

Hippos (Sussita) Excavations 2010 – 11th Season Daily Log + Drawing

Date: 28 July 10 Area: NEC Manager: Schuler

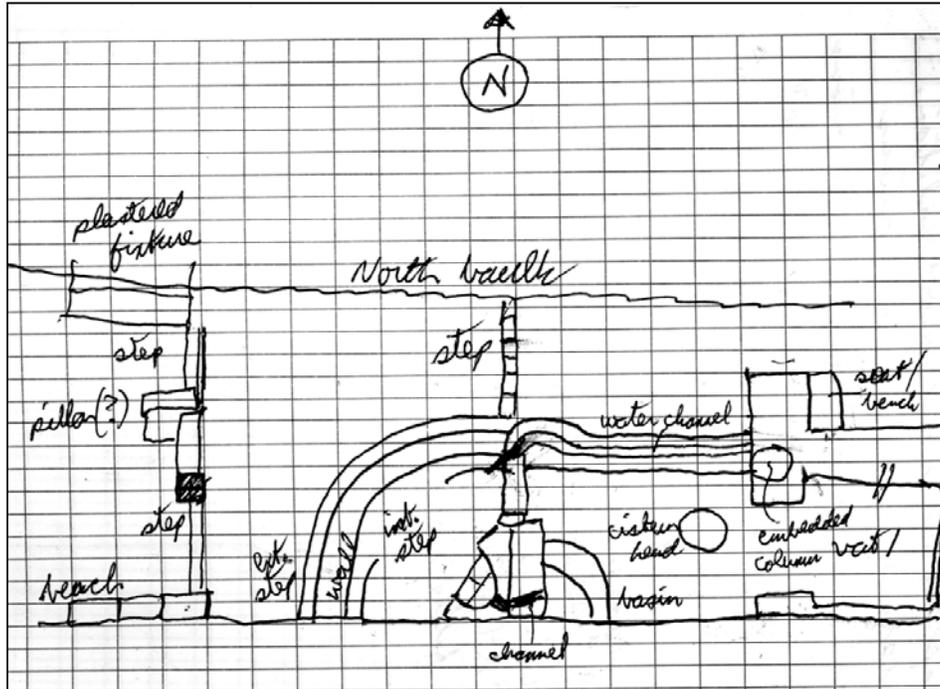
Squares	YY99	ZZ0	ZZ99		
Loci	1296 1918	1276			
Baskets	2382 2381	2383			
Walls	W1261, W1266, W1288, W1236, W1297, W1298, W1910, W1911				
Floors	F1294, F1909, F1912				

- Continued work in YY99
 - Goal = remove balk between excavated areas, clarify relationship between colonnaded building and later vat.
 - Starting elevation = 128.874 (mosaic south), 128.849 (mosaic north), 129.158 (outside step of pool), 128.961 (interior step of pool SW), 128.942 (interior step of pool NW), 129.720 (top edge of pool, east end), 129.826 (level of unexcavated fill), 130.447 (bottom of shallow basin that feeds fountain through pilaster), 129.759 (plaster floor near cistern I)
 - Ending elevation = 129.133 (step at east end of excavated area), 128.923 (mosaic floor next to east step), 129.157 (external shelf of fountain pool on the east end).
 - Soil is Horizon C
 - Removed a 2.91m monolithic column from the square and balk. Its base and top are quite similar to parts of a column previously removed in an earlier season from this same general area (NEC58)
 - Ceased excavation of the inside of the fountain pool, so that conservators could work on damaged parts of fountain and pool.
 - While removing destruction fill from the mosaic floor north of the fountain pool, we recovered a limestone block (24x38x22) to which plaster holding a partial

face of a woman was attached. It is a fresco of a Tyche *corona muralis*. The mouth and left side of the face are missing. Many Graeco-Roman cities, including those of the Decapolis, held Tyche (the goddess Fortune) in high regard. We recovered an inscription last year that began "Agathe Tyche" ("to good Fortune"). The find is fragmentary, having fallen to the floor in an earthquake. But the survival of such a fragment of a fresco in such a context is quite remarkable. The fresco was rendered in a high quality Roman form.

The eyes are full of expression, looking to the distance at the left. The crown is of note and helps us identify the figure as Tyche. It is a mural crown, that is, a crown showing the fortifications of the city. Sometimes these can be stylized, and sometimes they reflect actual structures. This example has rounded gate and nearby towers.

- The stone underwent immediate conservation by Ewa. Plaster fragments were extracted from nearby fill, but none were found to match the edges. The fragments were preserved and photographed to allow for possible digital reconstruction.
- Fill was removed to near the mosaic floor. The floor is 2.84 m from the west steps to the easterly step.
- On the west, the floor is accessed by two sets of two steps on either side of a podium. The first step of the north stairs has an elevation of 14cm and a tread of 23cm. a Second step of 20cm brings one to the level of the mosaic floor. Marble pieces (broken) from a border to contain the mosaic tesserae. The first step of the south stairs is 10cm with a tread of 41cm. The second step has an elevation of 20cm. At this step the tesserae are held in place by hard plaster. The intervening podium is 1.10m north to south and 60cm east to west. Only some of its base blocks survive to a height of about 90cm. The construction is similar to other parts of the complex.



- Item: 523. Description: nail shank (13 cm long, 0.4-1.3 cm wide, bent at 9 cm) found 288 cm north of w1266, 309 cm west of w1298, 167 cm from surface.
- Item: 524. Description: carved stone (button) of rounded black stone, flat on bottom and curved on top, hole in middle (3 cm wide, .6 cm high) found 285 cm north of w1266, 630 cm west of w1298, 180 cm from surface.
- Continued work in square YZZO
 - Goal = expose north portico of the east peristyle court
 - Starting elevation = 129.817 (F1293), 130.109 (high average)
 - Ending elevation = 129.810 (average of floor F1920 in north portico), 129.483 (sloping of floor F1920 to the west), 130.133 (threshold of doorway in W1910), 130.033 (slot for door in threshold), 130.221 (top of catch basin next to door), 129.825 (bottom of catch basin)
 - Soil is Horizon C
 - Cleared north portico to the level of F1920. The floor is a combination of flatter stones with mud and plaster. It slopes somewhat to the west where a crude line of stone set on their points functions to separate the floor from the staircase.
 - There is a door with jamb in W1910. The exterior is to the west..

- To the east of the threshold is evidence of a secondary plaster floor to the level of the top of the threshold (preventing use of a door).
- A catch basin wraps around the south end of the door. It is about 40cm deep. Part of the south side is damaged. We assume it drains to the cistern, but an exit was not discerned.
- Continued work in square ZZ99
 - Removed unstable material from the north balk.