

Morag M. Kersel

During the summer of 2012 **Morag M. Kersel** continued to direct the survey component of the Galilee Prehistory Project (GPP) at the site of Marj Rabba (directed by Yorke Rowan). At the same time Morag also worked on recording the excavations at the site, drawing architectural plans and sections, which are later rendered digitally back in Chicago by Oriental Institute Visiting Committee member Roberta Schaffner. During the 2012 field season, five high school students from the Rowe-Clark Math & Science Academy in Chicago, accompanied by their intrepid mentor, Bridget Davis, spent five weeks excavating alongside undergraduate and graduate students from the US and abroad. Continuing the great success of this initial foray, five additional students and another mentor, Maggie Culhane, will join the GPP excavation team on the project during the summer of 2013. By way of preparation, during spring 2013 Morag, Yorke Rowan, and Gil Stein conducted a series of Saturday morning workshops on the Middle East, archaeology, survey, faunal remains, and the Chalcolithic period with the high-school students. During the mid-morning break they were introduced to foods of the Middle East, although American donuts proved to be a more popular option.



Morag M. Kersel drawing architectural plans at Marj Rabba, Galilee Prehistory Project (photograph by A. C. Hill)

INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH

With Yorke Rowan, she presented the results of the 2012 field season at Marj Rabba at the annual meeting of the American Schools of Oriental Research in November 2012. At the same academic meetings one of the GPP summer field-school students, Allen Reinert of DePaul University, presented a poster on excavating Chalcolithic houses. Morag and Yorke continued to work on preliminary artifacts and survey analyses, which will culminate in a comprehensive final publication on the five seasons of excavation and survey at Marj Rabba.

In spring 2013 Morag was a discussant in the Oriental Institute Seminar *Catastrophe! Ten Years Later: Looting, Destruction, and Preservation of Cultural Heritage in the Wider Middle East*. The seminar examined, assessed, and discussed the state of cultural-heritage protection in the ten years since the ransacking of the Iraq Museum in the aftermath of the coalition forces invasion of Iraq. Morag was also a speaker in the Cultural Diplomacy Seminar hosted by the Cultural Policy Center of the University of Chicago. Her talk discussed aspects of the recently published volume *U.S. Cultural Diplomacy and Archaeology: Hard Heritage, Soft Power* (New York: Routledge, 2013) that she co-authored with Christina Luke. This volume highlights some of the ways archaeologists and archaeology act as unofficial US ambassadors by fostering good relationships (abroad and in the US) through investigations into the past.
