

RESULTS FROM JUNE 24, 2011

Today is a half day for us – most of the crew is traveling to the University of Memphis for the Mid-South Archaeological Conference on Saturday. Robert and I are presenting papers – and two of our crew Matt Colvin and Jesse Dalton are also presenting some of their research for their masters theses at Texas State University. Although short, our day was very productive– over in Feature 119, Ron, Amanda, and Clark discovered a second complete box turtle carapace.



The pre-mound pit feature is now more clearly defined – with the remains of a small but very hot fire visible as white ash below. A flat limestone slab to the west of the firepit seems to have been deliberately placed.



As investigations proceeded, it became apparent that this fire was “one time.” The fuel was placed in a shallow oval basin and burned – the upper edges of the basin have been burned into pottery. The brick red color is from oxidizing caused by the intense heat. The lower portions – away from oxygen – are not as intensely burned. This suggests to me that the basin was used for a fire only once – and perhaps may be associated with a ritual event marking the beginning of construction of the mound.



Below, the ash has been removed from the firepit. Before excavating further here, we will need to expose more of the apparent pit feature.



Later in the morning, we uncovered the eastern end of our mound 3 excavations for a photograph. The light clay band is clearly visible running across the units – the ash deposit covers most of the center of this photograph.



An even greater surprise emerged in our westernmost mound 3 units – the corner of a wall-trench house with intact floor deposits. The eastern wall trench is clearly visible in this photo – but the northern is less visible (both are highlighted by a yellow line on the outside of the trench). We'll investigate these further next week.

