

# The Davis Bottom History Preservation Project

## Archaeology/Laboratory Analysis

Over the course of an archaeological investigation, most of the research is conducted in the lab. Laboratory analysis is a vital part of professional archaeology. Dr. Tanya Faberson, Principal Investigator, supervised the research conducted at Cultural Resource Analysts in Lexington. "Its incredibly important for us to be able to almost read the archaeological record, so to speak," says Dr. Faberson, "because that is the only lasting record if we don't have written materials." Laboratory analysis is a highly detailed process. Specialists cleaned, identified and catalogued each one of the 38,000 artifacts recovered from Davis Bottom. "Artifacts tell a story as to what the people who lived in that community were really doing. What kinds of buildings were there, construction episodes, and what kinds of daily activities everyone in that area were participating in," says Jennifer Faberson, Historic Materials Specialist, Cultural Resource Analysts.

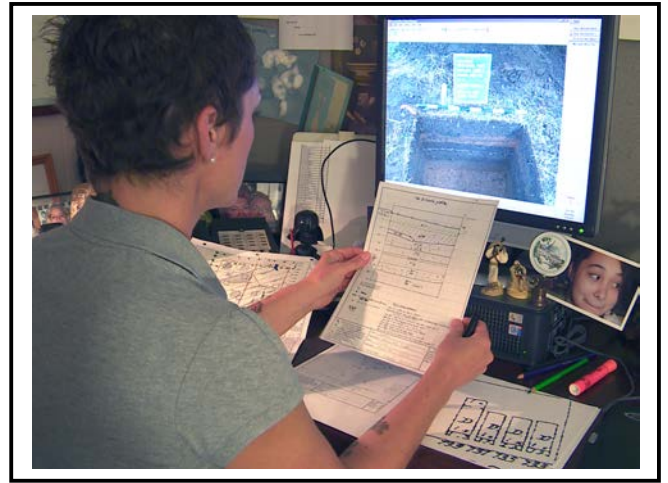


Figure 1: Dr. Tanya Faberson compares field notes and photographs from Davis Bottom.



Figures 2-5 (clockwise from upper left): Heather Barras washes glassware; Jennifer Faberson identifies and catalogues glass fragments; Renee Bonzani identifies and counts seeds; Jennifer Faberson refits pieces of a ceramic plate.

## Davis Bottom Artifacts

More than half of the artifacts recovered from Davis Bottom came from two features; the privies behind two shotgun homes built on DeRoode Street in the 1920s. "I think the most intriguing thing to me was just the large variety of artifacts that came from the privies with such wide date ranges," says Jennifer Faberson. Historic sites often contain artifacts from a long time period. The Davis Bottom privies contained artifacts made as early as the 1880s and as late as 2006. Jennifer Faberson concludes, "It just really suggests that the people that were living there were probably salvaging items and using them over a long period of time."

### The wood-lined privy



A wood-lined privy was discovered behind the shotgun house at 710 DeRoode Street. Dr. Tanya Faberson says this privy served a dual purpose for residents. "When they decided to stop using this as a privy, they started dumping their trash in it," says Faberson. "So that way it actually becomes two features in one." Most of the artifacts recovered from the wood-lined privy date from the early to mid 1900s.

Figure 7: The wood-lined privy's stratigraphy showing deposit layers.



Figure 6: Assemblage of Automatic Bottle Machine (ABM) glassware recovered from a wood-lined privy behind 710 DeRoode Street.



Figure 8: Blown in Mold (BIM) glassware dating from the late 1800s to the early 1900s.



Figure 9: Baby formula bottles.



Figure 10: Hand-carved Mahjong tiles used in a game that originated in China.



Figure 11: White-ware ceramics, including bowl and plate fragments.

## The Slate-lined privy



Shortly after archaeologists uncovered the wood-lined privy, a second privy was discovered behind the shotgun house at 712 DeRoode Street. Surprisingly, this privy was lined with slate salvaged from old pool tables, a creative example of adaptive reuse later confirmed by the homeowner. While there are older exceptions, most of the artifacts recovered from the slate-lined privy date from the mid to late 1900s.

Figure 12: The slate-lined privy from 712 DeRoode Street.



Figure 13: Blown in Mold (BIM) glass bottles, ca. 1900 to 1920s.



Figure 14: A variety of personal items, including tableware, buttons and beads.



Figure 15: Stoneware, ca. 1830-1925.



Figure 16: Iron cookware, and fragments from a porcelain creamer.

## References Cited

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