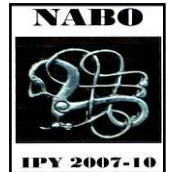




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NABO IPY 2009 Project Field Report

## Skútustaðir Midden Investigations Mývatn Northern Iceland 2009

Ágústa Edwald

FSÍ & U Aberdeen

&

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CUNY Northern Science & Education Center

Feb 25<sup>th</sup> 2010



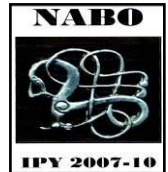
**Summary:** In June-July 2009 an international team (led by Ágústa Edwald FSÍ and Tom McGovern CUNY) conducted initial investigations of stratified midden deposits associated with the historic site of Skútustaðir in Mývatn in NE Iceland. In 2007 a joint FSÍ/CUNY NABO team visited Skútustaðir following the discovery of a patch of eroding midden by Arni Einarsson (Mývatn Research Station). Investigations in 2008 followed up on the 2007 results with a set of test trenches. The three 2008 test units (D, E1&2, F) located midden deposits with excellent organic preservation and multiple tephra horizons. Artifacts recovered and observed tephra indicate that the deposits sampled in **D** extend from ca. 1717-1477, **E1 & 2** have an early Viking Age deposit directly upon the Landnám surface, and **F** revealed a very rich early modern midden deposit and an unexpected structural wall. The 2009 season saw a major expansion of the area D unit into two connected larger units **G** (13 sq m) and **H** (20 sq m). Unit G was carried to lava bed rock, revealing an exceptionally productive Viking Age midden deposit packed into the natural fissures and crevices. Unit H was left at the level of a previously undocumented mid-17<sup>th</sup> c. tephra surface, with coring indicating at least 80-90 cm of additional midden remaining beneath. Large artifact and ecofact collections were recovered from the early modern and Viking age deposits, with excellent conditions of preservation throughout. A very successful expanded collaboration continued for a third season with the *Hið Þingeyska fornleifafelag*; local Archaeological Association and the Litlulaugaskóli and Hafraeðkjarskóli *Fornleifaskóli barnanna/ Kids' Archaeology* program. There is great potential at Skútustaðir for further archaeological investigation, education, and outreach. The project is part of a larger NABO (North Atlantic Biocultural Organization) and IPY (International Polar Year) program *Human Ecodynamics in the North Atlantic*, which works to coordinate international interdisciplinary projects in the Shetlands, Faroes, Iceland, and Greenland (see [www.nabohome.org](http://www.nabohome.org))



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## Research Background: Landscapes of Settlement

The current IPY-sponsored NABO / FSI project at Skútustaðir is a continuation of the long-running international cooperative project titled *Landscapes of Settlement: Historical Ecology of the Colonization of Northern Iceland*<sup>1</sup>. The Landscapes of Settlement project (LoS) has been directed by Orri Vésteinsson and Adolf Friðriksson of the *Archaeological Institute of Iceland* (FSÍ) since 1992 (continuously since 1996), beginning as a site-focused investigation of the Viking age ruins at Hofstaðir<sup>2</sup> and progressively expanding into a multi-year, multi-investigator, landscape scaled program researching the whole period of human settlement in the Mývatn basin and nearby districts from historical, archaeological, and environmental perspectives<sup>3</sup>. A recent overview of LoS research is provided by an appropriately multi-authored paper in *American Anthropologist*.<sup>4</sup>

The 2009 season at Skútustaðir thus continues the work of the LoS program, building upon past work in the Mývatn region and adding to a substantial body of prior research. Investigations

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<sup>1</sup> Funding has been generously provided by grants from RANNÍS, National Geographic Society, the Leverhulme Trust, CUNY Northern Science & Education Center, and the US National Science Foundation (Grants OPP 402900001, OPP ARC 0352596, BCS 0001026, BCS 0527732, OPP Arctic Social Sciences 0732327).

<sup>2</sup> Lucas, Gavin (ed). (2009) *Hofstaðir. Excavations of a Viking Age Feasting Hall in North-Eastern Iceland*, Archaeological Institute Iceland, Reykjavik.

Friðriksson Adolf, Orri Vésteinsson, T.H. McGovern (2004) Recent investigations at Hofstaðir, northern Iceland, In: R. A Houseley & G Coles (eds) *Atlantic Connections and Adaptations; economies, environments and subsistence in lands bordering the North Atlantic*, AEA/NABO Environmental Archaeology Monographs 21, Oxbow Books. Pp 191-202.

<sup>3</sup> Ascough, P.L.; Cook, G.T.; Church, M.J.; Dugmore, A.J.; Arge, S.V.; McGovern, T.H. (2006). Variability in North Atlantic marine radiocarbon reservoir effects at c. AD 1000. *The Holocene* 16(1): 131-136.

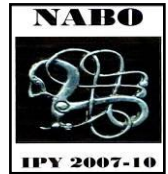
Ascough, P. L., Gordon Cook, Mike Church, Andrew Dugmore, Thomas H McGovern, Elaine Dunbar, Arni Einarsson, Adolf Friðriksson, Hildur Gestdóttir (2007) Reservoirs and Radiocarbon; 14 C dating problems in Mývatnssveit Northern Iceland *Radiocarbon* 49(2): 1-15.

Lawson Ian T., F.J. Gathorne-Hardy, Mike J. Church, Arni Einarsson, Kevin Edwards, Sophia Perdikaris, Tom McGovern, Colin Amundsen & Gudrun Sveinbjarnardóttir; (2005) Human Impact on Freshwater Environments in Norse and Early Medieval Mývatnssveit. Iceland, in: Jette Arneborg & B. Grønnow (eds) *Dynamics of Northern Societies*, Proceedings of the SILA/NABO conference on Arctic & North Atlantic Archaeology 2004, National Museum of Denmark Copenhagen, pp 375-383.

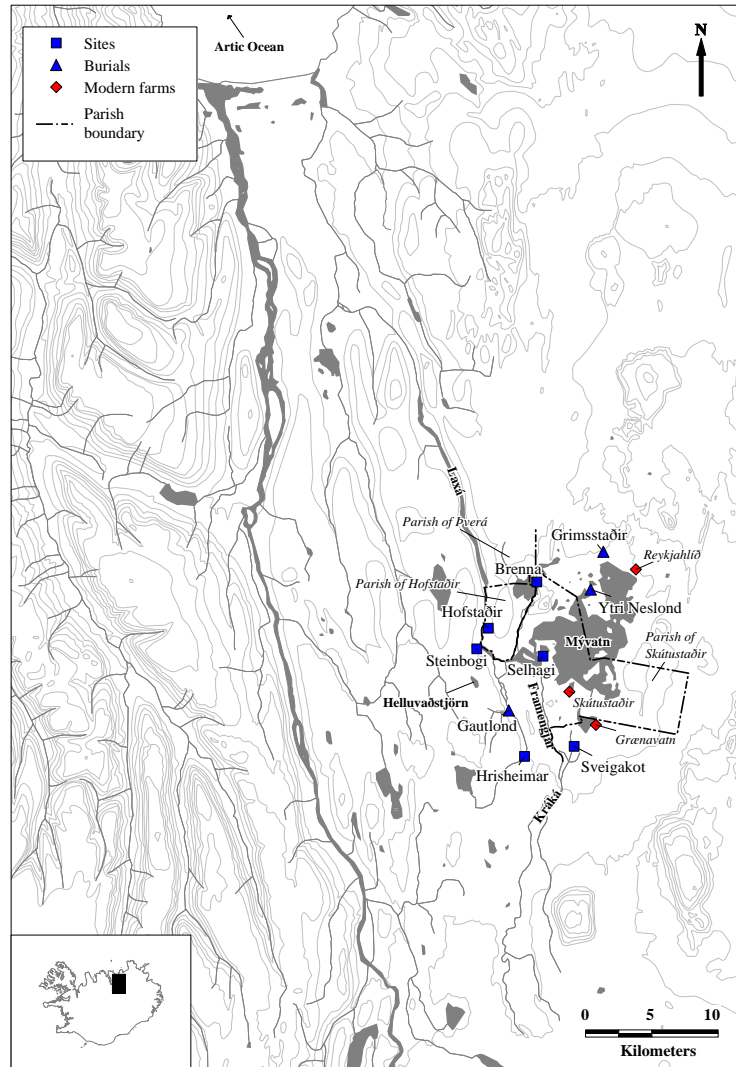
McGovern, T.H., Sophia Perdikaris, Arni Einarsson, Jane Sidell (2006). Coastal Connections, Local Fishing, and Sustainable egg harvesting, patterns of Viking age inland wild resource use in Mývatn District, Northern Iceland, *Environmental Archaeology* 11.1 : 102-128.

Ogilvie, Astrid & T.H. McGovern (2000) Sagas & Science: Climate and Human Impacts in the North Atlantic, in W.W. Fitzhugh & E. Ward (eds.). *Viking Voyagers*, Smithsonian Inst Press, pp 385-394.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas H. McGovern, Orri Vésteinsson, Adolf Friðriksson, [Figure 1 Location Map for Mývatnssveit](#) nore, Gordon Cook, Sophia Perdikaris, Kevin Edwards, Amanda M. Thomson, W. Paul Adderley, Anthony Newton, Gavin Lucas, Oscar Aldred (2007) Landscapes of Settlement in Northern Iceland: Historical Ecology of Human Impact & Climate Fluctuation on the Millennial Scale, invited paper in special issue on the archaeology of global change, *American Anthropologist*, 109(1):27-51



in Mývatnssveit for the past fifteen years have resulted in major excavation programs of both structures and midden deposits at Hofstaðir, Sveigakot, and Hrísheimar, with smaller scale midden excavations and test trenching at Steinbogi, Selhagi, Oddastaðir, Brenna, and Thorleifstaðir combined with a comprehensive foot survey of the district (continued in 2008 by Oscar Aldred and Christian K. Madsen with additional work by Aldred in 2009). The LoS program has greatly improved our understanding of the timing and processes of the Viking age Landnám in Iceland, and the value of multiple sites of different social status and local environment tied together by the isochrones provided by the critical V871 and V940 tephra has been clearly demonstrated. The strategy of a long term commitment to research in a single district and the “longitudinal” perspective provided has become a key element in the research agenda of *Historical Ecology* and *Human Ecodynamics*<sup>5</sup>, and the LoS is now one of several similar landscape-scaled investigations in the region. In many respects, Mývatnssveit is now one of the most intensively researched and best documented portions of the Norse North Atlantic, and one of a very few Viking Age multi-site cultural landscapes now known anywhere.



### **Human & Social Dimensions of Global Change Investigations in 2006-08**

However, the LoS has been far more successful in documenting the earlier phases of settlement in Mývatn than the later periods (somewhat reversing the normal situation in Iceland and elsewhere). We actually have far less evidence in Mývatnssveit for the later Middle Ages and early modern periods (ca. 1100-1850), and nowhere had we found a continuous archaeological record covering the whole period of human settlement in the region. In 2006 we began a cooperative project under the *Human and Social Dynamics of Global Change* program of US NSF led by Astrid Ogilvie (*HSD: Human and Social Dynamics in Mývatnssveit, Iceland, from the Settlement to the Present*) aimed at connecting the archaeological record with the historical

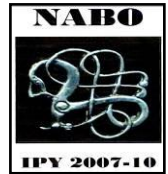
<sup>5</sup> Crumley, Carole (ed.) (1994) *Historical Ecology*, SAR Press, Santa Fe NM



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documents for land use and landscape change with interviews with senior farmers in the district. The archaeology team has been tasked with locating midden deposits contemporary with the historical data sets, and to support the overall objectives of connecting more distant past with the present. In 2006 we did locate early modern deposits at Hofstaðir and Narfastaðir, but failed to locate the large and continuous midden deposits needed to link to the large Viking Age collections. In 2007, a larger scale survey project aimed at locating and testing middens (using soil corers and small test trenches) was carried out under the leadership of Orri Vésteinsson with the aim of locating deeper midden deposits extending from recent times to the medieval period (Vésteinsson ed. 2008)<sup>6</sup>. The 2007 survey located and tested middens at multiple sites (Beinistaðir, Hofstaðir, Graenavatn, Geirastaðir, Litla Gotland, Thorleifstaðir, Baldursheimar, Grímstaðir) but the key discovery of the 2007 season was made by Arni Einarsson, who observed a patch of erosion at the southern edge of the green field behind the modern farm and church area at Skútustaðir had exposed a patch of well preserved mammal and fish bones (the site is clearly visible from the Mývatn Research Station). It appeared that one or more pseudo-crater depressions had been filled with cultural deposits, a pattern reminiscent of the use of midden debris to fill natural or cultural holes and depressions seen on other sites. These discoveries led to test cores which indicated the presence of up to 2.5 meters of cultural deposits on the sloping surface of the Skútustaðir mound. While the LNS were not clearly seen in any core, we did encounter several apparently in situ tephra (possibly V1717 and V 1477) in several cores, and bone was recovered from cores in excellent condition. The modern family at Skútustaðir was strongly supportive of an excavation project, and a larger investigation of these promising deposits seemed clearly indicated. In 2007, the HSD grant was supplemented by the first field season of the new NABO IPY effort supported by NSF OPP Arctic Social Sciences Program, and an expanded cooperative excavation of the Skútustaðir midden began in summer 2008 (see Edwald & McGovern 2008, Edwald 2009, Hicks and Harrison 2009)<sup>7</sup>. The 2008 investigations were extremely productive and provided both a very useful initial archaeofauna (Hicks in Edwald 2009, Hicks and Harrison 2009), archaeobotanical samples (Church in Edwald 2009) and artifacts datable to both Viking age and the 17<sup>th</sup> c AD. A suite of AMS Radiocarbon dates (provided by Gordon Cook of SUERC) and an unusually large number of volcanic tephra layers have provided an internally consistent chronology (see Edwald 2009), and thanks to the isochrones provided by the major tephra layers (esp. V1717, V1477, H 1300, and V c 940 and V

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<sup>6</sup> Orri Vésteinsson ed. *Archaeological investigations in Mývatnssveit 2007*  
Fornleifastofnun Íslands FS386-02263 Reykjavík  
2008. <http://www.nabohome.org/publications/fieldreports/ArchaeologicalinvestigationssinMyvatnssveit2007.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Ágústa Edwald & Tom McGovern (2008) *Skútustaðir Midden Investigations*  
*Mývatn Northern Iceland 2008: an Initial Field Report*; NABO IPY field report available for download at [www.nabohome.org](http://www.nabohome.org)

Ágústa Edwald et al. 2009 *Excavations at Skútustaðir 2008*, FSI field Report.

Megan T. Hicks & Ramona Harrison  
*A Preliminary Report of the 2008 Midden Excavation at Skutustadir, N Iceland NORSEC Report No. 45*,  
see also <http://www.nabohome.org/publications/fieldreports/SKUpreliminaryNORSEC09.pdf>



871) it has been possible to tie together widely separated parts of the site.

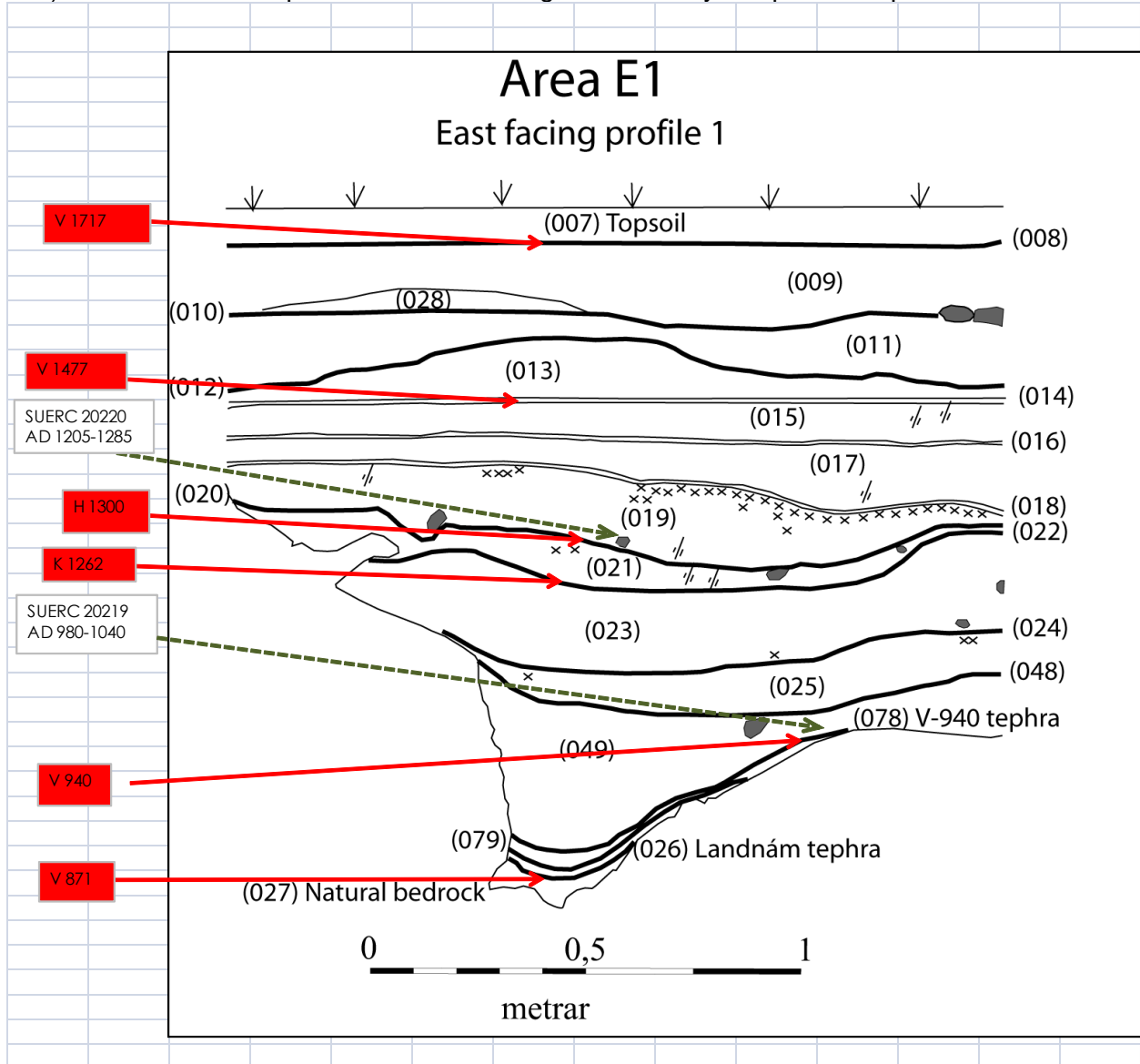


Figure 2. The 2008 profile from Area E 1 (Edwald 2009) showing the unusually complete tephra record (identifications by Magnús Á. Sigurgeirsson 2008) which match the AMS radiocarbon dates (two sigma) quite closely. Note that the Viking age deposits near the base of this profile are in filling a very uneven lava surface. This pattern was to be repeated on a larger scale in the lower portions of the 2009 Area G excavations.

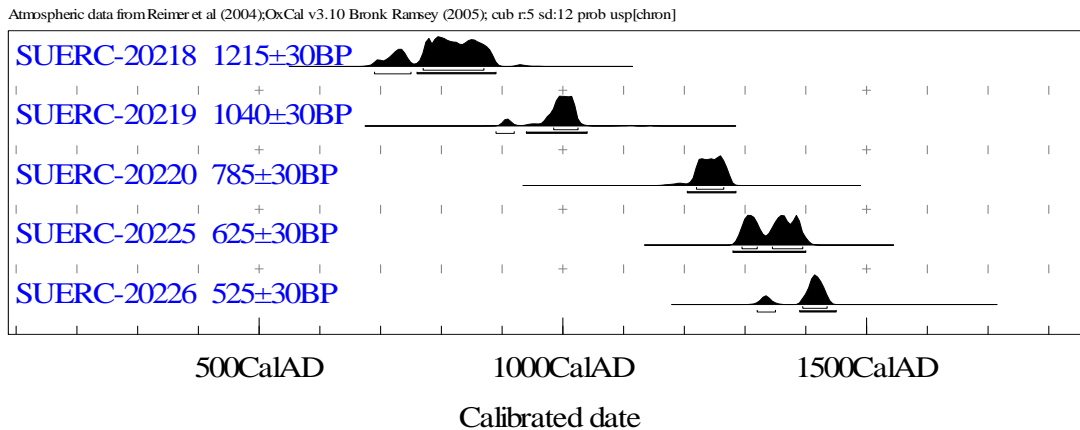


Figure 3 Distribution of AMS C14 calibration results (OxCal v 3.10) from 2008 SKU samples (all terrestrial herbivore mammals).

The tephra stratigraphy and the available AMS C14 dates (figure 3) from both area E1 and E 2 demonstrated that there was a clear human presence on the natural lava surface shortly after the fall of the LNS (V 871+/-2), confirmed by the early AMS date SUERC 20218 (1 sigma calibration AD 690-890) associated with a Viking age glass bead originating in the eastern Mediterranean..

The stratigraphy and AMS C14 also indicated that there had been a major filling with a mixture of lava gravel and midden material (including well preserved animal bone) at some later period in the Viking age (context [049]). The single AMS date SUERC 20219 on this fill suggests a late 10<sup>th</sup> c date for this infilling (above the mid-10<sup>th</sup> c V940 tephra), at least in the area E portion of the rocky outcrop. The use of this sort of mix of gravel and midden material to in fill and level out the very uneven and deeply fissured surface of the Skútustaðir natural lava outcrop was to be encountered on a much larger scale at the base of Unit G in the 2009 season.

**Zooarchaeology 2008:** The 2008 excavations produced a substantial archaeofauna (total number of fragments 16,614), which was divided into a set of six preliminary phases based on the stratigraphy and radiocarbon chronology available from the 2008 season. Most of the 2008 archaeofauna came from the early modern period (ca. 1500-1850) and derived from the D and F units, with smaller medieval archaeofauna being recovered from the E 1 and E 2 profiles, and less than a hundred bones from the Viking Age deposits ( see Table 1 below from Hicks & Harrison 2009). A major trend in the 2008 archaeofauna was an increase in the relative proportions of caprines (sheep or goat, here nearly all sheep) relative to cattle in the early modern period and a persistent dairy management profile in the cattle (high % of young calves). Both are trends apparent in other Mývatnssveit sites, but at present Skútustaðir is unique in maintaining a ca 5:1 caprine to cattle ratio into the early modern period (other archaeofauna show ratios nearer 20 : 1). This has remained a successful dairy farm down to the present, probably due in part to access to excellent wet meadows of the Framengjar nearby.



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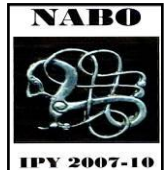


Table 1 SKU 08 (from Hicks and Harrison 2009)

An Overview of Species Present, Number of Identified Specimens (NISP) and Total Number of Fragments (TNF)

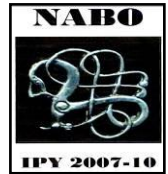
Unstrat.	9th c	1262-1300	14th c	pre 1477	1477-1717	post 1717	Total
Cow ( <i>Bos taurus</i> )		8	110	13	112	84	327
Horse ( <i>Equus caballus</i> )				1		1	2
Cat ( <i>Felis domesticus</i> )							
Dog ( <i>Canis familiaris</i> )					1		1
Pig ( <i>Sus scrofa</i> )			1		1		2
Sheep ( <i>Ovis aries</i> )	5	2	13	4	78	49	151
Goat ( <i>Capra hircus</i> )				1		1	1
Ovis/Capra sp.	22	5	159	19	467	380	1,052
<b>Total Domestic Mammals</b>		<b>36</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>658</b>	<b>1,536</b>
<b>SEALS</b>							
Harp seal ( <i>Pag. Groenlandicus</i> )						2	2
Phocid spp. (unident. seals)			1	34		18	53
<b>CETACEA (small whales/porpoise)</b>						1	1
<b>OTHER MAMMALS</b>							
Arctic fox ( <i>Alopex lagopus</i> )			1	2		1	4
Mouse ( <i>Mus musculus</i> )					2		2
<b>BIRDS</b>	3	9	35	11	62	49	169
<b>MOLLUSCA</b>		3	1		14	2	20
<b>TOTAL NISP(No. of Ident. Specimens)</b>		<b>39</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>1,787</b>
MM (Marine mammal)				1		3	4
STM (Small terrestrial mammal)							
MTM (Med. terr. mammal)		9	49	322	43	981	1,921
LTM (Large terr. mammal)		2	25	64	14	120	327
UNIM (Unidentified mammal)		3	299	905	184	7	2,928
<b>Total Number of Fragments (fish not included)</b>		<b>53</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>1,616</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4,800</b>
<b>Fish (Preliminary count)</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4,065</b>
<b>Total Number of Fragments (including fish)</b>		<b>59</b>	<b>565</b>	<b>1,937</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8,865</b>
							<b>4,618</b>
							<b>16,614</b>



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The 2008 excavations at Skútustaðir thus produced substantial collections of datable materials and confirmed the potential of these deeply stratified midden deposits and associated multiple tephra layers. It also resulted in a detailed site map created by Oscar Aldred with high resolution GPS and allowed for collection of geoarchaeology samples ( Ian Simpson, Val DeFeu, and Jennifer Brown) and palaeontological samples (Veronique Forbes) and a systematic soil coring survey (at 5 and 1 m intervals) that covered most of the potential excavation area. The 2008 effort thus left us in a good position to expand excavation units and increase sample recovery from increasingly well understood deposits. The success of the 2009 season thus owes a great deal to the hard work of the 2008 crews.

### The 2009 Skútustaðir Project: Staff, Methods, & Objectives

The 2009 Skútustaðir project season began June 8<sup>th</sup> and closed July 12<sup>th</sup> 2008. It was led for the FSI by Ágústa Edwald with help from Oscar Aldred ( FSI), George Hambrecht, Frank Feeley, Megan Hicks, Aaron Kendall, Tom McGovern (CUNY), Marianne Robson (U Bradford), Research Experience for Undergrads (REU) NSF fellows Reaksha Persaud, Jasmine Patel, and Jessica Vobornik, all participated in the excavations . The expanded 2009 *Kid's Archaeology / Fornleifaskóli barnanna* project (supervised by Sif Jóhannesdóttir, see <http://www.nabohome.org/projects/kap/fornleifaskolibarnanna1.pdf>) was particularly successful and enjoyable for all involved. Gerður Benediksdóttir was again our kind hostess at Skútustaðir and provided warm hospitality and a great deal of practical help and information about the site and its history. The 2009 season also benefited from the active cooperation of teams from U Stirling (geoarchaeology led by Ian Simpson) U Durham (charcoal and archaeobotany, Mike Church, Rosie Bishop) and U Leeds (pollen; Katy Roucoux, Ian Lawson). Oscar Aldred's continued pens and herding structures project produced an important set of investigations of the Rettir.

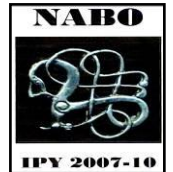
[http://www.nabohome.org/publications/ipy/Rettir\\_in\\_the\\_landscape\\_ipy\\_report\\_2009\\_sm.pdf](http://www.nabohome.org/publications/ipy/Rettir_in_the_landscape_ipy_report_2009_sm.pdf) ).

Excavation methods as in 2008 followed the standard FSI-NABO field manual and made use of single context recording and 100% dry sieving of deposits (4 mm mesh). Extensive whole soil samples taken following NABO IPY protocols (Church 2007) were floated on site with the kind help of Arni Einarsson of the Mývatn Research Station. Photos were digital, using 9.1 megapixel (FujifinePix 6200) and 14.3 megapixel (Canon G 10) cameras for working and record photos. A digital copy (in MS Excel 07) of the written registers was kept and is curated on DVD and data stick with the full set of photos, journals, logs, and photos of the profiles and overall site plan. This working record is also available on line as part of the new NABO project management system and will be continuously updated to provide basic excavation data to all interested. (see : [http://www.nabohome.org/cgi\\_bin/explore.pl?seq=3](http://www.nabohome.org/cgi_bin/explore.pl?seq=3)) All finds and data are now curated at FSÍ in Reykjavik along with the 2007 and 2008 site records.

The **objectives of the 2009 season** were:

- Expand the areas opened in 2008 to provide space for a substantial open area excavation allowing for both horizontal and vertical observation of stratigraphy. We chose to expand on the productive area D unit excavated in 2008.
- Recover a deeply stratified collection of artifacts and ecofacts from the longest possible time period,





extending the temporal coverage of the 2008 season and attempting to recover fully quantifiable collections from all time periods.

- Expand cooperation with the local Fornleifaskóli barnanna / Kids Archaeology program developed in 2007-08 and improve the experience for students and teaching staff participating, involving the NYC REU students in the community outreach program.

### Skútustaðir Excavations 2009

Excavation began by laying out and unturning an “L” shaped area initially, extending the 2008 D unit to grid south (magnetic SE) at 2 m wide by 6 m long, and then adding a 3 x 3 m unit connection to the east along the 110 line from 500/110 to 505/110 and down to 500/113- 505. This gave us an initial working area of 21 sq meters which we named Unit “G”. This unit was placed over 2008 soil cores that appeared to show deep stratigraphy and some tephra horizons, and was connected to the east side of the 2008 Unit D in an effort to connect the stratigraphic profiles and effectively combine the 2008 and 2009 phasing. Unit D had ended with its eastward end just getting below the V 1477 tephra, and we hoped that earlier periods would be represented further down slope.



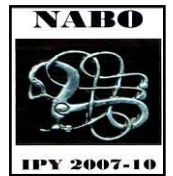
Figure 4 Initial layout and unturning of Unit G 2009



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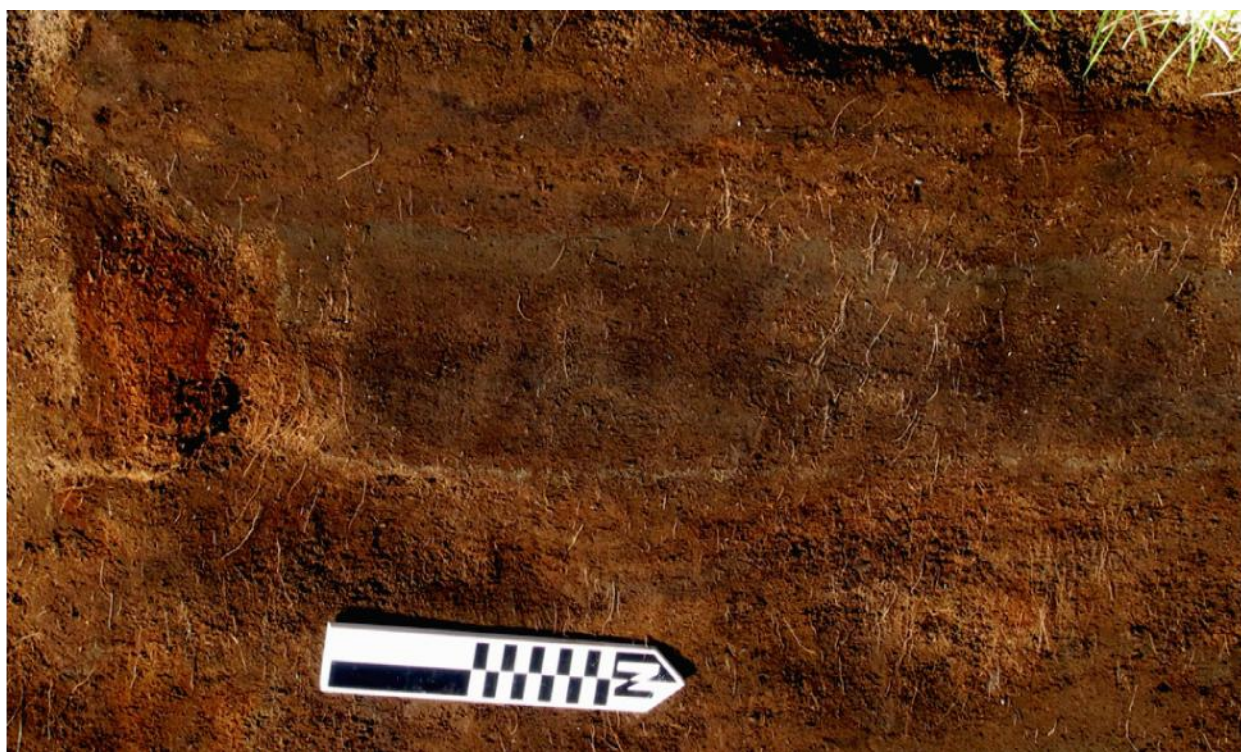


Figure 5. Structural turf found lying on its side in the demolition layer [102] in area G eastern portion. The tephra visible in the turf block appear to be V 1717 (dark discontinuous near top) V1477 (thicker continuous grey-green band), and what may be H 1300 (light thin line) at bottom. This would seem to have been cut in early modern times (at the earliest) someplace off the midden area- note the relatively small accumulation between these tephra layers.

We rapidly encountered masses of structural turf in random orientation mixed with bits of window glass and late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> c artifacts. Some turves retained intact tephra (Figure 5) indicating that they had been cut after the V 1717 tephra, and the deposit appears to represent the demolition of the large 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> c turf house (sketched by Bruun in 1908). This house was knocked down in the 1930's when the modern concrete farm houses were constructed, and it would appear that most of the turf demolition debris was deliberately scattered over the homefield to the south, a pattern of infilling that extends far back into the past. This demolition layer extended over most of the 2009 area G, and formed a dense deposit 50 to 75 cm thick (see Figure 6 below).





Figure 6 Structural turf in random orientation [ 102 ] with horizontally bedded midden layers below.

Below this 20<sup>th</sup> century demolition layer we encountered multiple well stratified midden layers and we were able to trace the V 1717 tephra surface across the entire unit (Figure 7 below). The stratigraphic excavation of Unit G continued very smoothly, but the clearly bedded layers were relatively poor in large bones (small fish bones and smaller mammal and bird bones were present) or larger artifacts such as pottery shards, vessels, or large glass shards; but smaller objects (especially clothing fasteners and small fragments of glass vessels) were recovered in some numbers. We speculate that this area may have collected a refuse stream largely from floor cleaning episodes of the large turf house prior to its demolition, and we may be seeing some segregation of relatively “clean” fill from the deposits down slope to the south and east, which are rich in larger bones and artifacts.





Figure 7. Unit G looking towards the SW cleared to the surface of the V 1717 tephra. The 2008 Unit has been backfilled and consolidated with turf. The cut of the 20<sup>th</sup> c water and electricity conduit ditch between Unit D and G is visible just above the photo scales.





Figure 8 Copper alloy disc (ca 2 cm in diameter) recovered from the Unit G deposits [123] below the V 1717 tephra and in what appears to be a 17<sup>th</sup> c context

One curious find in these deposits in Unit G was a small (ca 2 cm diameter) copper alloy disk with what is probably a monogram incised into the surface. The most probable reading is of a superposed thorn ( þ ) and J. The associated finds and the stratigraphic position would appear to place this object in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Possible association with the locally famous 17<sup>th</sup> century Skútustaðir resident Thorunn the Rich remains interesting but speculative.



Figure 9 Unit G cleared to the V 1477 tephra surface. Note the relatively thin accumulation of cultural deposits between the V 1717 and V 1477 tephtras in this area and the continuous bedding of the successive layers.

Since a major objective of the 2009 season was recovery of well stratified animal bone and the early modern layers in Unit G continued to be poor in large bones and artifacts, we put in a small 2 x 2 m test unit H just to the east (downslope) of Unit G to investigate bone and artifact density in this area. We immediately encountered masses of well preserved bones and large artifacts. We thus decided to expand Unit H, initially into a 2 x 5 meter unit running E-W (across the slope) that connected directly to the Unit G south profile (on the 500 E-W grid line). By the end of the season we had expanded the Unit G area to a full 4 x 5 m unit which continued to be amazingly productive of bones and artifacts. As we expanded the excavation unit down slope, it became apparent that what had seemed to be the edge of an infilled pseudo-crater was more likely simply a break in slope that had become covered with successive layers of midden deposit- the actual bedrock in the area is still far below according to coring results. It appears that we may be seeing deposits on a fissured lava ridge (which continues to the north of the grassy infilled area nearer the farm complex) rather than into a regular rounded pseudocrater. Also apparent was the sustained pattern of “dumping over the edge” of the plateau formed by earlier infilling of the lava ridge south of the main farmyard area, as we encountered a deposit of mid-20<sup>th</sup> c debris (early soda bottles and parts of a sheet metal water heater) near the surface,

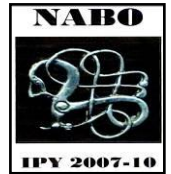




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with 19<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 17<sup>th</sup> c deposits directly beneath. It would appear that there has been a sustained pattern of infilling the nearer parts of the ridge (which is now part of the regularly mowed infield of the farm) with “clean fill” from house interior cleaning (and in the 20<sup>th</sup> c with the major demolition spread of the old turf farmhouse) and the deposit of larger (unsightly and probably smelly) debris over the edge of the ridge to the south and east. This use of midden material for landscaping and extension of home field area has been observed at other sites in Iceland and Greenland, but it seems likely that the extent of infilling and remodeling of land surface at Skútustaðir will be exceptional as we come to more fully understand its temporal and spatial patterning.

Below the V 1477 tephra horizon in Unit G (Figure 9 above) we were surprised to discover a very different set of deposits from the compact banded low-density midden above. Only 20 cm below the 1477 tephra we began to encounter a deposit rich in large mammal bones and comprised of a looser deposit with small lava stones and lava gravel mixed in with the many animal bones, bird egg shell, fire cracked rocks, and charcoal fragments (Figure 10 below).



Figure 10 Surface of Viking Age deposits in Unit G, mammal and bird bones, fire cracked rock, charcoal, and masses of bird egg shell.

This deposit resembled other Viking Age middens in Mývatnssveit, and proved to be associated with two 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> c tephra- the V c 940 tephra and the Landnám sequence (V 871). This bone rich deposit rests directly upon the V 871 LNS, which could be traced widely across the unit, but it appears to also be just above or mixed with the later V 940 tephra and is probably mid-10<sup>th</sup> c in date; perhaps contemporary with the late 9<sup>th</sup> c fill in Area E1 across the home field. This early midden dump seems to have been largely restricted to the south end of the unit, and was



packed into the many crevices and fissures associated with a major lava rock fissure that runs approximately east-west down the slope (Figure 11 below). This seems to have been a rapid infilling event (some long bones were standing vertically when excavated, indicating a dense packing during deposit) which appears in a similar stratigraphic position to the much smaller infilling observed in profile E 1 in 2008 (Figure 2 above). It would appear that sometime in the mid 10<sup>th</sup> c there was sufficient labor, midden material, and desire to conduct some major landscaping of what must have been initially a fairly hostile lava ridge line fissured with cracks and sharp edged depressions and holes. This represents one more challenge to the notion of a gradual and small scale settlement of the Mývatn area, suggesting substantial human presence in the first generations of settlement after ca AD 871. A small feature probably representing the edge of a hearth built directly upon the LNS tephra appeared below this 10<sup>th</sup> c fill in the NE corner of Unit G (Figure 12).

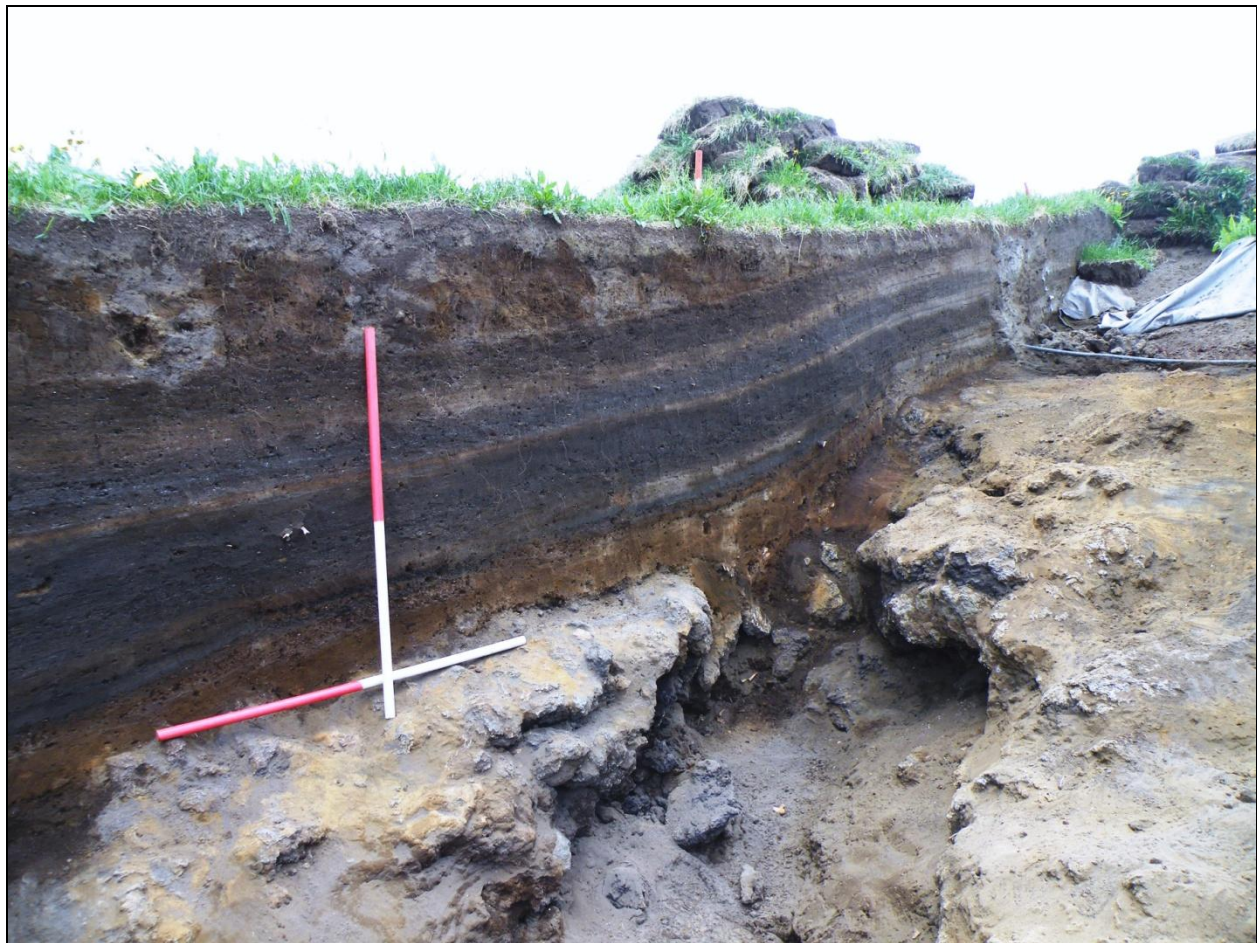


Figure 11. Unit G south profile carried to the lava bedrock. Note the marked change in colour and texture of the tan Viking Age infilling of the rough lava surface and the establishment of a relatively level and probably grass covered infield surface. The bone rich Viking age deposit was dumped into the fissure in photo center and packed into the small caves and crevices visible. The LNS tephra runs directly upon the lava surface in the profile, and dips down into the fissure opening in the middle of the profile.





Figure 12. Unit G north and east profiles, showing 20th c demolition layer of the earlier turf farm house and the banded compact early modern- late medieval midden layers below. At base (around photo scales) is a horizon of charcoal and fire cracked stone which rests directly on the undisturbed V 871 LNS Landnám tephra surface at the base of the profile. This feature appears to be the edge of a hearth or outdoor fire built by the first settlers. It is covered by later Viking Age fill (tan layer above), but clearly pre-dates the filling event. This hearth feature duplicates stratigraphic indications of human presence just above the LNS at Skútustaðir from area E 1 in 2008, and confirms the presence of humans very shortly after the V 871 ash fall.

As Unit G was being taken down to lava bedrock, excavation continued in the expanded Unit H downslope to the east. We realized that we could not carry a fully stratigraphic excavation to bedrock over this wide area in 2008, and opted instead to work to bring the expanded unit into phase over its entire Unit H, while carefully connecting layers across the Unit G-H boundary (Figure 12) in preparation for the 2010 excavation season. The Unit G area was fully backfilled (sandbags were inserted into the open lava pits and caves to prevent collapse) but Unit H was left partially backfilled under a cover of barrier cloth.



Figure 12. George Hambrecht records stratigraphic correlations between Unit H and G. Note the change in bedding angle near the photo scale, which approximates the point at which large bones and artifacts become common in the deposits.

At the end of the 2009 season we had taken the expanded Unit H down to the surface of a previously undocumented tephra layer (which must date to the early 17<sup>th</sup> c on the basis of associated pipe stems and other objects). This tephra (between the 1717 and 1477 tephra) has been tentatively identified in geological sections dug by Ian Simpson's team further south in the interior Kráká river drainage and awaits fuller characterization. Major collections of artifacts and well preserved bone were made in the 17<sup>th</sup> c layers of the Unit H excavation unit, and these showed some visible differences from the now-familiar Mývatn Viking age (more seal bones, many large fish heads as well as post-cranial bones, many more imported objects). The 2009 season was very successful in recovering large archaeofauna from the early modern period (esp. 17<sup>th</sup> c) and the Viking Age, with over 300 bags of bone registered. The large open area exposures certainly allowed us a better understanding of the history of deposition and landscape alteration at this major site and the strategy of stratigraphic stripping down of deposits proved practical and successful (and was greatly aided by tephra horizons). We did not recover a continuous stratigraphic record from 20<sup>th</sup> c to Landnám, as patterns of midden

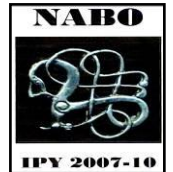




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deposition seem to have shifted over the homefield area over the centuries and medieval deposits were not well represented in the main Unit G area. However, we are steadily gaining a better understanding of horizontal and vertical partitioning of this extensive deposit, and the 2010 project season should be well positioned to extend our temporal coverage. The Skútustaðir midden deposits continue to represent a major resource for Iceland's historical and environmental heritage.



Figure 13. Area H at the end of the 2009 excavation season. View of the N profile with the whole surface carried down to the top of a previously undocumented early 17<sup>th</sup> c tephra surface. Coring from this layer indicates another 80-90 cm of stratified deposit covering the entire unit. Note the changes in bedding angle evident in the profile as the midden dumping patterns shifted through time. The end of the 20<sup>th</sup> c turf house demolition layer is evident in the left of the photo/. Earlier layers had accumulated downslope, and the use of the later layers and the house demolition debris to level up the slope (and probably make hay making easier) is evident.





Figure 14 . View of the sloping surface of the SKU midden area in late season 2009 from the Mývatn Research Station to the East. Area G has been backfilled and profiles are being drawn in the open area H unit. The exposed lava of the natural ridgeline is visible to photo left, and the modern house at photo right is bordered by the 2008 areas E 1 and E 2. The entire area between has significant cultural deposits, with the deepest and richest deposits encountered thus far in the un-mown area in the left half of the photo. Midden deposition seems to extend over much of this hillside, with both Viking Age and 17<sup>th</sup> c deposits well represented in the areas sampled in 2009.

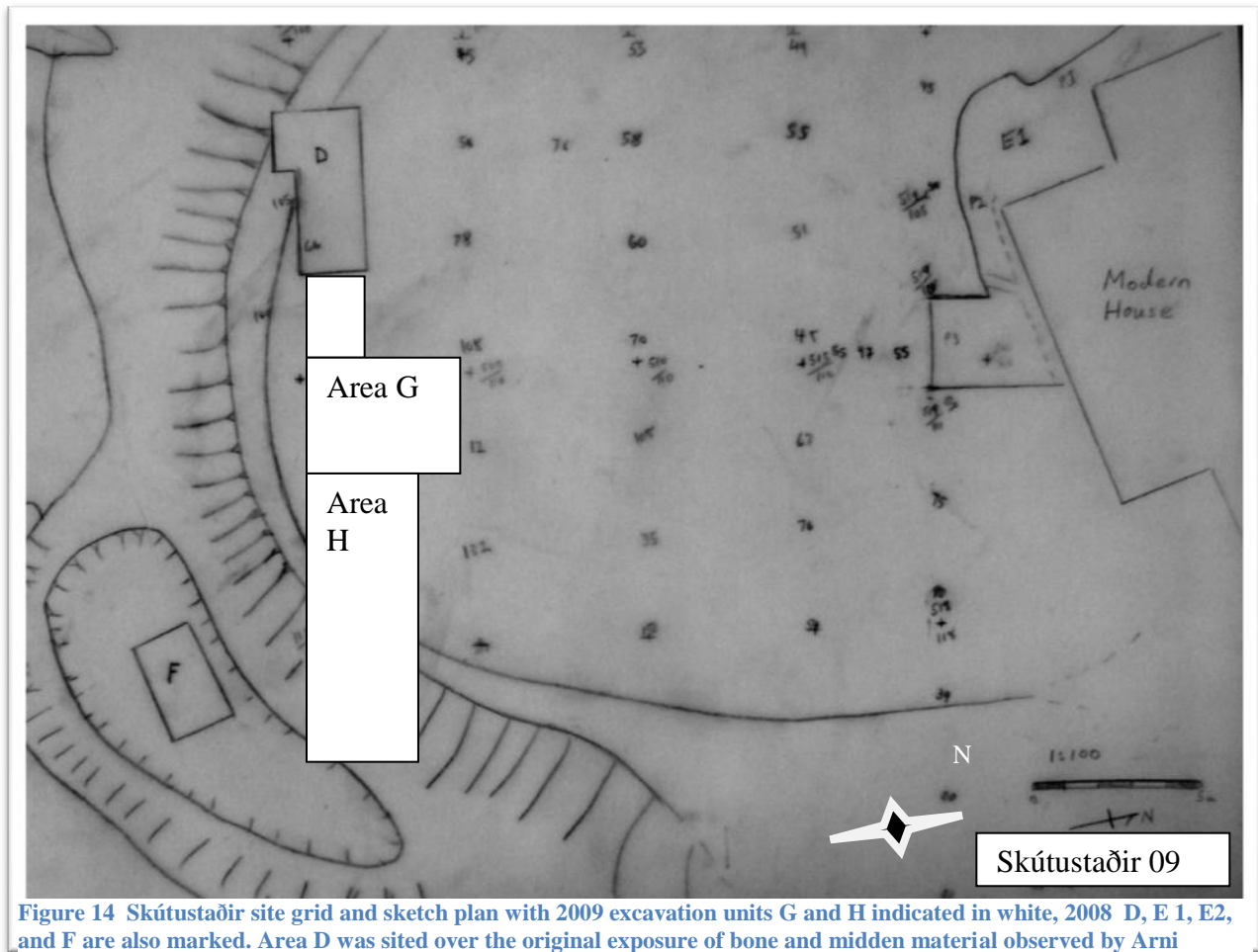


Figure 14 Skútustaðir site grid and sketch plan with 2009 excavation units G and H indicated in white, 2008 D, E 1, E2, and F are also marked. Area D was sited over the original exposure of bone and midden material observed by Arni Einarsson in 2007.

## Acknowledgements and Thanks

Profound thanks are due to our hostess at Skútustaðir, Gerdur Benediktsdóttir for her warm hospitality and cheerful tolerance of our large holes in her home field. We would like to also thank all the residents of modern Skútustaðir for their practical help, advice, and kindness. We also owe many thanks to Dr. Arni Einarsson for locating this important site in 2007 and providing us with excellent support and hospitality at the splendid Mývatn Research Station (<http://www3.hi.is/~arnie/engframe.htm>) which continues to provide invaluable logistical support, wisdom, and excellent coffee to visiting researchers from many parts of the globe. Thanks are also due to the students, community supervisors, and school staff of the Fornleifaskóli barnanna / Kids' Archaeology program who worked hard to make the season successful in education and in science and who provided a memorable international barbeque event. Funding support from the US National Science Foundation Office of Polar Programs Arctic Social Science Program through International Polar Year grant 0732327 is gratefully acknowledged. This report is a product of the International Polar Year program and of the NABO research cooperative.



Selected Finds



Figure 15. Decorative fastener, Context [104] above V1717



Figure 16. Bird(?), carved from a Haddock cliethrum; also context [104]



Figure 7. Multiple Iron Objects, nails, hooks, and fasteners; also context [104]



Figure 8. Fish hooks context [122], 20th c





Figure 9, Cu alloy hinge, possibly part of a book cover. Context [170]



Figure 10 Kaolin Tobacco Pipe, context [120]



Figure 11, Bone awl made from horse metapodial. Context [157]



Figure 12. Pot sherds context [157]





Figure 13. Pot sherds context [167]

### Finds Register 2008-09

		Finds Register				Skutustaðir	2008 & 2009
Finds no.	Unit no.	Area	Grid	Retrieval Method	Material type	Object type	Comments (condition, quantity, distribution, etc.)
19	001	D			glass	vessel glass	
20	001	D			glass	window glass	
21	001	D			metal	nail	
22	001	D			ceramic	sherd	
15	002	D			glass	vessel glass	
16	002	D			glass	window glass	
17	002	D			metal	fe obj	
18	002	D			ceramic	sherd	
23	007	E 1	Profile 1		metal	nail	



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25	013	E 1	Profile 1		metal	nail	
24	019	E 1	Profile 1		wool	cloth frag	
10	032	D			metal	fe obj	
13	032	D			glass	window glass	
14	032	D			ceramic	pipe stem	
1	033	F		SIEVE	bone	worked bone	
2	033	F		SIEVE	glass	window glass	
3	033	F		SIEVE	glass	vessel glass	
4	033	F			metal	nails	
5	033	F			ceramic	potsherds	
6	033	F			stone	whetstone	
7	035	F			ceramic	sherd	
8	035	F			glass	vessel glass	
9	035	F			metal	fe obj	
43	036	F			ceramic	pipe stem	
45	036	F			glass	window glass	
46	036	f			glass	vessel glass	
51	045	F			glass	window glass	
52	045	F			metal	fe obj	
53	045	F			ceramic	pipe stem, pipe bowl	
26	046	D			cu alloy	button	
27	046	D			cu alloy	button	
28	046	D			metal	pin	
34	046	D			glass	window glass	
35	046	D			metal	fe obj	
36	046	D			glass	vessel glass	
38	046	D			ceramic	pipe stem	
11	047	F			ceramic	sherd	
12	047	F			metal	fe obj	
40	047	F			ceramic	sherd	
41	047	f			metal	nail	
50	048	F			stone	polished	





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47	050	F			metal	nails	
48	050	F			glass	window glass	
49	050	F			ceramic	sherd	
30	052	D			ceramic	sherd	2
33	052	D			metal	fe obj	
37	052	D			stone	polished	
39	052	D			glass	vessel glass	
29	055	D			stone	spindle whorl	very large-horse hair rope making???
31	055	D			metal	clothing fastener	
32	055	D			ceramic	pipe stem	
56	057	D			metal	hook, nails, fe obj	
57	057	D			glass	window glass	
58	057	D			stone	whetstone	
42	058	E2			stone	whetstone	
44	059	E2			metal	fe obj	ice creeper fragment?
54	059	E2			metal	nail	
55	059	E2			stone	polished	
60	060	E2			steatite	potsherd	small fragment
61	060	E2			cu alloy	sheet metal w/riev	cooking pot fragment?? ?
62	060	E2			metal	slag	
63	060	E2			metal	fe obj	
64	060	E2			metal	iron ring	needs xray investigation
65	061	D			metal	fe obj	
66	061	D			metal	fe obj	
67	061	D			metal	clothing fastener	
68	062	F			metal	fe obj	several frags
72	063	E2			metal	fe obj	



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73	063	E2			metal	fe obj	
74	063	E2			metal	nail	small forged nail
75	063	E2			glass	bead	double bead w/ gold foil fill: Viking Age
76	063	E2			metal	nail	
69	069	F			ceramic	sherds	
70	069	F			cu alloy	hinge?	
71	069	F			metal	nail	
59	071	D			stone	?	polished stone
79	073	F			metal	nails (3)	
81	074	F			metal	fe obj	
77	075	F			metal	nails (3)	
78	075	F			metal	ring	part of a tool haft???
80	075	F			stone	obsidian	strike a light?
84	075	F			metal	fe obj	
86	075	F			cu alloy	rivet?	possible decorative mount?
82	077	F			stone	whetstone	small
83	077	F			stone	manuport	
85	077	F			metal	fe obj	
87	077	F			cu alloy	sheet metal	rolled ball of sheet metal
88	077	F			ceramic	sherds (2)	red glazed red ware w/ridges
89	077	F			stone	manuport	two pretty stones
90	077	F			cu alloy	loop	clothing loop?
2009							
150	104	G			leather	leather scrap	
151	104	g			glass	button	

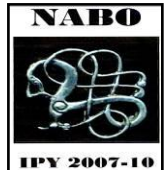




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152	100	g			brass	cartridge base	center fire shotgun shell base(fired)
153	104	g			cu alloy	clothing fastener	
154	104	g			cu alloy	ornamental fastener	
155	002	g		cleaning	ceramic	pipe stem	with tooth marks!
156	105	g			stone	whetstone	
157	104	g			glass	button	
158	103	g			cu alloy	button w/flower décor.	
159	104	g			glass	button	
160	104	g			glass	button	
161	104	g			bone	carved bird	haddock cliethrum
162	104	g			cu alloy	thimble	
163	104	g			cu alloy	belt furnature	
164	104	g			brass	cartridge base	center fire shotgun shell base(fired)
165	105	g			cu alloy	button	
166	104	g			ceramic	potsherds	
167	104	g			metal	fe hook	
168	103	g			metal	button	
169	104	g			cu alloy	boss	
170	104	g			metal	fe straps	
171	100	g			metal	fe nails	
172	104	g			glass	window glass fragments	
173	105	g			ceramic	potsherds	
174	100	g			ceramic	potsherds	
175	103	g			ceramic	potsherds	
176	103	g			glass	window glass fragments	
177	104	g			glass	vessel fragments	



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178	103	g			glass	vessel fragments	
179	103	g			glass	window glass fragments	
180	105	g			glass	window glass fragments	
181	105	g			glass	vessel fragments	
182	100	g			glass	vessel fragments	
183	100	g			glass	window glass fragments	
184	104	g			bone	button	
185	103	g			metal	fe nails	
186	002	g			metal	fe nails	
187	104	g			metal	fe nails	
188	105	g			metal	scrap	
189	100	g			metal	scrap	
190	105	g			schist	whetstone ?	
191	101	g			ceramic	potsherds	
192	100	g			brick	brick fragment	large piece
193	104	g			slate	frag	
194	100	g			ceramic	potsherds	
195	122	h			metal	scrap	
196	122	h			metal	fe nails	
197	122	h			metal	fe hook	
198	122	h			metal	fe straps and wire	
199	122	h			schist	whetstone	
200	122	h			lead	frag	
201	122	h			cu alloy	coin	
202	122	h			leather	strap	
203	122	h			metal	scrap	
204	122	h			metal	base of tin can	
205	122	h			jet?	rings	
206	122	h			ceramic	potsherds	





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207	100	h			metal	furniture	
208	122	h			leather	footwear label	intrusive from rubber boot
209	122	h			glass	vessel fragments	
210	100	h			metal	button	
211	100	h			ceramic	drainage tile	large fragments
212	100	h			metal	fe scrap	
213	100	h			metal	nails	
214	100	h			ceramic	potsherds	
215	100	h			ceramic	pipe stem	
216	120	h			ceramic	pipe bowl base	
217	120	h			metal	fe nails	
218	120	h			metal	furniture	
219	100	h			glass	vessel fragments	
220	120	h			glass	vessel fragments	
221	120	h			ceramic	potsherds	
222	120	h			glass	vessel fragments	
223	100	g			glass	window glass fragments	
224	121	g			ceramic	pipe stems	
225	121	g			ceramic	potsherds	
226	121	g			glass	frag	
227	105	g			ceramic	potsherds	
228	105	g			metal	fe nails	
229	105	g			glass	vessel fragments	
230	115	g			glass	frag	
231	124	h			metal	button	
232	loose	loose			glass	bottle bottom	found by Gerdur in her garden
233	124	h			metal	assorted furniture	
234	123	g			cu alloy	decorated sheet	



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235	123	g			ceramic	pipe stem	
236	123	g			glass	vessel fragments	
237	110	g			ceramic	potsherds	
238	124	h			ceramic	potsherds	
239	124	h			glass	frag	
240	123	g			cu alloy	pin	
241	124	g			metal	fe nails	
242	123	g			metal	fe nails	
243	123	g			metal	furniture	
244	110	g			metal	clothing fastener	
245	110	g			metal	netting needle	
246	110	g			glass	vessel fragments	
247	110	g			metal	button	intrusive
248	110	g			metal	frag	
249	110	g			metal	fe nails	
250	126	g			metal	fe obj	
251	142	g			metal	fe scrap	
252	144	h			metal	fe strip	
253	138	g			metal	fe scrap	
254	138	g			metal	fe nail	
255	142	g			metal	fe nail	
256	143	h			metal	fe nail	
257	144	h			metal	fe nails	
258	139	g			metal	fe scrap	
259	127	h			glass	frag	
260	130	h			metal	fe scrap	
261	126	g			ceramic	potsherds	
262	126	g			glass	frag	
263	141	h			metal	fe scrap	
264	136	h			metal	cu scrap	
265	136	h			ceramic	potsherds	
266	130	h			ceramic	potsherds	
267	141	h			metal	fe nail	
268	136	h			metal	fe obj	
269	136	h			stone	whetstone	



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270	136	h			metal	fe nails	
271	141	h			stone	whetstones (2)	
272	141	h			ceramic	pipe frags	
273	141	h			metal	fe fish hook	
274	136	h			metal	Cu button	
275	136	h			metal	fe needle	
276	136	h			stone	stylus	
277	141	h			glass	frag	
278	136	h			metal	pin	
279	136	h			ceramic	pipe frags	
280	149	g			metal	Cu decorated triangle	
281	130	h			ceramic	vessel fragments	
282	139	g			bone	whalebone netting needle	
283	120	h			metal	Cu bell	
284	136	h			glass	vessel fragments	
285	136	h			metal	fe scrap	
286	136	h			stone	polished stone	
287	136	h			metal	fe clothing fastener	
288	149	g			stone	whetstone	
289	141	h			glass	bead	
290	138	g			metal	Cu alloy strip	
291	120	h			stone	whetstone	
292	145	g			stone	spindle whorl	
293	141	h			ceramic	potsherds	
294	134	h			ceramic	potsherds	
295	144	h			metal	Cu furnature	
296	130	h			ceramic	pipe frags	
297	130	h			glass	vessel fragments	
298	130	h			metal	fe nails	
299	130	h			metal	Cu button	
300	142	g			stone	rounded stone	





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301	144	h			ceramic	pipe stems	
302	129	h			metal	fe scrap	
303	129	h			metal	fe nail	
304	129	h			ceramic	frag	
305	127	h			metal	button	
306	145	g			metal	fe nail	
307	129	h			ceramic	pipe stem	
308	144	h			glass	vessel fragments	
309	127	h			leather	scrap	
310	127	h			ceramic	frag	
311	129	h			metal	button	
312	129	h			glass	window glass fragments	
313	129	h			glass	vessel fragments	
314	133	g			metal	Cu strip	
315	140	g			stone	smooth stone	
316	144	h			ceramic	frag	
317	144	h			wood	burnt wood frag	
318	133	g			metal	decorated sheet	
319	141	h			metal	Cu metal frag	
320	120	h			wood	worked wood	
321	144	h			glass	window glass fragments	
322	144	h			stone	whetstone	
323	136	h			stone	tile frag?	
324	148	g			bone	pin	
325	157	h			bone	duck carving Haddock cl.	
326	156	g			metal	fe rod (spit?)	
327	100	h			metal	fe horse shoe	
328	158	g			metal	fe rod (spit?)	
329	123	g			ceramic	pipe stems	
330	100	h			metal	center fire shot gun	



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						shell base	
331	150	h			ceramic	frag	
332	150	h			metal	fe obj	
333	151	h			bone	bead	
334	151	h			metal	Cu button	
335	151	h			metal	fe nails	
336	151	h			ceramic	potsherds	
337	100	h			glass	bead	
338	127	h			metal	fe scrap	
339	127	h			metal	fe nails	
340	152	g			stone	worked stone	
341	158	g			stone	smooth manuport	
342	147	g			metal	fe nails	
343	144	h			stone	manuport	
344	155	h			metal	fe rivet	
345	120	h			glass	vessel fragments	
346	148	g			metal	fe nail	
347	148	g			metal	fe nail	
348	157	h			metal	fe furnature	
349	157	h			stone	whetstone frag	
350	148	g			stone	manuport	
351	144	h			metal	fe frags	
352	156	g			stone	manuport	
353	161	g			stone	flint strike a light (Eu import)	
354	120	h			metal	fe nail	
355	120	h			metal	fe nail	
356	120	h			ceramic	pipe bowl base	
357	120	h			metal	fe frags	
358	160	h			glass	window glass fragments	
359	160	h			ceramic	pipe stem frag	
360	160	h			ceramic	frag	



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361	160	h			metal	fe frags	
362	157	h			glass	vessel fragments	
363	157	h			metal	fe nail	
364	144	h			metal	cu frag	
365	144	h			metal	cu rivet	
366	144	h			metal	fe nail	
367	144	h			glass	vessel fragments	
368	144	h			glass	window glass fragments	
369	144	h			ceramic	potsherds	
370	158	g			stone	gaming piece	
371	149	g			stone	worked stone	
372	151	h			glass	vessel fragments	
373	149	g			metal	fe rivet	
374	150	h			metal	fe rivet	
375	150	h			glass	frag	
376	150	h			metal	fe nail	
377	150	h			leather	piece	
378	150	h			glass	vessel fragments	
379	100	h			metal	fe spring	
380	161	g			metal	fe nail	
381	149	g			metal	fe scrap	
382	151	h			metal	fe furniture	
383	127	h			metal	fe furniture	
384	157	h			stone	worked piece	
385	157	h			glass	window glass fragments	
386	100	h			ceramic	frag	
387	100	h			glass	vessel fragments	
388	158	g			metal	fe scrap	
389	150	h			metal	fe furniture	
390	144	h			wood	frag	
391	161	g			stone	worked wood	





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392	136	h			glass	window glass fragments	
393	161	g			stone	whetstone	
394	161	g			stone	spindle whorl	
395	157	h			bone	awl	
396	157	h			ceramic	frag	
397	157	h			metal	fe rivet	
398	120	h			glass	window glass fragments	
399	136	h			metal	fe scrap	
400	120	h			glass	vessel fragments	
401	156	g			bone	worked bone	
402	156	g			metal	fe nail	
403	150	g			metal	fe rivet	
404	156	g			metal	fe frags	
405	157	h			metal	cu pin	
406	163	h			metal	fe scrap	
407	163	h			clay	pipe fragment	
408	163	h			glass	vessel fragments	
409	157	h			metal	fe nails	
410	157	h			glass	vessel fragments	
411	157	h			glass	window glass fragments	
412	157	h			ceramic	potsherds	
413	155	h			metal	fe scrap	
414	155	h			glass	vessel fragments	
415	155	h			metal	fe nail	
416	155	h			ceramic	frag	
417	145	g			stone	wet stone fragment	
418	145	g			stone	worked piece	
419	100	h			clay	possible pipe stem	strange shape
420	141	h			metal ?	thimble	



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421	141	h			cu alloy	decorated furniture	
422	164	h			bone	carved bird	haddock bone
423	164	h			metal	rivet	
424	164	h			metal	key	
425	164	h			stone	manuport	
426	164	h			metal	button	
427	164	h			metal	metal furniture	
428	164	h			metal	rivets	
429	164	h			stone	tile frag?	
430	164	h			leather	scrap	
431	165	h			metal	scrap	
432	165	h			metal	furnature	
433	165	h			metal	rivets fe	
434	164	h			metal	scraps	
435	164	h			metal	hooks	
436	164	h			metal	nails fe	
437	164	h			clay	pipe stems	
438	164	h			clay	pipe bowl base	makers mark!
439	100	h			ceramic	potsherds	
440	100	h			metal	furniture button?	
441	100	h			glass	vessel fragments	
442	167	h			glass	vessel fragments	
443	167	h			ceramic	potsherds	
444	167	h			stone	worked stone	
445	167	h			metal	nail fe	
446	167	h			metal	hooks	
447	167	h			metal	furniture scraps fe	
448	167	h			clay	pipe bowl	
449	167	h			metal	knife	
450	167	h			clay	pipe stems	
451	167	h			stone	wet stone	
452	164	h			ceramic	potsherds	



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453	164	h			glass	vessel fragments	
454	164	h			glass	window glass fragments	
455	165	h			ceramic	potsherds	
456	165	h			glass	window glass fragments	
457	165	h			stone	possibly worked	
458	164	h			stone	worked stone	
459	164	h			metal	fe worked object	
460	170	h			metal	book hinge?	
461	165	h			metal	metal furniture	
462	167	h			glass	vessel fragments	
463	167	h			glass	window glass fragments	
464	165	h			glass	vessel fragments	
465	165	h			glass	window glass fragments	
466	170	h			metal	rivet	
467	170	h			clay	pipe stem	
468	169	h			metal	metal furniture	
469	169	h			metal	metal scrap	
470	169	h			metal	rivet	
471	167	h			metal	metal furniture	
472	167	h			metal	nails fe	
473	167	h			metal	scrap fe	
474	167	h			metal	rivets	
475	165	h			metal	nails fe	
476	165	h			metal	hook	
477	165	h			clay	pipe stems	
478	164	h			glass	window glass	





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						fragments	
479	167	h			stone	worked stone	
480	164	h			metal	rivet	
481	167	h			ceramic	pottery fragments	
482	164	h			metal	scraps	
483	172	h			ceramic	pottery fragments	
484	176	h			metal	fe rivet	
485	176	h			ceramic	pipe stems	
486	176	h			stone	worked stone	
487	176	h			stone	whetstone	
488	176	h			metal	fe scrap	
489	173	h			metal	fe nail	
490	173	h			metal	fe scrap	
491	174	h			ceramic	potsherds	
492	174	h			metal	fe rivet	
493	176	h			glass	vessel fragments	
494	176	h			glass	window glass fragments	
495	176	h			ceramic	potsherds	
496	175	h			glass	frag	
497	175	h			stone	gaming piece	
498	175	h			ceramic	pipe stem	
499	175	h			metal	fe nail	
500	174	h			stone	worked	
501	174	h			metal	fe nail	
502	174	h			glass	vessel fragments	
503	100	h			bone	worked bone	in profile cleaning
504	168	h			bone	worked bone	
505	122	h			metal	sheet metal object 20th c	



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## Context Register

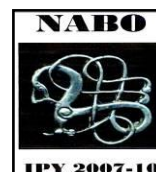
Skútustaðir 2009 Context Register			
Numb er	Are a	Typ e	Description
100	G & H	d	topsoil and turf (=001)
101	G	d	turf mix with charcoal lens
102	G	d	orange brown turf mix with stones, grit, and structural turf in random orientation with
102	G	d	V1717 V1477 H 1300 in some blocks= 19th c house demolition layer?
103	G	d	orange brown silty midden deposit
104	G	d	grey ashy midden
105	G	d	mixed ash and brown silty midden
106	G	c	cut for 20th c water and power pipe line
107	G	f	fill of cut [106] for 20th c water and power pipe line
108	G	d	grey ashy midden
109	G	d	TEPHRA: V 1717 (NB: this was a mis-identification- NOT the 1717 tephra)
110	G	d	grey ashy dump with bone included
111	G	d	grey ashy midden (NB = 110)
112	G	d	mottled orange and grey midden
113	G	d	mixed turf dump
114	G	d	TEPHRA: V 1477
115	G	d	brown silty deposit
116	G	d	mixed turf and gravel
117	G	d	dark ash + gravel
118	G	d	TEPHRA : V1717 (NB does not = 109, this is the actual V 1717 tephra)
119	G	d	brown silty deposit
120	H	d	grey ashy layer
121	G	d	mottled ashy dump
122	H	d	20th c dump, med brown with many artifacts and bones
123	G	d	dark grey ash
124	H	d	turf dump with ashy inclusions ??=[103]
125	H	d	brown midden below turf and also below 20th c midden dump [105]
126	G	d	soft turf and ash deposit
127	H	d	brown turf and silt on insde of crater edge = [110]



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128	G	d	brown silt, sterile
129	H	d	brown silty deposit under turf ? = [125]
130	H	d	brown silty rich midden above V 1717 [115]
131	G	d	mottled brown silt with ashy lenses
132	G	d	charcoal patch
133	G	d	charcoal deposit
134	G	d	grit and turf deposit in SE corner of G
135	G	d	wind blown silt and windblown V 1477 tephra
136	H	d	midden mottled ash with much bone, just below V 1717 [119]
137	G	d	V 1477 tephra = [114]
138	G	d	charcoal rich midden deposit
139	G	d	mixed turf deposit and windblown silt
140	G	d	sandy gravel in SE corner
141	H	d	turf deposit
142	G	d	mixed turf debris and sandy greenish tephra lines
143	H	d	possible grey black tephra below [141] and [136] definitely not V1717 again
144	H	d	ashy charcoal layer = [121]
145	G	d	
146	H	d	red brown turf dump with midden material
147	G	d	
148	G	d	midden below 1477 and above LNS
149	G	d	midden also below 1477 and above LNS
150	H	D	turf dump with some ash (= [124])
151	H	d	brown turfy silt, topsoil?
152	G	d	ashy deposit below [145]
153	H	d	c. 17th c tephra (undescribed) very fine dark grey/ green
154	G	d	charcoal deposit probably in situ
155	H	d	mottled deposit of ash and turf
156	g	D	dark midden deposit in S part of G
157	H	d	turf dump with ash and burnt bone
158	G	d	dark brown midden with charcoal
159	H	d	mystery 19th c? tephra
160	H	d	ashy midden with turf in bottom
161	g	d	mottled midden with much bone and gravel in G
162	H	d	turf deposit

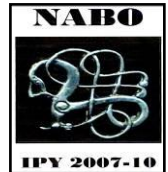




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163	h	d	grey ash mixed with turf
118	H	d	1717 tephra? Previously excavated in area H & G
164	H	d	(=[135]) grey brown ashy midden with charcoal and bone (below 1717 tephra)
165	H	d	turf/ash mixed deposit
166	H	d	tephra 1717?
167	H	d	turf dump with grey ashy lenses
169	H	d	grey ashy midden layer
170	H	d	turf block dump
171	H	d	tephra possibly 1717?
172	H	d	ash dump directly below [171] tephra, [171] tephra lies against [170] turf
173	h	d	grey midden
174	h	d	mottled grey ash and orange turf and peat ash
175	H	d	mottled brown silt with ashy lenses
176	H	d	brown midden with turf ash and silt