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Paleoamerican and Early-Archaic Occupations of the Widemeier Site (40Dv9), Davidson County, Tennessee

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In 2005, Cumberland Research Group, Inc. undertook a cultural resource management-testing project to determine if any human burials would be disturbed with the construction of two ponds on private land. (A Mississippian village had been previously recorded within the property boundaries.) Two possible burials were located during the testing. Both these burials were on the margins of the project and could easily be avoided during construction. Investigations were then terminated since the conditions of the contract had been met; however, a scatter of late-Paleoamerican and early-Archaic artifacts were recorded in several of the backhoe trenches (Allen 2005; Broster et al. 2006).

The Tennessee Division of Archaeology acted as monitors of this contract work. We strongly felt that further research was warranted, and we were permitted to conduct archaeological evaluations during construction activities. Accordingly, backdirt from three of the trenches was sifted for artifacts, profiles were drawn, and further excavation units were dug into sterile clay. A total of 13 m² was examined to a maximum depth of 90 cm below ground surface. A very high density of Paleoamerican and early-Archaic artifacts was found. Numerous charcoal samples were obtained for the early-Archaic levels, while extremely small amounts of charcoal were found in the Paleoamerican levels.

A total of 17 Paleoamerican projectile points were recovered during dirt removal from the ponds, including three Clovis, two Cumberland, four unfluted Cumberland, six Beaver Lake, one Quad, and one Dalton point. Early-Archaic projectile points are represented by the following: 20 Greenbrier, 2 Harpeth River, 23 Big Sandy, 17 Lost Lake, 2 Plevna, 3 Decatur, 70 Kirk corner-notched, and one Lecroy. Sixteen early-Archaic Cobbs knives were also recorded. Numerous unifacial endscrapers, sidescrapers, blade knives, and unutilized blades were found in disturbed context. Figure 1 illustrates three of the early-Paleoamerican points and two early-Paleoamerican point performs. The majority of blade tools appear to be assignable to a rather extensive Clovis occupation on at least three areas of the property. A shallow pit feature containing one Clovis preform, one blade, and two chert blocks was excavated in one of the test units. A total of 61 Clovis performs were recovered from the

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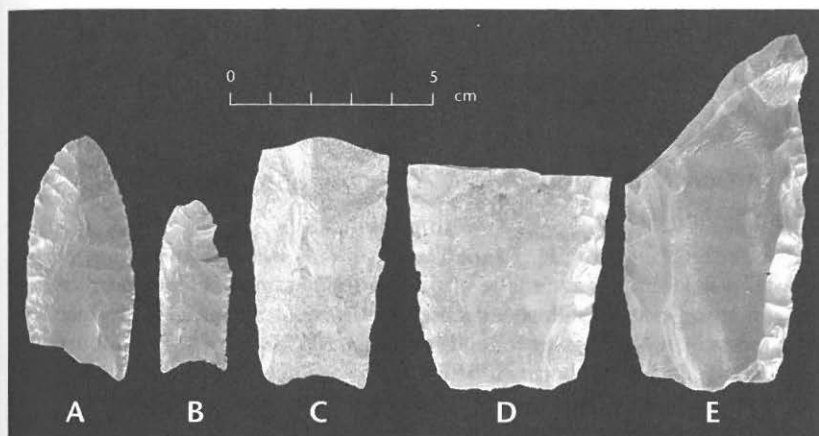


Figure 1. Clovis projectile points (A–C) and preforms (D–E) from site 40Dv9.

site. Numerous burnt areas and shallow pits were found within the early-Archaic components. A charcoal sample from one of these burned areas, containing a Cobbs knife, yielded a ^{14}C age of 9390 ± 50 RCYBP (10,730 to 10,500 CALYBP) (Beta-234592).

It is unfortunate that a more controlled excavation of this site could not be conducted. Most of the deposits were removed and used to reclaim a landfill some 2 km southeast of the site. Hundreds of early preforms and projectile points are known to have been collected from this landfill. We are presently trying to track down these collectors and get their permission to record their finds.

References Cited

- Allen, D. S., IV 2005 Due-Diligence Archaeological Investigation of Proposed Areas on Deborah C. Hicks Property, Davidson County, Tennessee. Report prepared for CJRT, Inc. Cumberland Research Group. Copy on file at Tennessee Division of Archaeology, Nashville.
- Broster, J. B., M. R. Norton, B. Hulan, and E. Durham 2006 A Preliminary Analysis of Clovis Through Early Archaic Components at the Widemeier Site (40Dv9), Davidson County, Tennessee. *Tennessee Archaeology* 2(2):120–127.