

Carol Meyer

The Bir Umm Fawakhir Survey Project occupied most of **Carol Meyer's** research efforts in the past year. The site of Bir Umm Fawakhir in the central Eastern Desert of Egypt near the Wadi Hammamat is now known to be a fifth- and sixth-century Coptic/Byzantine gold mining town, one of the first ancient Egyptian mining communities to be studied archaeologically and the only one of its period. In July Meyer presented a paper on "The Social Context of Gold Production at Bir Umm Fawakhir" at an international conference on "Social Approaches to an Industrial Past: The Archaeology and Anthropology of Mining," held at the Rockefeller Bellagio Study and Conference Center in Bellagio, Italy. The conference did not focus on mining technology but on miners, where they came from, how they were supported, and what motivated them, a very new approach. The paper has been revised and is scheduled to appear in the conference proceedings in 1998. In December Meyer presented, jointly with Lisa Heidorn, a paper entitled "Three Seasons at Bir Umm Fawakhir in the Central Eastern Desert" at the "Life on the Fringe" conference sponsored by the Netherlands Institute for Archaeology and Arabic Studies in Cairo to bring together archaeologists working in the Eastern and Western Deserts. An impressive amount of research has been carried out in the deserts since Donald Whitcomb and Janet Johnson's pioneering excavations at Quseir al-Qadim from 1978 to 1982, so the opportunity to assemble some of the results of recent work was welcomed. The paper has been prepared for publication in the *Life on the Fringe* volume. In February Meyer submitted a major grant proposal to the Egyptian Antiquities Project for support for a final season of survey and excavation at Bir Umm Fawakhir in November and December 1997. Another paper, "Bir Umm Fawakhir: Insights into Ancient Egyptian Mining," appeared in the *Journal of Minerals, Metals, and Materials* in March. Revision of the final report on the 1993 season continues, as does the preparation of the 1996 report. "Sasanian and Islamic Glass from Nippur, Iraq" appeared in *Annales du 13^e Congrès de l'Association*

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Internationale pour l'Histoire du Verre, and Meyer delivered talks on the invention of glass in antiquity to an Oriental Institute Adult Education workshop, the Society of Woman Geographers, and the Primitive Arts Society.
