

In the run up to our Medieval Weekend on July 30 and 31, we caught up with Darren Hawkins, who will be making an appearance as a medieval archer, guarding the entrance to The King's Great Ships Trail. Read our 60-second style interview to find out more about what he does and what visitors to our Medieval weekend can expect to see from him.

RTA: Hello, thanks for catching up with us today. Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and what it is that you do?

DH: I'm Darren Hawkins and I am, or rather will be, 45 in July and I work in IT. I have been shooting Longbow for some 25 years, and when shooting regularly, shot competitively to a high level.

RTA: That's very impressive! How did you first get involved with re-enactments?

DH: I got into this through the archery club, where I learned to shoot. We were approached by the Mary Rose Trust to demonstrate the historic use of the bow for an event in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. The rest is history, so they say!

RTA: We see what you did there! So, how do you best prepare for a day of re-enactments?

DH: That's a good question... To be honest, most of the preparation is ensuring that everything is loaded and you haven't forgotten anything! You just have to go with the flow for the rest of it.

RTA: What interests you the most about History?

DH: I enjoy history in general but mostly the shooting and then the living history re-enactments. I get most enjoyment from imparting my knowledge of the 12th to 15th centuries on those who come to watch our re-enactments.

RTA: That's great that you enjoy your work so much. But tell me, do you face any challenges during a day of working as a historical re-enactor?

DH: I take it you mean a day working in kit? To that end, my biggest challenge is normally finding time to

stop and eat! I have often found myself explaining the use of the bow, arrow types, kit etcetera for so long and to so many, that it's been known for me to be forced to stop so that I can get my lunch.

RTA: We'll keep that in mind for our Medieval Weekend! We can't have our archer not eating, can we? Speaking of the Medieval Weekend, can you give away a bit about what you might get up to during the event?

DH: As part of the weekend organised by the Road To Agincourt team to celebrate the 600 years since the Battle of Agincourt, I and my partner will display-(although not shoot... Safety first!) the weapons, equipment and the way of life of those soldiers who embarked on campaign with Henry V; as he headed to France to regain the crown and land.

RTA: Fantastic, thank you for your time Darren. We very much look forward to seeing you in July!