

Pace, Robert E. (Anthropology Laboratory, Indiana State University)

EXCAVATION OF THE LATTAS CREEK SITE (12 GR 29) IN GREENE COUNTY

An unique agreement between archaeological and coal mining interests led to testing and subsequent excavation of the Lattas Creek Site in the spring and summer of 1986. Parties to the agreement included the Council for Conservation of Indiana Archaeology, the Wabash Valley Archaeological Society, the Department of Natural Resources Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology, and the Division of Reclamation, and Black Beauty Coal Company. The ISU Anthropology Laboratory, with the assistance of professional and avocational volunteers, performed the work through a contract with the coal company.

Test excavations demonstrated the significance of the site, which is located on a low ridge spur above a former wetland in west- central Greene County. Excavation of the 1.6 acre site documented features including some 180 hearths, cooking, storage and refuse pits, along with 4 house patterns and 9 burials. Preliminary analyses have established Late Archaic, Allison-LaMotte and Albee components. A midden found at the site was produced by the Late Archaic and the Allison- LaMotte peoples, while most of the hearths, pits and houses were Allison-LaMotte. Albee use of the site appears to have been limited to its use as a cemetery.

Six radiocarbon-14 dates include two for the Late Archaic, B.C. 2020 + 80 (Beta-18342) and B.C. 1930 + 80 (Beta-18340). These dates, very similar to those from such sites as Prairie Creek in Daviess County and Oliver Vineyard in Monroe County, appear to represent a cultural manifestation just prior to Terminal Archaic Riverton Culture, however, with greater similarity to the French Lick Phase of the Late Archaic. Three Middle/Late Woodland Allison-LaMotte dates of A.D. 250 + 70 (Beta-16203), A.D. 470 + 70 (Beta-18343) and A.D. 620 + 60 (Beta18344) fall within the range reported for Daugherty-Monroe Site in Sullivan County. The one Late Woodland Albee date, A.D. 950 + 80 (Beta-18341), was obtained from charcoal in association with a burial and Albee vessel. Although similar dates from such sites as Welsh-Dunlap and Farrand in Vigo County, and Cooke in Parke County have been interpreted as Albee, the above date is the first with a clear, unquestionable association. It is especially significant since diagnostic tool kits and ceramics were also recovered from burial contexts at the site. Similar diagnostics have been reported in the region since Maclean's excavation of the Albee Mound in Sullivan County in the late 1920's.