The time detective

Der passionierte Archäologe nutzt sein umfangreiches Wissen, um faszinierende Lebensgeschichten aus vergangenen Zeiten aufzudecken. **JULIAN EARWAKER** hat mit ihm gesprochen und seine Antworten protokolliert. 🔴 medium plus

My name is Giles Emery. I'm a commercial field archaeologist. I'm 36 and live in Norwich, England. Archaeology is something I feel I was always meant to do. From an early age, I was finding things in fields and keeping them in boxes. I went to university to study biology, but I changed to archaeology and never looked back. I've always liked history. However, it was people and their stories that really fascinated me.

Found: a fourth-century Roman coin

barrow [ˈbærəʊ]	Hügelgrab
commercial field archaeologist [kəˌmɜːʃəl ˈfiːld ɑːkiˌɒlədʒɪst]	archäologische(r) Grabungstechniker(in)
context sheet [ˈkɒntekst ˌʃiːt]	Grabungsdokumentation, Befundformular
development [dɪˈveləpmənt]	Bebauung, Bauprojekt
excavate [ˈekskəveɪt]	ausgraben
feature [ˈfiːtʃə]	Besonderheit, Befund
fieldwork [ˈfiːəldwɜːk]	Feldforschung
footings [ˈfʊtɪŋz]	Fundament
monitoring [ˈmɒnɪtərɪŋ]	Überwachung
never look back [ˌnevə lʊk ˈbæk]	etw. niemals bereuen
Norwich [ˈnɒrɪdʒ]	
record [ˈrekɔːd]	hier: Dokumentation
self-employed [ˌself ɪmˈplɔɪd]	selbstständig
urban archaeology [ˌɜːbən ɑːkiˈɒlədʒi]	Stadtkernarchäologie

Working in the past: Giles Emery at the ruins of a 15th-century house near Norwich; jewellery from the building site (top left)

Archaeology is a **vocation**. It takes at least two years to be any good at excavating and fieldwork. After working on different sites, I moved to Norwich to join a local archaeological unit. I left in 2008 and have been self-employed since.

For me, there are two types of working day: out in the field, or at home in the office. I always manage several projects at one time. First thing in the morning, I check e-mails for requests for work or replies to my enquiries. If I'm out in the field, then I'm up early to load my van with tools, survey equipment, cameras and paperwork. My specialism is urban archaeology, but I enjoy prehistoric sites most: I recently found a Bronze Age barrow in the centre of Norwich.

By midday, things are quite busy. I do a lot of monitoring of building sites. If a crew is excavating the footings of a new building, for example, then I'll observe, investigate, collect any finds and record them. I use what we call "context" sheets for every feature we find. A busy site can have hundreds or even thousands of contexts, each with a description. I also make drawings and take photographs.

When we leave, this is the only evidence that remains. The official term for what we do is to "replace by record". It's sad that archaeological finds get destroyed, but we wouldn't know they were there without the building site — without development.

Commercial archaeology in Britain <u>mitigates against</u> development. This was part of the planning regulations introduced in the 1990s. Based on my background research, test digs and fieldwork, I **come up with** a strategy to protect the archaeology. Archaeologists look at history as physical layers in time. We study what people leave behind and look through it like time detectives.

For every day on site, I need two or three days at home to write up the results. I form a chronological <u>matrix</u> of the site based on the finds. I use <u>spreadsheets</u> and geographic information systems to work out which features are related to each other; for example, separating Bronze-Age history from Roman or modern.

I give talks, undertake activities in schools and organize a local archaeology club. I don't romanticize the past: throughout history, people essentially have had the same motivations and <u>concerns</u>. I also work with the <u>volunteers</u> at the Caistor Roman Town archaeological project near Norwich. It's one of only two or three such sites in Britain that didn't develop into a modern town or city.

My wife is an archaeologist, too. We have a two-year-old daughter. One of her first words was "dig". We've just moved house, and I'm already behind with the <u>DIY</u>. I like <u>real ale</u> and going to beer festivals. Most of our friends are archaeologists. We have what we call a weekly "**nerd** night", when we play board games and <u>catch up with</u> people. ∎

catch up with sb. [ˌkætʃ 'ʌp wɪð]	sich auf den neuesten Stand der Dinge bringen lassen
concern [kən'sɜːn]	Sorge, Problem
DIY [ˌdiː aɪ 'waɪ] *UK*	Heimwerkerarbeiten (→ p. 63)
matrix ['meɪtrɪks]	Raster
mitigate against sth. ['mɪtɪgeɪt əˌgenst]	etw. abmildern, in Grenzen halten
real ale ['rɪəl ˌeɪəl]	traditionell gebrautes Bier
spreadsheet ['spredʃiːt]	Arbeitsblatt, Tabelle
volunteer [ˌvɒlən'tɪə]	freiwillige(r) Helfer(in), Ehrenamtliche(r)

Taking a closer look: Emery in a medieval rubbish pit

vocation
If something is your vocation, it is an activity or area of interest about which you are passionate. For example, members of the medical profession, such as doctors and nurses, are generally considered to have a vocation for helping and healing. The word comes from the Latin *vocare*, which means "to call". Another way of saying that people are well suited to their jobs is to say that this is their "calling".

come up with
If you "come up with" an idea, it means that the idea was yours. Creative people come up with solutions to problems; people who like to cook enjoy coming up with new variations on classic meals. If you are ever thanked for a good idea, but know that the idea or plan was someone else's, you can always say, "Thanks, but he came up with it." Try using "come up with" in the following sentences:

a) Who _____ that silly idea?

b) I simply must _____ a solution by Friday.

nerd
The word "nerd" comes from American English of the 1950s. Originally, it referred to a person of few social skills, who perhaps had too intense a

Archaeology makes nerds of us all: a Bronze-Age arrowhead

focus on one particular area, such as computers or maths. These days, people also use the word and its adjective "nerdy" to describe themselves in a humorous way. For example, in the text, Giles Emery says he and his archaeologist friends get together for a "nerd night". He uses "nerd" to indicate that his friends love archaeology — and to make clear that they are very good at it, something of which he is very proud. Use "nerd" or "nerdy" in the sentences below:

a) I am a science _____ and proud of it.

b) My brother is really _____. He actually likes doing homework.

Answers
Come up with: a) came up with; b) come up with; nerd: a) nerd; b) nerdy