



Hippos (Sussita) 2003 – 4rd Season

Locus Card

Locus No. L533

Archaeological Context

Locus Status: closed

Locus Type: interior of exposed sarcophagus

Field Manager: Schuler

Area: Northeast Church:

Opening Date: 23 July

Opening Height: 130.98

Closing Date: 23 July

Closing Height: 130.59

Locus Location

General Description of Borders:

At head of south aisle

Loci

Below	Above	North	South	West	East	Identical
L501		L507	L529	L520	L535	
		L508				

	X coordinate	Y coordinate
North East	523.55	608.25
South West	624.16	606.00

General Description and Soil Analysis

As the sarcophagus was sealed and partially exposed, no soil had migrated into the interior. Only bones and decompositional remains were recovered.

Chronology of Excavation

- 23 July
 - After raising the level north of the sarcophagus with dirt and sand to the top of the box of the sarcophagus, the lid was rolled off just before 8:00am.
 - The box was essentially empty, with the bones gathered toward the west end under the hole of the reliquary. Major long bones form a ḥēt around the skull and pelvis.
 - The skeleton does not seem to be complete. The skull and many bones are broken.

- The top of the sarcophagus is solid limestone. The box is also limestone with a cut interior. It is rounded on the inside at the west end and square at the east end.
- Box has a visible decorative line on the south side parallel with the south edge.
- Lid was set on small stones that were plastered in place creating a gap that was later plastered shut.
- Interior width is 40cm; interior height is 39cm
- The reliquary hole was drilled in the limestone and capped with a stone basin that was plastered in place.
- After measurements, photography and diagrams, bones and bone fragments were removed, boxed, and sent for analysis
- Remaining soil and bone fragments were swept from the sarcophagus and gathered in three buckets. Later sifting of the contents recovered numerous small bone fragments from the west end and 15 toe bones and 4 tesserae from the east end. Total volume was 12.45kg.

24 July

- Documentation of sarcophagus box
 - Width 61.5cm (at west end) and 64 cm at east end
 - Length 2m on center
 - North wall is 11.5cm thick at east end and 10cm thick at the start of the curve
 - South wall is 12 cm thick at east end and 21cm thick at the start of the curve
 - Depth
 - North wall is 36-39 cm west to east
 - South wall is 35-39 cm west to east
 - Center is 36-39 west to east
 - Slight slope to east
 - Curve at west end
 - Wall thickness at west end is 12cm
 - North side curve begins 33cm from west
 - South side curve begins 32cm from west
 - Strokes on north side angle down from east to west at about 60 degrees
 - On south side, there are some discernable stokes down from west to east
 - There is a single inscribed line on the south side of the sarcophagus 60 cm from top of box
 - The lid
 - 23cm high
 - 197cm long
 - 59 cm wide
 - was held up on the west by stones plastered in place to create 2-3cm gap.
 - Comparative measurements to sarcophagoi on the surface east of the gate at Hippos

	Length	Width	Depth
#1	191	63	48

#2	198	66	49
#3	196	67	71
#4	212	89	(unclear – stuck in ground)
NEC	200	62	39+12=51

Pottery and Small Finds

4 1cm tesserae

Concluding Remarks

Bones were those of a woman of 60+ years.