

5. FEATURE FINDS FROM THE RIVERBANK SITE, 33RO1059

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Located just south and east of the Hopewell site's Square Enclosure by about 225 meters is the Riverbank site, 33RO1059, which represents multiple occupations spanning the Archaic through historic periods, and includes a significant Middle Woodland component. Particularly noteworthy are two impressive pit features that were encountered in 2006 during a data recovery project undertaken by the Midwest Archeological Center. These pits, Features 7 and 8, would have been contemporaneous with Hopewell activities at the nearby earthwork complex, and the material culture recovered from them provides an intriguing glimpse of activities outside of the earthwork walls.

Feature 7 is a circular pit partially outlined in rock and measuring 87 cm in diameter at the top and 60 cm at its flat base, which is 32 cms deep (Figure 1). The feature fill includes dark, organic soil, burned earth, charcoal—particularly concentrated in the center and toward the bottom of the feature—and abundant artifacts. The assemblage includes over a thousand pieces of burned and/or calcined bone, including one bone tool fragment that is polished and striated, 314 pieces of lithic debitage, 194 fire-cracked rocks, 25 shell fragments, 16 mica fragments, 10 bladelets, and 1124 pottery sherds. A minimum of eight distinct vessels are represented, including a tetrapodal pot, fragments of which were also recovered from nearby Feature 8. Figure 2 shows this pot, partially reconstructed. Feature 7 yielded a radiocarbon date from a charcoal sample calibrated at 2 sigma of A.D. 20-220 (Beta-231668).

Feature 8 is a circular basin pit that measured 1.1 meters in diameter at its top. The feature fill was 30 cms deep and comprised of the same type of matrix as Feature 7, but with an even greater amount of cultural material (Figure 3). This feature contains 785 pieces of debitage, 402 fire-cracked rocks, 118 mica fragments, 23 shell fragments, two bifaces and a core, and nine bladelets, all made from Flint Ridge flint, and a pitted stone. Nearly 5000 fragments (n=4728) of bone were recovered, most of which was burned. Several bone tools are present, including two burnishing tools, multiple pieces that are polished and striated, and two awls (Figure 4). The pottery assemblage includes 1077 sherds, representing a minimum of four distinct vessels, including the aforementioned tetrapodal pot, plus two additional partially complete tetrapodal vessels, which articulate from rim to base (Figures 5-6). These are identified as belonging to the Southeastern Series, Untyped Cordmarked. A charcoal sample from this feature, calibrated at 2 sigma, produced a radiocarbon date of A.D. 70-250 (Beta-231669). There seems to be no question that these two pit features were open and used at the same time.

These features, combined with additional archeological evidence from the site, support Hopewell use of the Riverbank site during the Middle Woodland period. Faunal and ethnobotanical remains indicate of a short term occupation, or occupations, in summer through fall. Occupants engaged in food processing and cooking (with an

emphasis on deer), stone tool manufacturing (based on the variety of lithic reduction stages represented), weaving, and other subsistence activities. Tetrapodal pots and mica are often associated with Hopewell ceremonial practices, and their presence at this site indicates such a use.



Figure 1. MWAC Archeologists excavating Feature 7.



Figure 2. Partially reconstructed tetrapodal pot, with sherds recovered from both Features 7 and 8.



Figure 3. Feature 8.



Figure 4. Bone tools recovered from Feature 7 and 8.



Figure 5. Tetrapodal pot recovered from Feature 8.



Figure 6. Tetrapodal pot recovered from Feature 8.

