

**Free Public Seminar**



# **Investigating rural complexity after urban collapse: new excavations of a 3rd millennium olive oil production site at Khirbet Ghozlan, Jordan**

**Dr Jamie Fraser**

Senior Curator, the Nicholson Museum, University of Sydney

**The Subject:** When large, fortified, mounded settlements were abandoned in the mid-3rd millennium BC, the economy of the southern Levant is thought to have reverted to agro-pastoral subsistence. However, the appearance of several small, enclosed sites in upland areas suggests that post-collapse communities maintained a complex rural economy through the exploitation of different environmental zones. In early 2017, a new project by the British Museum commenced excavations at Khirbet Um al-Ghozlan, Jordan, to test the hypothesis that these sites were processing centres for upland fruit crops, such as olive and grape, which were enclosed to protect seasonally-produced caches of oil and wine. Although Khirbet Um al-Ghozlan is less than 1-ha in size, the knoll is enclosed by a monumental circular wall. Excavations in four trenches uncovered the remains of at least two EB IV architectural complexes. The nature of these complexes, and their associated finds, suggest that Khirbet Um al-Ghozlan served as a specialized storage site possibly associated with the production of olive oil in the late 3rd millennium.



**The Lecturer:** Jamie Fraser completed his PhD on dolmens in the Levant at the University of Sydney in 2015. As Curator for the Levant at the British Museum, Jamie established the Khirbet Ghozlan Excavation Project, which had its first season in 2017. Jamie was recently appointed Senior Curator at the Nicholson Museum, University of Sydney.

**5.15 pm Thursday 1 March, 2018**

**Venue: Australian Institute of Archaeology,  
Terrace Way, Macleod**

**(La Trobe University, Building TER 11, Melways 873-4,  
University parking restrictions end at 5pm)**

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