

The RICARDIAN HERALD

Connecting our global community



The magazine for the worldwide branches and groups of the Richard III Society



Ricardians met at The Old Rectory Pub in Stockport, to plan the revival of the Greater Manchester Branch. Organiser Marion Moulton is pictured far right.



Support your team
Jules Welch identifies a "second-tier" of membership, and asks everyone to get involved. Pages 2,3

The Greater Manchester revival!

In early March this year, a group of people arrived at the Old Rectory Pub, in Stockport, England. Led by the amazing Marion Moulton, this group had one thing in mind: to breathe life back into the Greater Manchester Branch.

In planning this important quest, Marion and her supporters left nothing to chance. A member was appointed to scope out a suitable venue; a deal was done with the Old Rectory management, and in return for a meal, the Ricardians were invited to use the historic meeting room upstairs.

Marion had planned things well in advance. She had prepared an introductory pack for each attendee. This included quizzes, puzzles, word searches and a few newspaper articles. As our branches and groups liaison officer Jules Welch urges more members internationally to actually get involved in some way, initiatives by the Greater Manchester Branch and Mid Anglia Group offer inspiring examples. Pages 4-7



Group profile
The force has never deserted the Mid Anglia Group Pages 4,5

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"DUBLIN KING"

Margaret Byrne explores the mystery of the lad who was crowned in Dublin.

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UNHOLY ALLIANCE

Annette Carson says it's important to argue against the 'Lucy Worsley school' of Thomas More.

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EVENTS

A rare treasure auction features among special Ricardian events coming soon!



Leicester shines

Richard and the football fox. Pages 18-20

In the very short time that I have been the society's Branches and Groups Liaison Officer I have noticed some very strange things, notably about how members of the Society, especially new members, react to joining their local branch or group.

Support your local team

I recently had a communication from someone who had apparently been a member of the society for some time and wanted to know, in no uncertain terms, why their local branch had not invited them along to meetings or an event at which the branch had been in attendance. This person knew where the local branch met, what day and time because they'd seen it advertised in a local newspaper.

They'd also seen details of the branch being at the local event, again in a local paper and again giving date, time and venue. Now what this seemingly annoyed member wanted to know was why the branch hadn't seen fit to invite them along?

At first I assumed this was a communication issue and that the new member's contact details had not been passed onto the local branch, but further discussion put a stop to that line of enquiry because it seems that the member hadn't requested, on joining the Society, to have their details forwarded to their nearest branch and yet still apparently thought that the branch had in some way failed in its duty in not contacting them to extend a welcome.

This is the thing with branches and groups - they're not clairvoyant!

If a member doesn't indicate that they wish to have their information shared with their nearest branch or group then, of course, it won't be.



Jules Welch
Liaison Officer
Branches &
Groups

The Society has no option other than to follow the member's instructions. Of course, people can change their minds and at any point a member may contact the Society and ask to be passed onto their local branch, and the society will happily do this for them; but without that instruction, there's nothing that the society can do in this instance.

What struck me as particularly odd was that this member knew where and when the branch met and also knew about a local event that the branch would attend and yet they did nothing, choosing instead to wait for the branch to invite them along.

Of course, I forbore to mention how peculiar I found all this and simply sent the member's details on to the branch. But I couldn't help thinking what a pity it was that, with a branch that is clearly doing all it can to have a public presence and let people know that they exist, the member hadn't taken the initiative and gone along to either a meeting or the event.



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This all got me thinking about my own group, South Wales (we're the "old" South Wales to prevent any confusion with New South Wales which is down under). On paper, our group membership would indicate that, to hold a group meeting, we would need to hire the local Miners Welfare Hall and that, when taking part in local shows and festivals, we ought to be falling over one another with having so many willing pairs of hands. But alas no, our typical meeting consists of five or six of us around a table in Brecon library and it's the same five or six, along with outwardly willing spouses, who set up and then man our stall at shows.

Not that we haven't tried to get our "on paper" group members to be involved. We've moved our meeting venue, time and day, we've tried a Zoom meeting (somewhat risky given the WiFi coverage in Wales) and we've even sent out a survey asking all members where and when they would prefer to meet. Typically, it was whilst analysing the results of that survey that we realised that the only members who had completed it were the same five or six who usually attend meetings anyway!

At each meeting the group chooses a character or event linked to Richard III to research and we then discuss our findings at the next meeting, helping to share our knowledge and improve our understanding of Ricardian times. Aware that our "on paper" members were missing out on this, we started a newsletter edited by our media secretary Penny and sent out to all of our group members. Sadly, not even this has moved any of them to either comment or contribute.

Being a member of the main Richard III Society gives access to information and knowledge about that monarch through the archive, library and the *Ricardian Bulletin* and *Herald*.

"Get involved at grass roots level and support your local branch or group - it's much more fun than being an 'on paper' member! "

But it is in the local branches and groups that members get to meet other Ricardians, to perhaps visit sites, discuss characters and events and, above all, talk about Richard III without the perennial cry of friends and family "not that man again!" ringing in their ears.

Our group has fielded complaints from "on paper" members moaning about things that the group doesn't do or offer, not because we don't wish to but we've only got so many pairs of hands. Unfortunately, suggestions that the member concerned muck in and set things up themselves have been met with echoing silence.

I'm sure we're not the only group or branch who has this two-tier type of membership, but it does seem to me to be a very great shame that not every person who joins the Society wants to actually get in there and start discussing our much maligned king. Sharing knowledge and spreading awareness are surely the best ways of going about changing public opinion about Richard and, of course, increasing our own understanding of his life and reign.

So, if you're reading this as a Society member who hasn't taken the plunge and joined your local branch or group then I would urge you to do so. You won't regret it and, what's more, it's free! Get involved at grass roots level and support your local branch or group - it's much more fun than being an "on paper" member!

The force is with Mid Anglia

In spite of setbacks over the years, it seems the force has never deserted the Mid Anglia Group. Indeed, it's just as powerful as it was 24 years ago.

Every time the group looked as though it might fade away, someone has always stepped in, stepped up, and donated energy and drive.

New ideas, new ways of doing things and amazing personalities have appeared at just the right time to push this group forward.

In 2025 Michael O’Gorman and his team are clearly up to the challenge.

The Mid Anglia Group was founded in 2001 by the late Dr John Ashdown Hill. By 2010 John’s research priorities meant he had less time available for the group.

It was placed in abeyance until 2014, when Stephen Lark took the reins. And Stephen himself became a force to be reckoned with.

He launched a blog and organised Zoom meetings that were made available internationally. He also organised many group trips to sites of Ricardian importance. Evidently this included a medieval hospital by the Bury St Edmunds car park.

The group has the staunch support of Dr Joanne Larner. A retired osteopath, author and speaker, Joanne has written four novels about Richard III. She edited *The Road Not Travelled*, an anthology of alternative history stories in aid of scoliosis support.

A fellow Mid Anglian, Joanne says she joined the society following publicity around the discovery of Richard’s remains.

Stephen was the first Ricardian she met. After Stephen’s passing, she took over the Murrey and Blue blog “we couldn’t let it end. Likewise, we couldn’t let the group end”.

Joanne remembers Stephen as eccentric, with a wicked sense of humour. “He insisted on a blog post every day, he had a team of blog writers whom he would nag for posts when he was running low – he liked to keep a few months ahead.”

He had even memorised the genealogy and days of all Richard’s extended family. “He was amazing for that,” says Joanne.

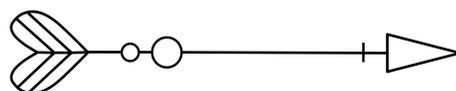
Member Sue Howlett says John was chair when she joined the group.

“We all met by the memorial outside Colchester Castle and John led a walk which included going inside the medieval gatehouse, all that is now left of the abbey.”

Sue organised a lunch in a Colchester restaurant, followed by a walk around historic sites.



From the top: John Ashdown Hill, Stephen Lark, Michael O’Gorman



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Stephen lost his battle with cancer two days before the anniversary of the Battle of Bosworth last year. Joanne says she also suffered cancer at the same time as Stephen, and they would regularly reach out to encourage each other. She says she is now cancer-free.

Group visits organiser Moira Walshe has been a member of the society since 1997.

“I got involved with the Mid Anglia group which then had John Ashdown Hill at the helm. I remember going to a walk with him in Colchester.

“There was a big event at Clare Priory in 2002 when a blue plaque was installed in the ruins of the priory. Many of Richard and Anne Neville’s ancestors are buried there. Most notably Edmund Mortimer, Joan of Acre, and Lionel Duke of Clarence.

“We also had a talk at Moyses Hall in Bury St Edmunds. I did stop attending at some point and then found out in the *Ricardian Bulletin* that it was then being led by Stephen Lark. I rejoined sometime around 2014.”

Pictured right: Mid Anglia Group News is part of an initiative to attract new members. The digital newsletter was launched this month.

Allan Johnson, who, with his wife, joined the group in 2015, has attended many events over the years.

Today, Michael O’Gorman is the man in charge. And, true to form, the force is with him. He’s keeping the group as busy as ever.

Michael says the group is actively seeking new members, and the newsletter is part of that drive.

A team is now working on the structure of the group and developing a plan around future member activities.

Meanwhile the group is planning to attend a Philippa Langley presentation in May.

This month (April) the group launched its new digital newsletter the Mid Anglia Group News, edited and designed by Zigurds Kronbergs.



Founded by an amazing man, the Mid Anglia Group has overcome the odds – every time saved by the wisdom and energy of more amazing people with new ideas, new energy and the drive to make things happen.

To paraphrase Joanne Larner: ***John Ashdown Hill and Stephen Lark will be looking on with approval.***

“I took over the Murrey and Blue blog. We couldn’t let it end. Likewise, we couldn’t let the group end”.

Dr Joanne Larner





Ricardians met at The Old Rectory Pub in Stockport, to plan the revival of the Greater Manchester Branch.

New beginning for Greater Manchester

By Marion Moulton

March 12, 2025 was an auspicious date in the history of the Greater Manchester Branch.

On this day 12 Ricardians met for a meal at The Old Rectory Pub in Stockport, to take part in what we hoped would be a new beginning for the branch.

The timing was particularly notable because was exactly 50 years since its founding in 1975; so was appropriate that 2025 should be the year of the revival of the branch.

Branch secretary Helen Ashburn sadly died in 2017 but had worked tirelessly to keep the branch going. Numbers dwindled and then came Covid, so the remaining members decided to put the branch into 'mothballs' until such time as it could be revived. March 12 was that date.

Paula Clarke, who was a member of the Greater Manchester Branch before it folded, volunteered to help with the relaunch and has been an absolute Trojan – contacting old members and replying to new enquiries and, most importantly after that, trawling pubs and restaurants in the Stockport Area to find a venue. She eventually found The Old Rectory, and management was willing to let us have a meeting room upstairs, if we had a meal beforehand in the restaurant. So that was one hurdle overcome.

The history of The Old Rectory dates to the 16th century, but the present building is late Victorian, and holds the prestigious position as once being the palace of the bishops of Stockport. It is a grand building and there are many original fittings of the palace left, including a very fine Victorian conservatory which is now the main restaurant. The whole site is huge - as you would expect with the title "palace" - and nowadays includes a Premier Inn, with the added bonus of onsite parking - always a plus with any venue.

Conversation flowed freely throughout the meal, which is always a good sign. The fact that members hadn't met for more than five years didn't matter – they just picked up where they left off!

The meal being over, we retired up to the room designated for us. It is purpose built for meetings with a huge television set on the wall, which can act as a projector for PowerPoint presentations. Another bonus.

I had prepared an introductory pack. This included quizzes, puzzles, word searches and a few newspaper articles, in the hope that members would be able to study them together, discuss them and work through the puzzles together, thus breaking the ice.



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Not that it seemed like any ice needed to be broken between old friends or the new ones for that matter. The evening flew by, and we parted company just before 9pm. We agreed to meet on the second Wednesday of every month, in accordance with the tradition before Covid and the mothballing of the branch.

We have established a full programme of events up until November, and there is also the prospect of joining up with the North Mercia Branch for meetings and outings. So, it all bodes well for Richard III in the northwest, and very appropriate it is too, because it is in the dreaded Stanley Lands, but that will not matter. We will be driven by the immortal words of Philippa Langley 'onwards and upwards' and continue Richard's cause. Loyaulte me Lie.



Marion Moulton has been a member of the society for half a century.

Meanwhile, this year represents a few milestones: the Greater Manchester Branch is 50 years old, my branch North Mercia is 15 years old; it's 50 years since I became a member of the society and it's the tenth anniversary of Richard's reinterment.

Books

Richard's the bad guy, but still a good read

The Stolen Crown
by Susan Higginbotham.
March 1, 2010.
Sourcebooks Landmark
Reviewed by Annette Parry

Spoiler alert! Richard is the baddie – once you get over this, it's a good read. The story of the Cousins' War is told alternately by Harry Buckingham, reminiscing the night before his execution and Kate Woodville, the wife that he loved. So not how we usually see this couple, but it's a good story and I suspended disbelief and enjoyed it.

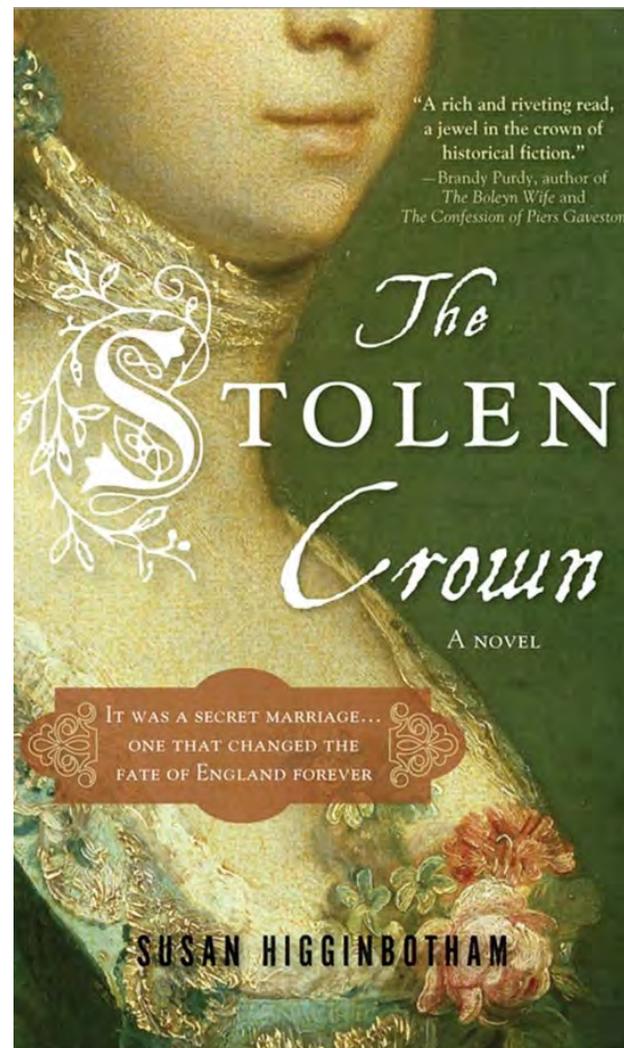
Susan has researched the period well and her conclusions – OK, not mine – all make sense.

I liked Kate and felt sorry for Harry – but I was waiting for him to admit that he wanted to see Richard one last time to stab him – as they are both well-drawn and sympathetic

The imagery is good and I was back in the 15th century with the story moving along quickly.

Her genealogy is good and she manages not to confuse people with all the similarly-named characters. I wanted to learn more about Henry Stafford's mother, the OTHER Margaret Beaufort, and I didn't realize he had so few Stafford relatives, who are of course descended from the Nevilles and John of Gaunt (wasn't everyone?)

Annette Parry is secretary of the New Zealand Branch



Scots celebrate 25 years

Last year was the 25th anniversary of our founding by our President Philippa Langley.

At our annual meeting in March our long-standing members spoke about our 25 years. The major highlight was, of course, the start of the successful Looking For Richard Project at the Cramond Inn in Edinburgh on February 23, 2009.

Another highlight was the visit to the Shrine of St Ninian of Galloway in 2016, when Philippa unveiled the interpretation board about Richard III and St Ninian. The third highlight was hosting the 2019 Society AGM at the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh.

Throughout our 26 years, we have enjoyed meeting together and visiting places of interest. As our membership grew, we became widely spread. Our Scottish membership stretches from Thurso, the most northerly town on the British mainland, to the southern Borders.

We also have members in England, Wales and North America. When Covid curbed meeting in person, we began to have talks by zoom and that has been continued, so they are within reach of most members.

Last year we had four zoom presentations – the first three by members of the Branch:

1. A fascinating look at Pilgrimage in Scottish medieval society by historian, David Santiuste
2. Annette Carson stunned us when she asked whether Titulus Regius had been repealed – and then went on to show it wasn't!
3. The Branch research on Richard's Scottish invasion was presented by Sandra Pendlington, giving us an insight into what happened and debunking the myths of ethnic cleansing and burnings that are the usual accusations
4. Just after the Channel 5 programme that 'connected' a chain of Edward V to James Tyrrell and the murder of the Princes, Stephen David gave a talk about Sir James Tyrrell. As you would expect, a lively discussion ensued.



When it all began. The Looking for Richard Project team, February 23, 2009. Speaker of the day John Ashdown Hill is at the front right, with Philippa in the back row, third from the left. David and Wendy Johnson were the first two original members, with Philippa, of the project. David is in the back row, right, wearing glasses. Wendy is just behind John.



Scottish Branch members ready for the 2019 Society annual meeting at the National Museum of Scotland

At the end of August we followed in Richard's footsteps to Berwick. In gloriously sunny weather we visited Alnwick Castle, (prominent in Harry Potter films and the TV series Downton Abbey), Lindesfarne Island, took a boat ride at Berwick and ate at an ancient inn.



Philippa Langley and Peter Spring were guest speakers at the Scottish Branch annual meeting earlier this year

Bruges trip to honour Margaret of York

We have an exciting diary of events to look forward to, beginning with two special guests at the Scottish Branch annual meeting earlier this year.

Philippa Langley gave us an update on the missing princes research. This included details about the paperback version of her book that is due out next month: *The Princes in the Tower: Solving History's Greatest Cold Case*.

Meanwhile Peter Spring spoke about Sir John Tiptoft, 1st Earl of Worcester 1427-1470.

For our spring programme we have three talks planned so far. Later this month, we are looking forward to Annette Carson talking to us about Edward of Middleham. In May, Stephen David returns to talk about the earl of Warwick. In June, member David Johnson is talking about his new paper *The Dutiful Duke* in which he challenges the idea that Richard had long term plans to usurp the throne.

In September, for the first time members will travel outside the UK on a trip to the medieval city of Bruges to visit sites closely connected with Richard's sister Margaret of York, duchess of Burgundy.

In the autumn, Annette will share her new research about William Lord Hastings and the events at the Tower in June 1483 that led to his execution.

The talks and visits support our research that, since our founding in 1999, has been important to our branch.

Being the Scottish Branch, we concentrate on Richard and Scotland and it is surprising how many events he was involved in.

He was an active and effective warden of the English West March towards Scotland from 1471 to the time he became king.

He knew the Border counties well and he led the 1482 invasion of Scotland. Richard and his men entered Edinburgh without damaging the town or killing its citizens and he negotiated the return of Berwick upon Tweed to England.

Our account of those years of war can be seen on the Society and our branch websites and both will be re-edited as our latest research adds to the story.

The accidental Ricardian tribute

By Jules Welch

The Welsh Mabinogion is a collection of 11 stories of legend and folklore. One story is that of the Twrch Trwyth, a huge boar, and I was reminded of the story not long after moving to Ystradgynlais in Powys as, when driving to visit a friend, I passed the sign for the nearby village of Lower Cwm Twrch (or Cwm Twrch Isaf) and very nearly drove off the road.

As can be seen from the picture above right, the village had recently installed what to my Ricardian eyes was a carved wooden "Dickon"! Clearly this needed further investigation.

The story in which the Twrch Trwyth (pron: Tursh Trueth) appears is actually a love story about a squire named Culhwch (pron: Culluck) who wished to marry Olwen, the daughter of an evil giant king named Ysbaddaden Bencawr (pron: Esbathedin Bincower)

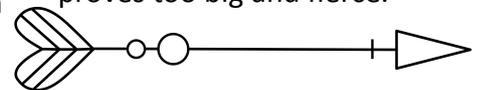


As is the way in such legends, he set young Culhwch several challenges, each trickier than the last, with the last one being impossible.

What the evil king demanded was that Culhwch bring him the magical comb, scissors and razor, which were currently entangled in the beard of the Twrch Trwyth, so that he could barber his own beard for the wedding.

Undaunted, Culhwch enlists the help of King Arthur (yes, the Camelot one!) with his band of warriors and together they travel to Ireland to tackle the boar.

Once there, King Arthur and his warriors manage to kill all of the wild boar family apart from the Twrch Trwyth itself which proves too big and fierce.



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The huge boar then takes off back to Britain - some versions say that it walked or ran others that it swam - leaving King Arthur and Culhwch to follow behind and try to catch up.

The Twrch Trwyth lands in Wales at Porth Clais in Pembrokeshire and proceeds to rampage across the country destroying homes and crops from Milford Haven (!) across the Preselli Hills.

Eventually King Arthur and Culhwch manage to corner the beast at Mynedd Du and King Arthur picks up a huge rock which he throws at the boar, knocking it off the hillside of Craig y Fron and killing it.

The body of the Twrch Trwyth falls into the Afon Twrch (Boar River) at the bottom of the hill and Culhwch can retrieve the scissors, comb and razor from the boar's beard. Many versions of the story end with a warning that the area around the Afon Twrch where the boar's body fell is either cursed or haunted by the spirit of the Twrch Trwyth. I leave it to the imagination as to which option would be worse!

Having seen the beautifully carved wooden boar at Cwm Twrch Isaf - the name means Lower Boar Valley - I discovered other boars in places around mid-Wales including Ammanford, Llanelli and St. Clears so this story from the Mabinogion is fondly remembered in the area.



"What a remarkable irony it would be if a Welsh legend about a wild boar actually played a part in Richard choosing the boar as his personal emblem..."

With its combination of a love interest, knightly daring do and not least King Arthur himself, the story of Culhwch and Olwen is surely one which King Richard III would have enjoyed, as much as he recognised the type.

Is it too much of a stretch to think that, in his time as Lord of Glamorgan, now known mostly as Powys, Richard would have heard the story, perhaps from the travelling bards who went from place to place carrying news and giving entertainment?

It's also not beyond the realm of possibility that the stories of the Mabinogion were put into print by Richard's brother-in-law and his protegee Caxton, so that Richard could have read them for himself.

The Twrch Trwyth is a fascinating story, part of the rich bard tradition of Wales and one which has left us as Ricardians lots of treats to the eye to discover.

In a country not known for its great support of King Richard III it is perhaps amusing to see the, albeit inadvertent, tributes to him in the form of his personal badge scattered across the country.

What a remarkable irony it would be if a Welsh legend about a wild boar actually played a part in Richard choosing the boar as his personal emblem, not least since the Twrch Trwyth chose Milford Haven, of all places, in which to start his wrecking spree across mid Wales!

Tudor cover-up clouds identity of the 'Dublin King'

By Margaret Byrne

I am very pleased to report that the Merseyside and West Lancashire Group are now very well settled into their new base at Leyland Road Methodist Church, Southport.

We began our programme for 2025 when I gave two talks in January and February on the subject of the young man crowned in Dublin Cathedral in 1487

This was inspired by Philippa Langley's book *The Princes in the Tower: Solving History's Greatest Cold Case*.

When we were discussing Philippa's book in January 2024, it soon became apparent that we were all rather confused about the events of 1486-7 when a Yorkist army invaded England, following the coronation of a young man in Dublin Cathedral.

Who was he? Using secondary sources and as much up to date information as possible, I wanted to examine those events in strictly chronological order. The first part of this talk ended with the Battle of Stoke Field in June 1487. So far, I had not been able to find mention in any contemporary documents in England, Ireland or on the continent of a person called Lambert Simnel or any suggestion that the person crowned in Dublin was an imposter.

The second part of the talk looked at accounts of the events of 1486-7 written after the Battle of Stoke. Here I found many elements of what we think we know about this episode.

On July 8, 1487, the Earl of Warwick was taken from the Tower of London and paraded at St Paul's with "the child that was in Ireland" (The London Chronicle c 1483 - 88). Please note the date.



Left: The young man crowned at Dublin Cathedral. Who was he really?

Many people believe that the Earl of Warwick was paraded before the Battle of Stoke in 1487, based on the much later writing of Polydore Vergil. The first mention of the name Lambert Simnel came in November 1487 when the Act of Attainder was passed against John de la Pole earl of Lincoln.

In 1494, all acts of the Irish parliament held after the coronation of the king crowned in Dublin in 1487 were to be destroyed on pain of treason.

This suggests a cover up - the destruction of evidence. It is from the Book of Howth that we hear that the king in Dublin was a child who was carried on the shoulders of a local giant called Darsey. The source of this information for *The Book of Howth* is believed to be Nicholas St Lawrence, 4th Baron Howth.

Yet he was rewarded personally by Henry VII in 1489 which suggests his testimony was far from an impartial account.

In a ballad called *The Mayor of Waterford's Letter* we hear that a crown was borrowed from the statue of the Virgin Mary and used in the coronation of the king in Dublin. It isn't certain when this was written but was most certainly composed in support of Henry VII.

Polydore Vergil's account was written as late as c1506.



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He was an Italian who did not arrive in England until c1502 so just how reliable is he as a source of information for events which happened twenty years earlier? Yet I would argue that his version of events has become THE accepted and traditional view of the Yorkist invasion of England in 1487.

My conclusion was that it is very difficult to unpick the events of 1486-7 in chronological order because Vergil's version of events has become so enmeshed in the story.

It seems that the Tudor government was able to successfully create contemporary confusion over the identity of this King Edward, crowned in Dublin, so that potential supporters were not sure who he was. It was only after this serious threat to Henry VII had been defeated that the back story of Lambert Simnel emerged.

In March we heard Dr Alan Crosby talk to us on the subject of *Monasteries and Society in the North West*. Alan is so knowledgeable and always entertaining. He explained that monasteries in the North West of England had their own particular characteristics. In the Medieval period there were few monasteries in Lancashire, some in Cumberland and few in Westmorland.

Furness Abbey was the only abbey of note in the North West except perhaps for Cartmel Priory. All the others were of mid-size or small. Surprisingly, we have evidence from the King's Commissioners of 1530s that Furness Abbey contained only 30 monks and four non-residents but they had over 100 servants.



A staircase used by medieval monks at Furness Abbey on their way to early-morning services was reinstated 500 years after it was destroyed. Image: Stuart Walker Photography/English Heritage.

These were table servants, cleaners, cooks, launderers etc. Although, at this time, monks were beginning to be perceived as over indulged, decadent and corrupt, their presence also created many jobs in the local area.

At the same time, Henry VIII's commissioners investigated the behaviour of the monks, actively seeking further justification to dissolve their houses. They could only find 17.7% of monks in the North West guilty of misdemeanours. In addition, houses were assessed for their contributions to charity. Lancashire monasteries gave an average of 10.8% of their income whereas, for example, Westminster Abbey gave 2.7% of their wealth as alms or charity. Whalley Abbey in Lancashire gave 21%. Lists of resident monks showed that they were on the whole, local men, drawn from nearby villages and more generous to the poor when compared to other areas of the country.



Notts and Derby Group secretary Anne Ayres shares her Ricardian journey which was inspired by an Alan Grant moment.

Weird obsessives and my best friends!

I was a baby-boomer in the UK Midlands and I daresay the names of Richard III or the princes in the Tower were vaguely around, probably because of the Olivier film in the fifties; though it did not impinge on my consciousness enough to make me wonder about their "story".

I was a helper in the school library in my fifth form comprehensive and picked up a book in the art section on the National Portrait Gallery.

Many of the pictures were in colour, and being of a somewhat romantic disposition, I went through looking for handsome young men, preferably in powdered wigs, wishing I'd been born in the 18th century - a sort of "kiss, marry, avoid".

At the end of the book was a section of royal portraits, and from there my story becomes almost like that of Alan Grant's in *The Daughter of Time*. I turned to a page with a few additional, less important portraits, just in black and white, not much larger than passport photos.

And there was a young man, with long darkish hair, a bony face, velvet cap on his head. He looked worried, concerned, distracted, almost weighed down with care.

Anne Ayres:
"From there, my story becomes almost like that of Alan Grant's in *The Daughter of Time*."



It was the first time I was aware of studying a portrait of King Richard III. It gave his dates - king for such a short time, so young when he died. He certainly didn't look like a man to "avoid" - indeed I'd rather have comforted him and soothed that troubled frown!

In those days I wasn't much of a one for real biography, so I began to seek out novels set in the fifteenth century, romantic of course, a lot of them published by Robert Hale (remember those?) I was Anne Neville, I was Elizabeth of York, I was some young maidservant (a Katherine or a Cecily) in

attendance at Middleham. One novel struck me deeply at the time, *Dickon* by Marjorie Bowen, which I think was one of the better ones, though I have never re-read it.

I began to draw romantic pictures of Richard, practised Gothic manuscript, even had what I called "the vision" (anyone else had it?) - Richard in church looking up to the heavens, praying, a shaft of sunlight illuminating his face, tiny shining speckles of dust floating down. So I began to get an inkling of the general arc of his tragic story, but in a very non-academic way.



And I wondered if I should join, and as I've sometimes said before, would they be a group of weird obsessives?

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In the 6th form The Wars of the Roses by the RSC was broadcast on TV. I had a major crush on David Warner - playing Henry VI - and because we did not have BBC2, used to cycle to my gran's after school each week to watch the whole series - my gran had never seen so much of me before or since!

And Ian Holm played Richard with Janet Suzan as Anne Neville - "I'll have her, but I'll not keep her long"... Wow! Yet it was a separate Richard, not "my" Richard, who I knew to be pure, and guiltless of the crimes ascribed to him!

Visits to various Shakespeare productions at Stratford must have somehow sharpened up my academic abilities a little in the sixties, for I was deemed suitable to go to teacher training college, and there, a friend who'd been at school with me, gave me a copy of *Daughter of Time* for my birthday.

At last, I had the arguments clear in my head, I had the "truth" which is the daughter of time, and was a convinced Ricardian, though at the time I did not know there was a society to join.



Anne, middle row end right - ponytail aloft

That came much later after three children, during a career of part teaching, part librarian, when an exhibition was held at our local library a year or so after the Quincentenary - arranged by a Mrs Pamela Stokes.

And I wondered if I should join, and as I've sometimes said before, would they be a group of weird obsessives?

And they were. And they are. And the best friends I've ever had. Thank you Pam, thank you friends, you've changed and enhanced my life!

""And they were. And they are. And the best friends I've ever had. Thank you Pam, thank you friends, you've changed and enhanced my life!""

Italian convert to Ricardian cause

By Maria Grazia Leotta

Last December my family was reunited once again to celebrate Christmas together. My brother Domenico who lives in Sicily, decided to visit England for the second time and spend the festivities with us.

On January 18, we both left York to spend a weekend in Leicester. As soon as we arrived, we first stopped at the Cathedral, and we left a bunch of white roses at the statue of King Richard. My brother was emotional in front of the tomb, and he said this time he felt even more touched after he had learnt a lot about the king since his first visit last year.

The day after, we went back to the Cathedral to attend the Sunday service. This time my brother had brought a mysterious bag with him and when I asked why on earth he had it with him, he replied he had planned a surprise both for the king and me.

After the service and the usual refreshment, we had a chat with the new Dean, John, one of the vergers and the guides. It was at that point that my brother opened his mysterious bag, and he took out the Italian biography of King Richard I had published in December 2022 and had given him as a Christmas present.

My brother showed the book to Dean. She tried to understand the Italian content, and she eventually could make sense of a couple of chapters' titles, notwithstanding she could not speak Italian except for a couple of sentences she had learned when she visited Italy.

She showed a lot of interest in the book and asked me a couple of questions. We went all together to the tomb where my brother revealed to me his intentions. He gave me a pen and asked me to write a dedication right on Richard's tomb. I was gobsmacked! His idea was fantastic, but we had to ask for permission to use his tomb as a desk.

As soon as the Dean and the volunteers' leader heard the story, not only did they agree to the book-signing, but the Dean also suggested taking a selfie while I was writing the dedication for my brother. When other visitors asked to do the same, the Dean explained to them the reason why we could do so. We felt privileged indeed and could not hide our emotion.



Author and staunch Ricardian Maria Grazia Leotta and her brother Domenico at Richard's tomb in January. Domenico, who lives in Sicily, has become a convert to Richard's cause. Generally Italian history portrays Richard as the villain of Shakespeare and Thomas More.

Our trip continued with a tour to the visitor centre and subsequently we went to St Mary de Castro where we could share a good coffee with our friends Sheila, Matthew, Reverend Russell and all the parishioners.

On the way back to York, both Domenico and I were still moved by the warm welcome we received in Leicester. We will treasure these memories forever.

My brother is already planning a next trip to England and another unforgettable weekend in Leicester to visit his king.

Image: The fox, which featured in Leceisters "light" celebrations, is the mascot of Leicester and its football team The Foxes. Richard is credited with the football club's famous victory of winning the Premiership: their shirts declaring King Power.



Leicester shines on Richard

Words & photos by Joanne Larner

Celebration of light

Leicester celebrated the ten-year anniversary of Richard's reinterment over a three-week period in March this year. There were various events in several locations.

One of these was the Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre which had a special weekend on March 22 and March 23 to commemorate the 10-year anniversary of King Richard III's return to Bosworth Battlefield before his reinterment at Leicester Cathedral.

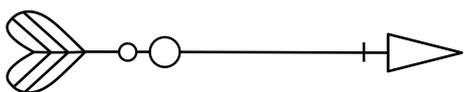
There was an action-packed weekend that included a special memorial ceremony (Saturday 22 only), battle re-enactments, living history camps, a new exhibition about the return of the King, family crafts, talks and more.

At the Cathedral, there were various services and a special light show which projected onto the cathedral itself. It showed a brief history of Leicester, including a special mention of Richard and his importance for the town, which has seen a marked upswing in its tourism and business since Richard was found.

I like to think that Richard would have been glad that he could help the ordinary businesspeople of the town. They certainly love him and even credit him with their football club's famous victory of winning the Premiership – well, the slogan on their shirts WAS 'King Power'! The light show repeated at intervals every evening until late and both the cathedral and the Richard III Visitor Centre were open until late during this period.



I like to think that Richard would have been glad that he could help the ordinary businesspeople of the town.



From previous page...

I was lucky enough to visit Leicester during the celebrations and saw the light show. As well as the projections, with commentary, there were stalls selling food and LED snap bracelets, et cetera.

I also attended the cathedral, to visit our king. I like to just touch the top of the tomb and whisper a blessing for him, whenever I go there. I also laid a bouquet of white roses at the foot of the statue.

While I was waiting for my friend to meet me, I overheard a young couple talking about Richard while looking at the statue.

The young man said: 'What did he ever do except murder his nephews and die?'

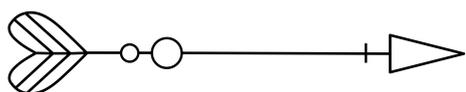
I immediately leapt up and gave them a short lecture about all the good things that Richard did, putting them right about the princes in the Tower. As I was speaking, they were backing away, while looking wide-eyed at me, and agreeing with everything I said! I suppose a Ricardian in full flow is quite formidable, but I couldn't resist defending our king!

The full programme of the celebrations is on the next page...



"I laid a bouquet of white roses at the foot of the statue."

I suppose a Ricardian in full flow is quite formidable, but I couldn't resist defending our king!





Late night openings

Light Up Leicester's amazing projections were on the front of the cathedral. There was also a soundscape produced by DMU students using recordings from the Richard III Oral History Project.

The Scoliotic Knight: Reconstructing the Real Richard III

In this illustrated talk, Dr Toby Capwell explored how Richard III excelled in armoured combat despite his significant spinal condition.

Concert – music for kings and queens

Leicester Cathedral Choir presented a programme of music for royal occasions including the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II, Richard III's Service of Reinterment, and the Coronation of King Charles III

Service – Service of Compline

A solemn and contemplative evening service of music and prayer honouring the memory of the last Plantagenet king.

Richard's Women: Their impact on his life, death and legacy

Acclaimed novelist Annie Garthwaite – author of *Cecily* and *The King's Mother* – revealed the untold story of the women who loved Richard, who feared him and who brought him down.

Dean's discussion

The Very Revd Karen Rooms, Dean of Leicester, held a panel discussion on Sikh history linked with the Medieval Women Forging the Way exhibition in the Cathedral.

Service – civic service on the tenth anniversary

A Civic Service for the city and county on the day of the tenth anniversary, with music sung by the Cathedral Choir.

Panel – revisiting the discovery and reinterment

Assembled experts from the worlds of archaeology, history, and the Cathedral revisited the amazing story that captured imaginations around the world.

Medieval banquet

Guests were transported back to late medieval England, with feasting on four sumptuous courses and live entertainment fit for a king. The York Waites performed a repertoire of medieval European music as well as their own arrangements of popular dance and ballad tunes.

Richard III afternoon tea

An exclusive Richard III-themed afternoon tea included live entertainment and VIP guests who were involved with the reinterment.

Medieval women forging the way

Recently displayed at Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre, this FREE exhibition explored the close historical links between the Battle of Bosworth and the beginnings of the Sikh faith in Punjab.

We know a lot about the powerful women of the Wars of the Roses, but this exhibition drew on extensive research, stories, and images to explore their medieval peers in Punjab and the paths they forged for generations of Sikh women around the world.

The lost Morton tract...

Proof of an unholy alliance

With the ‘Lucy Worsley school of history’ reviving the sainted Thomas More as a respectable historical source, it’s incumbent on Ricardians to fight back, argues Annette Carson. She points to the lost Morton tract which, though still ignored by Ricardians, should be promoted publicly as crucial evidence of the unholy More-Morton alliance.

My interest in Sir George Buc and Sir William Cornwallis goes back a long way, and originates with Arthur Kincaid. When I started researching Richard III for the book that eventually appeared as *Richard III: The Maligned King*, among the first books I bought were Arthur’s editions of Buc(k)’s *History of Richard III* and Cornwallis’s *Encomium of Richard*.

There was much I learnt from both books that was not encompassed by the normal run of articles in *Richard III Society* publications, mainly (I think) because few historians of the 15th century concern themselves with the late Tudor / Jacobean periods – a time when the antiquary movement was born, and men of letters appreciated the importance of unearthing authentic documents rather than perpetuating myths and legends.

Arthur was an expert in this period and its literature and drama, and I began to be alert for anything I could learn from that perspective.

Thus it was that in *The Maligned King* I featured Arthur’s research into the influence of Bishop John Morton on Thomas More – see Appendix, p. 362 (2023 edition) – ‘A lost Latin manuscript’.



Arthur Kincaid researched Bishop John Morton’s influence on Thomas More

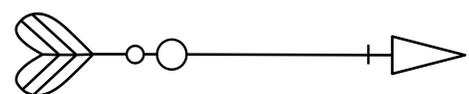
He was kind enough to approve and recommend the various books I produced; and we kept up a regular correspondence over many years, until, affected by terminal cancer, he appealed to me in 2021 to find a way to publish his revised edition of Buc’s *History ...* and the rest you know.

It was when I gave a brief speech at the Society of Antiquaries at the launch of the *History* that Julia Langham buttonholed me, and asked if I would give a talk about it as one of the Society’s Zoom lecture series.

***‘In his time
were many
good Acts
made’***

Frankly, I considered an entire lecture on Buc would have been a very dry experience, especially as the new edition speaks for itself, so I combined it with a brief survey of the changing climate of opinion on Richard III around the period that Buc was mixing in antiquarian circles and developing his ideas about our king.

Yet even earlier, in 1525, Richard was remembered for his good laws by the Mayor and Aldermen of London, who resisted when Cardinal Wolsey tried to impose those hated forced-loans called benevolences, which they knew Richard had abolished. ‘In his time were many good Acts made’, they retaliated.



From previous page...

An important development to note is the switch from the old religion at the Reformation, which freed a lot of dissenting voices from the constraints of orthodoxy.

We're all familiar with the substantial pre-Reformation Tudor chronicles that survive, having found their way into the collections of the wealthy and élite, most being elaborated copies of Thomas More and of each other.

These popular little chronicles, usually in octavo, were printed again and again for a large mass market, their printers being such as Byddell, Mychell, Judson, Petyt, Myddleton, Powell and Copland. They enjoyed a constant readership among the non-élite, and their contents seem largely uninterested in Richard and unaffected by Vergil or other texts in Latin.

Later we have evidence from a respectable source in the very first months of James I's reign, in a document from the College of Arms – taken to be by Garter King of Arms William Segar, as a draft for a manuscript that appeared as early as 1604.

It reads as follows: ***'Richard III, esteemed of many men an evil man, and called usurper, he was a good king, for he made many good and wholesome laws which are yet in force. He was wise and valiant.'*** Not a bad epitaph.

There were other softenings of attitudes too: Arthur Kincaid made some analyses of antiquary-historians, and noted particularly that Stow and Camden had begun to liberalize their views on Richard.



Nice things were being said about Richard in 1604, in the very first months of the reign of James 1.

In his Survey, Stow described Richard's accession as an election, not a usurpation; and in his Annales he gave a list of Richard's good works.

Thomas More's writing on Richard was of course well known to the educated and wealthy who acquired books and created libraries, but by the 1590s not everyone was wholly convinced that it emanated from a reliable source.

At least this was the case with a group of scholars and antiquarians, Sir George Buc among them, who were equally as intelligent as any of our present-day historians, and who were well aware (as we are now) that More was an infant during the reign he described, and had therefore obtained his material at second or third hand.

Inspired by the impetus that original sources must be sought, these men were enthralled when they discovered where More's information truly came from: the pen of Cardinal Archbishop John Morton. And they weren't impressed.

This fact, unearthed by Arthur Kincaid, has intrigued me ever since.

Their aversion to Morton didn't just arise from a general antipathy to the Catholic Church. They also knew he was resented in his day as Henry VII's relentless enforcer; so he embodied all that was considered bad about the old ways.

Cardinal John Morton had written a pamphlet in Latin, vilifying Richard III, which was located in the library of the Ropers. William Roper was the husband of More's daughter Margaret, so Thomas More's own library would have ended up there.

Morton's pamphlet or tract was known, at least as early as 1595, to Sir Edward Hoby, a prominent antiquarian, diplomat and Member of Parliament. Hoby informed his friends – among them Sir John Harington (courtier, translator and author) who went on to share his knowledge of its existence.

Having read Morton's damning words about Richard, these young, educated literati were entirely convinced that Thomas More's work was so close as to be squarely derived from it.

Unfortunately, this pamphlet has disappeared and hasn't been traced, perhaps lost in the great Cotton fire. But there's no doubt it did exist; and Arthur Kincaid published that he had identified Morton's anti-Richard tract as the subject of a famous letter written by Edward Hoby to Robert Cecil. This letter had been thought, until then, to refer to quite another subject.



From previous page...

At this point we need to dissociate the 'Morton tract' discovery in the 1590s from an idea propounded by Clements Markham in the 19th century, to the effect that the Richard III manuscript was erroneously attributed to Thomas More, and was actually a copy of John Morton's tract with some additions.

This was gleefully dismissed by the academics of the day and has been scoffed at ever since ... which therefore taints the scholarly case that Hoby, Harington et al were familiar with the Latin 'Morton tract' and saw that it informed More's writing.

It is perfectly clear from two well-known contemporaneous documents that their authors took it for granted that Thomas More's work was derived from the polemic written by Morton.

The best known of these is Sir George Buc's History of Richard III where he takes More to be virtually indistinguishable from Morton, and states this in several places.

E.g. on p. 121 he sets out the entire case, and on p. 202 he tires of distinguishing between them, saying **'These be the words of More, or of Morton, for their books are all one'**. Fortunately Buc's work is now accessible to Ricardians in its new edition, so I need elaborate no further, save to mention that editor Arthur Kincaid reveals exactly how Buc came by this knowledge (page cxxii of his Introduction).



" We need to renew the age-old case for treating More as the polluted source he is, and expose his contamination by the pen of John Morton."

This may all seem academic and ancient history when looking back over the centuries; but we've had a salutary lesson in the recent 'smoking gun' programme on Channel 5, where acolytes of the Lucy Worsley school of history were bold enough to put forward circular arguments based wholly on the sainted More.

All of a sudden the media have embraced More as a respectable historical source, and it's incumbent on Ricardians to prevent them getting away with it! We need to renew the age-old case for treating More as the polluted source he is, and expose his contamination by the pen of John Morton.

Nowhere is the unholy alliance between More and Morton seen more vividly than in the second document I want to discuss, The Encomium of Richard III, whose author was Sir William Cornwallis the Younger.

This is a woefully overlooked and vastly underestimated manuscript, which Ricardians seem to find embarrassing because it isn't 'serious history'. I've recently written a lengthy article analysing 'Cornwallis, the Paradoxical Ricardian' which is on my website www.annettecarson.com under 'Research Topics', so I won't go into detail here.

Cornwallis flourished in exactly the same era as Hoby, Harington and Buc, and was a notable writer and essayist.

These young men were the new intelligentsia of their day, clever and articulate, and they undoubtedly cross-pollinated each other. Cornwallis chose the form of the paradox for his Encomium because he was butting heads and turning the traditional story upside down.



From previous page...



*'this defamed prince,
whose life
... I found ill rather by
supposition than
assuredness'*

John Donne

The *Encomium* is a statement of the case to be made in defence of Richard III's character and actions, ostensibly cloaked in a tongue-in-cheek literary format

Yet the reader need only look at his opening Dedication to the renowned poet and scholar John Donne [i.e. not part of the paradox itself] to see that he refers to Richard in all seriousness as 'this defamed prince, whose life ... I found ill rather by supposition than assuredness'.

Richard had so many virtues, he continues, which even his enemies could not deny, that it is insufferable they should be drowned out by reciting his vices. In this same Dedication we are also introduced to 'the Chronicler' whose accusations and ill opinion Cornwallis quotes and refutes throughout his text.

On p. 20 of Arthur Kincaid's edition he even goes so far as to call him 'this corrupt Chronicler'.

Though John Morton is never named, at least not in the versions that survive, we are given enough clues to be in no doubt as to his identity: for example one who favoured Richard's Lancastrian opponents. 'Our Chronicler' also seeks to clear the traitor Collingbourne, a person never named by Thomas More.

In conclusion, I have tried to give a sketch of how Richard's evil reputation was not universally embraced as the Tudor era progressed, and how More's credentials crumbled when his source was found to be Henry VII's Cardinal Archbishop John Morton.

In my lexicon, the attribution of Morton as the source for More's *Richard III* is a far more ground-breaking discovery for Ricardian studies (and Thomas More studies) than any so-called 'smoking gun' based on a dubious line in a will. The lost 'Morton tract' certainly fascinated me when I read Arthur's research; yet to the best of my knowledge it's been steadily ignored by Ricardians apart from Arthur and myself.

Given the present Thomas More revival, I believe it should be brought to public notice.



This article was first published in Blanc Sanglier, the publication of the Yorkshire Branch.

A short while ago, I was lucky enough to interview Thomas Dennis, the young actor who recreated the voice of Richard III. He was chosen, not only for his acting ability (which has garnered great reviews), but also because his facial bone structure closely resembles Richard's – this was considered a vital part of recreating Richard's voice. Here is part of the interview.

If you want to see the whole thing and more pictures, go to the Murrey and Blue blog page (see link at the end)

'Band of brothers' speeches inspire voice of the king

By Joanne Larner

Joanne Larner: Can you tell us a little about your background and how you came to be an actor?

Thomas Dennis: It's always been about history. I loved history as a kid; I was always watching historical dramas and films on TV, documentaries, books, running around pretending to be a knight in shining armour. The playfulness of it inspired my interest in professional acting. Shakespeare's Henry V, particularly the Kenneth Branagh version, helped. Particularly those big, rallying speeches.

JL: How did you first hear about the 'Voice for Richard' project?

TD: That was interesting because it wasn't a routine acting project. Covid was a difficult time for performers and actors. However, my prior involvement with the Warwick jousting team came to the rescue. I joined up and they were brilliant.

We put on jousting exhibitions throughout the country. Warwick Castle was, of course, an important venue.



Image: Thomas Dennis as Richard III in a jousting tournament. **Credit:** X

Here we re-acted the Wars of the Roses, though I need to emphasise this was about entertainment, rather than historical accuracy. Our focus was on bringing the story of Lancaster versus York to the stage, for families to enjoy.

I was at Warwick when I heard Philippa Langley was due to do a presentation at the castle. I've been a Ricardian for many years. The book Royal Blood by Bertram Fields inspired me to think of a Richard who did not fit Shakespeare's villain. For instance, there's absolutely no evidence that proves the princes were even murdered, never mind murdered by Richard. So why was this fable accepted by historians? So, I attended Philippa's presentation and talked to her afterwards.



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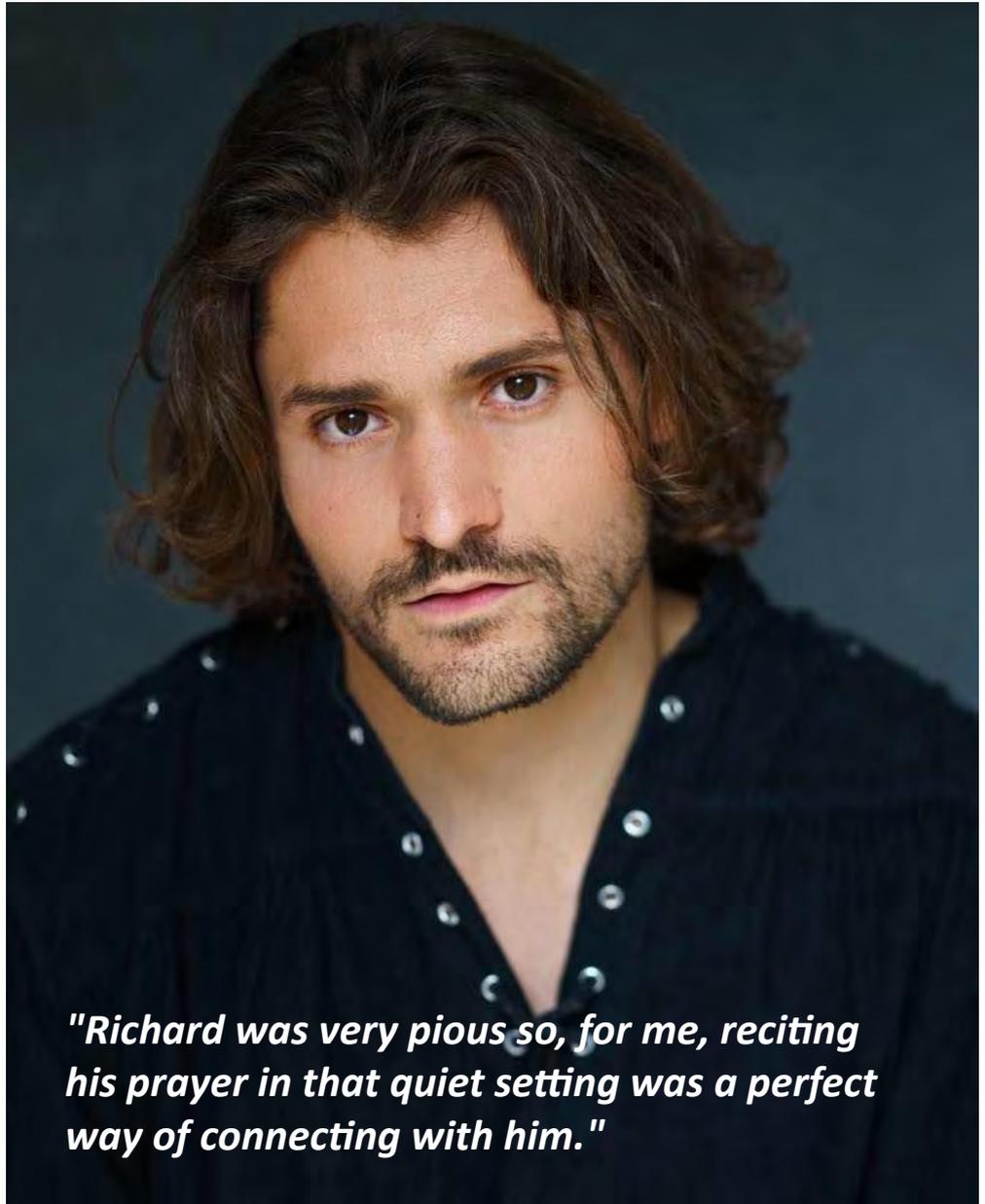
Meanwhile Matt Lewis, with whom I have worked in the past, told me that the hunt was on for an actor who could be Richard's voice. My agent and I followed up on this and I was auditioned for the part. And it's at this point where you meet me in the documentary.

JL: How did you feel when you got the role? What was it like to find out you have a similar facial bone structure to Richard?

TD: It's been a special experience. One of the pieces I needed to read to prepare for the audition was Richard's Book of Hours. I decided to go to York Minster. I found a quiet place and recited Richard's prayer. It was a powerful moment. I was in a building that he would have been in, spoken in, and prayed in; a place important to him. I am not overly religious, but I have enjoyed exploring his faith.

It's difficult, these days, to understand how important their Christian faith was to people back then. It was a key component of their existence, and to everything they did in life. Richard was very pious so, for me, reciting his prayer in that quiet setting was a perfect way of connecting with him.

During the jousting tournaments I played the part of Richard and grew my hair long for the role. It was then I noticed that my jaw structure was similar to that of his facial reconstruction.



"Richard was very pious so, for me, reciting his prayer in that quiet setting was a perfect way of connecting with him."

Me and my fellow jousters thought it was quite funny. Two characters I dream of playing are Henry V and Richard III. But not Shakespeare's Richard. I see the Shakespeare version as a fictional villain. Sure, a brilliant villain, but not the real person. One of my big passions is to represent the real man.

Read the rest of the interview here:
<https://murreyandblue.co.uk/?p=63511>

During the pandemic the Notts & Derby Group didn't meet up, so instead we had cyber meetings - not by Zoom or video, but in writing. Those who wanted to contribute sent an item on the pre-set subject. I collated them and sent them out to members for that quarter. Here is my own contribution, slightly adapted for *The Ricardian Herald*.

The 'pleasaunce' of the medieval garden...

By Anne Ayres

What can I say about gardens, particularly medieval ones? I think I'll just let my mind have a wander - and the first thing I might say is that I hate gardening - the mowing, weeding and cutting back. But I like flowers, and I do fill my tubs and containers and I do like to see a good garden - and we've been to many with the group!



Above: Bronze boar in the garden of Lincolnshire Branch secretary Jean Townsend. Right: The fruit of a mulberry bush in Rochester.



But one of the first things that springs to mind was an actual meeting we had once, outdoors in a member's garden in Mansfield. We all brought along examples or pictures or spoke about plants, and I believe it was our member Joyce who put the pinnacle on the day when she brought out her lavender scones. An old medieval recipe, they were soft and crumbling and fragrant, what a wonderful treat!

Another memorable meeting was held in the garden of Lincolnshire Branch secretary Jean Townsend; her garden huge and rambling and beautiful (the garden that is!) complete with a wonderful bronze Ricardian boar. There were little corners and outdoor "rooms", packed with medieval trees like medlars and quince. And a "picnic" with cakes!

Talking of trees, I remember being in Rochester, between the cathedral and the castle during our group trip to Canterbury, when we came across a quite large tree with flat almost rounded leaves and what looked like raspberries and blackberries growing straight off the twigs!

It looked so unusual and somehow unreal - but it turned out to be that most famous of nursery rhyme trees - "*Here we go round the mulberry bush, the mulberry....*" Of course, being me, I had a quick look round and nabbed one and ate it immediately - pure sweet juice bursting in your mouth.



From previous page...

There is one of these growing at 15th/16th century Charlecote Park in Warwickshire at the back of their lovely woodland walk.

We also had a visit to Felley Priory in Notts where we met the Lady of the Manor, a formidable but friendly senior woman who still did a great deal of the gardening. She told us about the lovely little medieval garden squares - or knot garden - that she was developing.

We saw it just before the spring bulbs were out so it looked a little sparse and very new, but had distinct promise - I should like to see it again now.

But I think the thing that fascinates me most is the etymology or language of gardens and flowers. Having done English at college I just love the old country names for many familiar plants - often to do with the Virgin Mary, but sometimes earthlier in origin.

For instance, in Hamlet when Gertrude is describing Ophelia's death she refers to:

"long purples that liberal shepherds give a grosser name, but our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them".

The grosser name is possibly referring to the two tubers which resemble male testicles!

And of course there's the poetry of Midsummer Night's Dream:

I know a bank where the wild thyme blows, where ox-lips and the nodding violet grows;

Quite o'er-canopied with

lush woodbine, with sweet musk roses, and with eglantine:

There sleeps Titania, some time of the night, lull'd in these flowers with dances and delight;

And there the snake throws her enamell'd skin, weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in."



Primula (Cowslip, Herb Peter, Fairy Cups)



The Lady of the Manor

Shakespeare is a huge source of the old country names, and I would refer anyone wishing to follow this up to: <https://bardgarden.blogspot.com>

Most herbs and plants in medieval times had medicinal uses, sometimes shown in the name:

Lady's Bedstraw - (Gallium Verum)
Yellow bedstraw.

passions of lovemaking, both inside and outdoors.

Yellow bedstraw. Given to women in labour and used in cheese making. Chaucer said "'O perilous fyr, that in the bedstraw bredeth" - invoking the

Lungwort - (Pulmonaria), for chest complaints - Lady's Milk Drops, Adam & Eve (because of the blue and pink flowers?) Lady's Cowslip, Lady's Milk, Mary's Honeysuckle and Mary's Tears.



From previous page...

English Plantain - Lamb's Tongue - as a tea or in tincture form, for indigestion, ulcers, or heartburn. Externally, a poultice of it can be used for insects and snake bites. It is also known as Kemps, an Anglo-Saxon word for soldier - which shows in its upright growth and also explains the English surname!



From left: Anemones (or Lily of the field, Windflower); Ribwort Plantain (or Lamb's Tongue, Buckhorn); Pulmonaria (Lungwort, Mary's Tears, Our Lady's Milk Drops); Rhinanthus minor (Yellow Rattle, Cockscomb)

Rue - Ave Grace, Countryman's-Treacle and Herb o' grace - used to aid period pains but strong doses can cause miscarriage (perhaps explaining why it is Rue - rueing the night before!)

There are many more country names, signifying images of the Virgin Mary, animals, body parts, times of year, passions, and human or mystical qualities.

But gardens aren't just the plants are they? Many of the ones I've mentioned are looked on as a weed now, and only remembered for their healing properties in old almanacs or in places like Alwick Castle's Poison Garden or the Physick Garden at Kew. Many of the old Manor Houses still have their walled gardens - some have been mentioned already.

Our group visited the one at Burton Agnes Hall in Yorkshire. Our member Carol (pictured on the right) is standing happily in the doorway of their Walled Garden, surrounded by wisteria) Newstead Abbey and Hardwick Hall locally also have walled gardens.

Further afield, Mottistone Manor on the Isle of Wight has a delightful rambling garden, open daily. Greys Court at Henley-on-Thames has a beautiful walled garden, as has Packwood House in the West Midlands, with its own beehives.

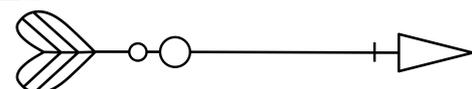


Though it is not walled, the re-creation of an Elizabethan working garden at Ann Hathaway's Cottage near Stratford is well worth visiting.

Hatfield House has Cardinal Morton's palace in the grounds, complete with a box-hedge knot garden.



And it was backwards into a knot-garden box-hedge that Joseph Fiennes fell, from "Juliet's" balcony window, in the film "Shakespeare in Love", filmed at Broughton Castle in Oxfordshire.



From previous page...

It is still owned by descendants of the Fiennes who fought for Richard at Bosworth.

The Pleasaunce at Kenilworth Castle was built in 1414 by Henry V, perhaps to please his new wife, the French Princess Katherine, the younger sister of Richard II second wife. In such a place there would be arbours and shelters, little private corners where one could pursue a love affair away from prying eyes. There could be all manner of "goings-on" in this rather risqué garden party.

There would be fountains and ornaments, as of course, plants alone are not enough to display one's wealth to the neighbours.

However, we now come to the ultimate in one-upmanship!

Famously one man in Leicester, Lord Mayor Robert Herrick, (uncle of the poet of the same name) had a pillar in his garden at the crossing of four pathways, marking the burial place of Richard III.

It's not many who can boast they've got an English King in their garden

Seen and noted by the father of Sir Christopher Wren, one of these external pathways helped archaeologists in 2012 to prove the exact position of the garden and the former nave of Greyfriars church, pre- Reformation, where the maltreated remains of Richard were found.

And now having brought us back to Richard III, I think I will leave my garden ramblings here, thankful that Herrick's garden had given sanctuary to our king.

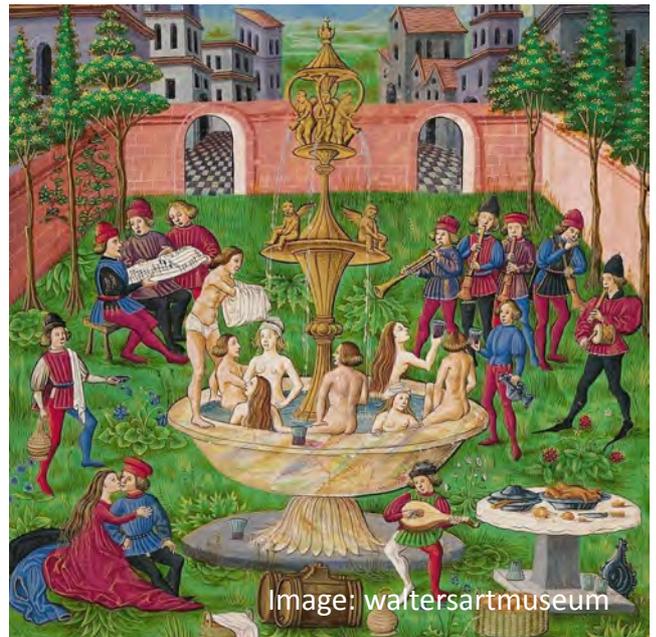
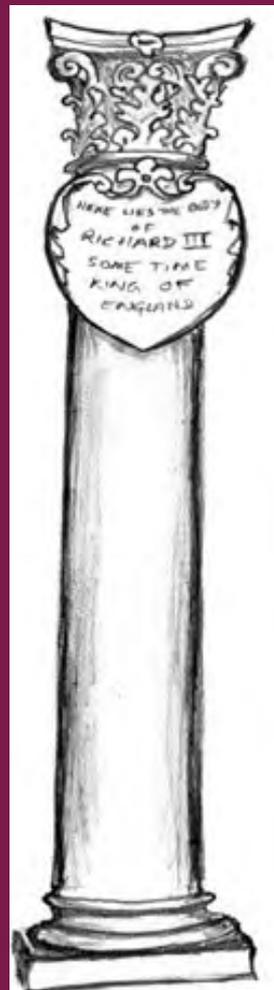


Image: watersartmuseum



And now having brought us back to Richard III, I think I will leave my garden ramblings here, thankful that Herrick's garden had given sanctuary to our king.



Sleep well, 'a chara'

By Jane Clarke

The *Herald* is sad to announce the death of columnist Jack Clarke.

Jack died at the end of January after a short illness, aged about 13 years.

He had always enjoyed robust good health, but suddenly developed an aggressive form of bone cancer.

Jack certainly left his paw print on the world; he loved life and he loved people - he was a total extrovert and regarded life as one big party.

His zest for life and his Irish charm made him many human and canine friends. He was irrepressible - and often 'the lord of misrule'. - a force of nature who freewheeled his way through life - with 'not a bother on him!' His exuberance was in counterpoint to his ability to be a 'lazy hound' - he certainly perfected the art of 'relaxation'!

Through January Jack continued to work as a consultant on our medieval dogs project. However fate had a final card to play; his friend, Moira the greyhound died just before Jack. Because the first section in our Herald series about hunting dogs discusses the importance of greyhounds, Jack decided to dedicate it to Moira.

Their spirits are now running free - and no doubt they are continuing 'the great debate' - greyhound vs lurchers.

Jack is much missed but has left so many memories -our tribute to him is "medieval dogs".

Sleep well, 'a chara'.

In Jack's memory, Jane Clarke and the *Herald* will continue this column under his name. In this issue, Jane continues her series about hunting dogs.

This article is part one of a two-part series. It isn't intended to be a comprehensive academic study. It comprises a few - hopefully interesting - observations, drawn mostly from a lifetime of being interested in dogs and history – Jane Clarke

Medieval hunting dogs – the gold standard

By Jane Clarke

The history of hunting dogs is one of continuity - and change.

Hunting itself has undergone an evolution - medieval 'par force' hunting was very different from 20th century fox hunting, and in the UK hunting live prey with packs of hounds became illegal in 2004. Trail hunting is permitted - where a scent is laid in advance for the dogs to follow. Hunters can use a maximum of two dogs to flush live prey - which must then be euthanised humanely with a gun.

One of the most famous medieval books on hunting and hounds is the *Livre de Chasse* by Gaston de Foix – also known as Gaston Phoebus. It details everything from where a kennel should be situated, through to kennel management and care of the dogs themselves.

The book was edited and translated into English under the title of *The Master of Game* by Edward, 2nd Duke of York, who was Richard III great uncle. Gaston's text shows that aristocratic hounds had a gold standard of care and accommodation in return for their services



An illustration from the *Master of the Game*. Fox hunting above ground with raches or running hounds. From MS. f. fr. 616 in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. www.gutenberg.org



What do we know about these dogs? Some medieval hounds are still around today, others exist as a largely different breed under the same name. Similarly, as hunting practices changed some breeds became extinct or were crossbred to suit changing requirements.

One of the most represented dogs in medieval manuscripts is the greyhound - a highly valued, high status, ancient breed which could only be owned by nobles.

Archaeological and DNA evidence from skeletons shows that the medieval greyhound was virtually identical to the modern breed. The slight genetic difference can be attributed to slight mutations through many generations of breeding.

Another of the most famous medieval dogs the talbot hound, with its links to the Earls of Shrewsbury, suffered a different fate. It is extinct, but we can see its likeness because it is represented alongside John Talbot, Eleanor Talbot's father, on a manuscript and on his tomb in St Alkmund's Church, Whitchurch.

A well-known breed of mediaeval dog today is the Irish wolfhound. But its medieval ancestors probably looked quite different. Wolfhounds are mentioned in Irish laws and literature from the around the 6th or 7th century - but archaeologists have never found skeletons which match the size of the modern breed.

It is likely that the medieval wolfhound was the size of an Alsatian - big, but not the giant breed we see today.

Wolfhounds were highly prized and frequently gifted to European royalty and nobility - so much so that the native stock was so depleted by the mid-17th century that Oliver Cromwell banned exports to prevent the breed dying out in Ireland.

References

- 1 Svobodova H; Bartos M; Nyvltova Fisakova M; Kouril P. 2015.
- 2 McCormick 1991.

Right: An Irish wolfhound. It is likely that the medieval wolfhound was the size of a German shepherd - big, but not the giant breed we see today.



Archaeological and DNA evidence from skeletons shows that the medieval greyhound was virtually identical to the modern breed



Likeness of a Talbot hound represented alongside John Talbot, Eleanor Talbot's father, on his tomb in St Alkmund's Church, Whitchurch. The Talbot hound is now extinct.



Lord Stanley in name controversy

SCOTTISH BRANCH OF THE RICHARD III SOCIETY



In spite of his name, Scottish branch member Lord Stanley is a staunch Ricardian.

He made headlines recently during a visit to the effigies of Thomas Stanley and Margaret Beaufort. He pondered the antics of his namesake and, well, was not impressed.

He walked away shortly after the photo was taken, refusing to speak to the pawparazzi who had been eagerly waiting for his comment.

However, sources have revealed that he's possibly negotiating a change of name with his personal secretary Mhairi Macleod, who is branch chair.

He's also not happy that his image at the effigies was published by the Scottish media, in spite of the fact he asked them not to. Sources say he might be lawyering up.

When not involved in controversy, Lord Stanley is a lovely, friendly wheaten terrier. He is a regular attendee of branch meetings and joins in committee meetings when they are getting off the point.



Pawparazzi captured Lord Stanley making a point: He wore his special Ricardian coat to the Scottish Branch annual meeting recently, proving he is a staunch Ricardian. However, he was still not willing to comment about the controversy around his name.

Rare, vintage treasures to be auctioned

By Sheilah O'Connor

The Canadian Branch has been gifted several rare and vintage Ricardian items that we are making available to members across the world this coming autumn.

We are still working out the details, but we can show a small sample of what we have. Half of the profit will go to the Ricardian Churches Restoration Fund, or a similar Ricardian cause.

The Great Seal of Richard III purchased at Bosworth Field in 1979

Double sided great seal in natural colour with a red woven cord through it. In a burlap bag. This replica was made by Museum Casts. An exact copy of the one found in the National Archives. Mint condition. Comes with display stand.

Bottle stopper with pewter boar

Crown your wine or other bottle appropriately with this vintage pewter boar cork/bottle stopper. Richard III beer bottle not included.

Framed image of Richard III

Miniature glass dome fronted image of Richard III in a brass frame. It's small, it's lovely.

White rose tea light

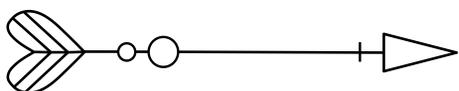
As we all know, the white rose was an emblem of York and this porcelain light will lend brightness and charm to any table.

Further information about the auction will be made available in due course.



Pictured above and inset: This replica of the Great Seal of Richard III will be sold at auction

Images of the items up for auction are on the next page



From previous page...

Auction of Ricardian treasures ...



Clockwise from above left: Framed image of Richard III; bottle stopper with pewter boar; white rose tealight.

All welcome. Free entry to talks!



The Richard III Society invites you to

MIDDLEHAM MEDIEVAL FESTIVAL

celebrating 550 years of Richard as Lord of the North

Saturday 5th & Sunday 6th July 2025

A PROGRAMME OF TALKS BY
SPECIALLY INVITED GUEST SPEAKERS
AT THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY & ST. ALKELDA,
AND THE KEY CENTRE, MIDDLEHAM

SATURDAY 5TH AT THE CHURCH:

11.00 am: *'Richard's Women'* + book signing by Annie Garthwaite (author)

1.00 pm: *'Windows for the King'* by Kim Harding

(Northern Dales Richard III Group)

2.30 pm: *'A Voice for Richard'* by Yvonne Morley-Chisholm

with special guest Actor Thomas Dennis
(subject to availability)

SUNDAY 6TH: AT THE KEY CENTRE:

11.00 am: *'Richard the Northern King'* by Graham Mitchell

(Yorkshire Branch Richard III Society)

2.15 pm: *'The Princes in the Tower:*

How History's Greatest Cold Case was Solved' by Philippa Langley MBE

SUNDAY 6TH: 9.30 am: Morning Worship at the Church of St. Mary & St. Alkelda

Each illustrated talk lasts one hour.

Entry is free to talks but donations to the church will be much appreciated.



**The Gloucester & Bristol
Branch**



THE RICHARD III SOCIETY



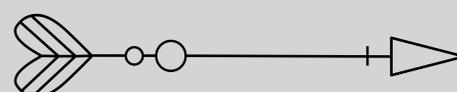
PRESENTS

The Wars of the Roses in The Severn Vale

A study day on **Saturday 7th June 2025** commencing at
10:00am at The Watson Hall, 65 Barton St, Tewkesbury
GL20:5PX

Travel information link <https://www.visittewkesbury.info/>

**PROGRAMME DETAILS ON
THE FOLLOWING PAGE**



09:30 Registration and coffee

10:00

The Berkeley's during the Wars of the Roses – Dr Adam Dolling

The relationship between the family and the Yorkist and Lancastrian regimes as it ebbed and flowed depending on who held the Crown.

11:00 Coffee

11:30

The Wars in the Severn Valley - Stephen David, Swansea University

The role of the peerage and gentry in the counties bordering the Severn estuary and how rivalries between them contributed to the start of the wars.

12:30 Lunch break

14:00

The Herberts and the Wars – Nathan Amin, historical author and TV historian.

The Herbert family , custodians of Raglan Castle and guardians of the young Henry Tudor. How their support for Edward IV affected the Severnside area.

15:00 Tea

15:30

The Newport Ship – Dr Toby Jones.

Discovered in Newport on the River Usk in 2003, the ship dates from c.1450 and probably built in the Basque county. Research efforts are currently focused on plans to reassemble and display. There are suggestions that the ship may have been owned by 'Kingmaker' Richard Neville 16th Earl of Warwick.

16:00 Close

All talks will be followed by a Q & A session

Tickets for the day £25 – to include refreshment, but not lunch

Tickets via Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-wars-of-the-roses-in-the-severn-vale-tickets-1249230755819?aff=oddtcreator>

Purchase by cheque or BACS and all further enquiries to : Angela Iliff, 1 Court Rd, Horfield, Bristol BS7:0UB Email:ardiliff@gmail.com Or visit our website www.richardiiigloucester.co.uk



Mission Statement

'In the belief that many features of the traditional accounts of the character and career of Richard III are neither supported by sufficient evidence nor reasonably tenable, the Society aims to promote in every possible way research into the life and times of Richard III and to secure a reassessment of the material relating to this period and raise awareness of the role in history of this monarch.'