

Linden Grad Digs Up History in Romania

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Last August, I took a much-needed break from my MA dissertation and headed to Romania to participate in an archaeological excavation.

I should mention right away that archaeology is far less glamorous than you might expect. Most days we woke up at an appallingly early 5am, threw on our work boots and some sunscreen, and drove out to the trenches. The main site was a



A view of the dig site in Romania.

Roman military fortress, although I split my time between two other sites nearby. The goal of the project, which has been going on for over a decade, is to establish the

relationship between the fort and the communities that surrounded it. Around 2pm, the oppressive heat forced us into the shade, where we would spend the afternoon sorting our new finds.

Despite all the hard work, archaeology really is an incredible way to travel. Not only do you get to spend your days with friendly people digging around in the mud for ancient treasure – even if the treasure ends up being a few broken pots – you also get to see the world in a way a tourist never can.

My home for three weeks was an old boarding school along the Danube River, in a town so small that horse-drawn wagons are still a normal means of transportation. Most of the townspeople live on self-sufficient farms – I know this because our cook, Anna, took the leftovers home every night for her pig. Though it shows some signs of rejuvenation, the ruins of a

communist factory still stand in the centre of town. We did find a few young locals who were excited to practise their English, which they had learned from listening to bands like Pink Floyd. Sadly, however, the only Romanian I was able to pick up was “sap aich, multumesc”: “dig here, thank you.”

If anyone wants to know more about the project, or archaeology in general, feel free to email me at emwjohanson@gmail.com.



Emma hard at work on site.