

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



2020-21 Report from the acting Chair

Susan Troxell

To say that the past 12 months was a Most Unusual Year would be an understatement, but I am pleased to report that the American Branch pulled through all the challenges with as much aplomb and steadfastness as can be expected of a volunteer organization like ours. Our first “virtual Zoom” General Membership Meeting went forward without significant hitches and was well-attended by almost 50 members from across the country, generating \$2,400 in net revenue from ticket sales. We received lots of positive feedback on the quality and accessibility of the lectures and the experience gave us some confidence that we can conduct future on-line events. Of course, we would like to have an in-person GMM in 2022, but we on the Executive Board will keep a close eye on whether it would be practicable to do so. If one of our local Chapters would like to act as host for the 2022 GMM, please feel free to step up and be assured that you would have the full support of the Executive Board in planning and hosting it, whether it be in-person or virtual.

One of the challenges we met successfully was getting our large membership to register with the Richard III Society, CLG, in the United Kingdom. It took a great effort on the part of our Membership Chair, but we have achieved a registration rate of close to 90% American Branch members, which is truly excellent news. The UK publications - *Ricardian Bulletin* and *Ricardian* journal – will now be directly mailed to Americans who have completed the CLG registration. The switch to individual direct mailings was primarily motivated by a sudden and very large price increase in international bulk shipments into the US, a cost increase that would have been charged back to the American Branch and may have required an adjustment of Branch membership dues. The Executive Board felt it was imperative to avoid that potential, especially during a global pandemic.

Another opportunity that we seized upon was to send representatives of our Executive Board to the CLG’s Articles of Association Conference, and the Branches and Groups Conference that were conducted virtually from London. Although this required our Vice Chair and Membership Chair to set their alarm clocks at 4 am to participate, it was well worth getting up before dawn to express the unique issues of the American and other overseas branches. For instance, we wanted to make sure that the CLG’s Articles provided a way for overseas members to vote for candidates to the CLG’s Board of Directors and other motions, without having to travel to the UK to cast their votes in person. We also wanted to urge the CLG to continue using on-line tools such as Zoom or YouTube to make their educational lectures more accessible. We are happy to report that the new leadership of the CLG is completely receptive to our concerns, and is willing to be a supportive partner rather than a distant parent. This bodes very well for the future!

However, as with all news, there is some less-than-good to report. The formation of the CLG, and all the associated legal, governance, administrative, organizational, and technical details to be sorted, took a personal toll on some of our elected officers, namely our Chair, Membership Chair, and Secretary, all of whom were voted into office at the 2020 GMM but found it unrealistic to serve out their full terms. The reasons they supplied for stepping down had nothing to do with how the American Branch operates or how the Executive Board governs it, but rather were about their own lack of time or personal administrative expertise to support the Branch at this critical moment of transition with the CLG. We are confident that these burdens will be relaxed once the CLG is fully up and running with all its procedures in place, but it did remind us that we must be very clear and transparent about what serving on the American Branch’s Executive Board requires. Therefore, we want to invite anyone who might be interested in becoming an officer or committee head to attend our quarterly Zoom Board meetings to observe what we do! Please feel free to reach out to me if you wish to do so.

The good news is that the Executive Board was able to recruit some of its most senior and experienced officers and committee heads to fill the vacant positions until the next election in 2022. Wayne Ingalls, who has served as Chair in the past, is now Interim Membership Chair as well as continuing as Public Relations officer. Joan

Szechtman, our editor, is the Interim Secretary. Deborah Kaback remains as our Treasurer, Dr Compton Reeves our Immediate Past Chair, and Nita Musgrove our Chapters Coordinator. New to the American Branch are volunteers Pauline Calkin as our Fiction Librarian, and Andy Hart as our Articles/Archives/AV librarian. And I, of course, have moved from Vice Chair to Chair, in accordance with the Bylaws. We also want to thank Bob Pfile and Jessie Prichard Hunter, for their past service as Sales Officer and former Fiction Librarian.

Finally, on a personal note, I want to say what an honor and privilege it is to serve as Interim Chair especially as it coincides with the 60th Anniversary of the American Branch's founding in 1961. Please do keep an eye out for Wayne Ingall's articles in the *September Ricardian Bulletin and Ricardian Register* which summarize the uniquely wonderful history of our Branch! We have so many achievements to be proud of, and, despite the fact that we live on a continent that Richard III never set foot on, we continue to do him proud by representing his life and legacy in the fullest light possible. Let us virtually raise a toast to our King and to our Branch – may we continue to be beacons encouraging the Fight for Historical Truth. *Loyaulte me lie!*

2020-21 Report from the Vice Chair

Susan Troxell

The major tasks of the Vice Chair are to prepare the agenda for Executive Board meetings, and to fill in as Chair in the event of his/her incapacity or resignation. I have found that serving as Vice Chair was an excellent way to “learn the ropes” and to hear from more senior officers about the branch's organizational history and protocols. On top of these duties, I took the initiative to propose that the American Branch think about redesigning its website (r3.org), which for the past decade has been admirably administered by Canadian Branch member Lisa Holt-Jones. The Executive Board received and accepted a proposal from our immediate past Membership Chair, Cheryl Greer, to totally redesign the website to make it more current to 21st century standards. Cheryl, as you know, received the 2020 Dickon Award for outstanding service to the American Branch, and has been building websites both as a hobby and professionally since the mid 1990s. She is currently the website administrator for her department at the University of Pittsburgh. Cheryl is working with Lisa Holt-Jones, Wayne Ingalls, Joan Szechtman, Colleen Goos, and myself, to support her redesign. We hope to rollout a brand new, visually appealing, and easier-to-navigate website in the next 6 months. Our potential Branch website motto is to join us in the “Fight for the Truth” – something that should appeal to a broad demographic and to all history nerds. We hope you will enjoy the new look!

2020-21 Acting Secretary's Report

Joan Szechtman

Following the successive resignations of Jean Aquino and Justin Smith, the board appointed me as acting secretary August 8, 2021 during an emergency board meeting held for the purpose of filling positions left vacant. The secretarial duties include keeping an accurate record of all proceedings and publishing the minutes.

2020 Editor's Report

Joan Szechtman

In 2020 we continued the two publications: Ricardian Register in March and September with both print and digital editions; and Ricardian Chronicle in June and December as a digital edition. The Register is oriented towards academic articles about Richard III, fifteenth-century English culture, and events around and about the Wars of the Roses.

The March 2020 edition featured an article by Michèle Schindler, “Anne Lovell's Rebellions” and “Errata for Whodunit: The suspects in the Case” by Helen Maurer. The September 2020 edition contained no articles.

The Chronicle is a newsletter that focuses on members' activities, such as meetings, interviews with members, and Ricardian travel logs and is an online publication on our website (r3.org). They are published in June and December.

2020 Treasurer's Report (prepared by Wojeski & Company)

Deborah Kaback

Income	2020	2019
Dues	\$ 27,135.00	\$ 28,544.00
Gift General Fund	\$ -	\$ -
Investment Income Unrealized Gain/Loss	\$ 8,402.00	\$ 8,641.00
Dividends	\$ 4,127.00	\$ 4,370.00
Blue Pay Transactions	\$ -	\$ (65.00)
Amazon Smile	\$ 32.00	\$ 64.00
Interest	\$ -	\$ -
Program Service Fees	\$ 2,451.00	\$ -
Gifts McGee Fund	\$ -	\$ -
Gift Schalleck Fund*	\$ -	\$ -
Gifts Weinsoft Fund	\$ -	\$ -
GMM Destination	\$ -	\$ -
GMM Registration Fees	\$ -	\$ -
Additional Registers	\$ -	\$ -
Total Income	<u>\$ 42,147.00</u>	<u>\$ 41,554.00</u>
Expenses		
UK Society Dues	\$ 10,290.00	\$ 14,704.00
Ricardian Register PPS UK Pub	\$ 5,852.00	\$ 4,987.00
Publication Shipping Bookmaster Sungraphics	\$ 4,164.00	\$ 1,360.00
Fiction Library Expense	\$ -	\$ 147.00
Non Fiction Library Expense	\$ 30.00	\$ -
Bank Wire	\$ 216.00	\$ 191.00
Neon Monthly Fee	\$ 588.00	\$ 196.00
Acc Federal NY State Tax Filing Fees	\$ 4,171.00	\$ 1,150.00
Blue Pay Monthly Fees	\$ 1,167.00	\$ 1,148.00
Conference Calls & Travel	\$ -	\$ 1,762.00
Sales Office Expense	\$ 421.00	\$ 394.00
Blue Pay Volume Fees	\$ -	\$ -
PayPal Transaction	\$ 73.00	\$ 65.00
Printing and Copying	\$ 506.00	\$ -
Reimbursement	\$ 681.00	\$ 7.00
Speaker Fee	\$ 134.00	\$ -
Publicity	\$ -	\$ -
Website	\$ -	\$ -
Bank Fee Adjustments	\$ -	\$ -
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 28,293.00</u>	<u>\$ 26,111.00</u>
Net income	\$ 13,854.00	\$ 15,443.00
Beginning Balance		
Vanguard Total Bond Market Fund Indexs	\$ 162,320.00	\$ 149,309.00
Bank of America Business Fundamentals Checking	\$ 55,001.00	\$ 53,731.00
Paypal	\$ 5,480.00	\$ 4,319.00
	<u>\$ 222,801.00</u>	<u>\$ 207,359.00</u>
Ending Balance		
Vanguard Total Bond Market Fund Indexs	\$ 174,849.00	\$ 162,319.00
Bank of America Business Fundamentals Checking	\$ 54,263.00	\$ 55,001.00
Paypal	\$ 7,543.00	\$ 5,480.00
	<u>\$ 236,655.00</u>	<u>\$ 222,800.00</u>

2020-21 Report from the Interim Membership Chair

Wayne Ingalls

Following the resignation of Buffy Tarbox-Martin, the Executive Board sought a volunteer to take over the duties of the Membership Chair. I was appointed to serve out Buffy's term as Interim Membership Chair by the Board on November 22, 2020. Former Membership Chair Cheryl Greer was extremely helpful in bringing me up to speed.

As of this report, the American Branch has 329 members. While our current trend is flat, there has been a slow decline in membership numbers over the years. In October 2018, we stood at 365 members.

Our Parent Society in the UK moved to establish the Richard III Society as a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG) to give it proper legal standing as an organization in the UK. Since the CLG is a new legal entity, American Branch members were asked to voluntarily register to join the CLG. There was and is no additional cost to join the CLG (American Branch membership dues cover the cost), but our Branch members had to register with the CLG to continue to receive the UK publications, vote in CLG elections, and attend CLG events. Of our 329 members, 308 (94%) are also registered members of the Richard III Society, Ltd., UK (CLG). Beginning in December 2020, I began to send in the CLG registration forms by email to the CLG for all new members who joined the American Branch (unless they opted out).

In late May 2021, I represented the American Branch in a Branches and Groups Conference via Zoom. The meeting was attended by representatives from across the UK as well as Canada and Australia. The meeting was to discuss the status of Branches and Groups in the CLG. The meeting clarified some terminology questions and noted that only registered CLG members may vote in CLG elections. I discussed some of our Branch's concerns regarding the CLG, explained our legal status as a non-profit corporation under US law, and touched on some of our unique nuances based on our Branch's By-Laws. Susan Troxell provided the Parent Society with a read-ahead so they knew of our concerns in advance of the conference. The summary of the conference is that the Parent Society understands the American Branch far better than before. Matt Lewis, the CLG Chairman, noted that his intent is to have a "light touch" as much as possible with regard to Branches and Groups.

Beginning in March 2021, the CLG began to mail CLG publications directly to registered CLG members of the American Branch. This has not gone without some hiccups. I have helped to update and correct mailing addresses of our members, working closely with our contacts in the UK. Nevertheless, there have been some delayed, lost or even missing publications. Many of these issues were clearly the result of miscues by the US Postal Service. The CLG received our reports of missing publications and acted quickly to replace them. Still, delivery from the UK seems agonizingly slow. Because of these delays, the CLG began notifying all members when mailings occur and when they may be expected to arrive.

I always enjoy the responses to email blasts as well as notes received in the mail accompanying dues payments. Thank you for letting me continue to serve the American Branch.

2020 Chapters Coordinator Report

Nita Musgrave

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been little to report from the chapters. The Illinois Chapter have had zoom meetings and are hoping to get back to in person as soon as possible.

I was contacted on two occasions by people wanting to start chapters. I gave them the information they needed but have not heard further. Some people needed to be informed that could not start a branch of the society unless they were themselves members. Hopefully, when the situation with this virus is resolved, it will be easier for members to start a chapter.

2021 Fiction Library Report

Pauline Calkin

Jessie Prichard Hunter resigned as fiction librarian in December 2020 and I am honored and pleased to have been asked to take over the position. The transfer of books to my custody is complete. Although over 20 volumes were lost in transit, replacements have been found for all but two of the lost or missing books, including a 1913 first edition of Dora Greenwell McChesney's *The Confession of Richard Plantagenet*. Replacements could not be found for *Cry for Reason Thrice* (1977) by Eva McDonald and *Dark Betrothal* (1938), a play by T.B. Morris. The 1966 Heinemann Educational Books edition of Gordon Daviot's (Josephine Tey) two-act play *Dickon* (reviewed in the March *Register*) was acquired; previously, the library possessed only a photocopy of the play.

I have received very few member requests to borrow books. In an effort to encourage members to avail themselves of this free resource, reviews of some of our books, especially those that are not readily available elsewhere, will be published in the Ricardian Register.

Karen Abbey Nuckolls donated *Harry of Monmouth* by A.M. Maugham and *A Dangerous Inheritance* by Alison Weir.

Other acquisitions this year are:

Soldier I and Meeting the Past (Soldier, Part 2) by Maryann Benbow

Dickon's Diaries #3 by Joanne R. Larner & Susan Lamb

The Road Not Travelled edited by J.R. Larner

The Colour of Evil by Toni Mount

Cecily Neville has inspired two recent novels that have been added: *The Queen's Rival* by Anne O'Brien and *Cecily* by Annie Garthwaite.

The Autumn Baron by Michele Schindler

Yorkist Stories edited by Michele Schindler

Soldier I and *The Colour of Evil* are reviewed in the September *Register*. Reviews of the other recent acquisitions will appear in upcoming editions.

An updated catalogue of the library's books will be posted on the Society's website later this year.

2020 Annual Report from Research Library

Susan Troxell, Research Librarian

A significant change occurred by splitting off the books in the research library from journals, magazines, articles, Branch archives, and audio-visual materials, the latter forming the "Articles Archives AV Library" or "AAA Library". Member Andy Hart graciously volunteered to house the AAA library in his residence and it was transferred to him in February. Andy will be a wonderful custodian of the materials! This was necessary because the volume of materials was growing to the point of making it too cumbersome for one volunteer to manage. Our book collection is close to 650 texts, and a few acquisitions were made in 2021, in part due to generous donations from members. As librarian of the non-fiction research library, I am maintaining a conservative approach to acquiring more books, as the number of borrowers is low. However, I did receive requests from new Branch members who were asking for primary source materials to help them understand Richard III's time period. The most requested book was the Crowland Chronicle (Pronay & Cox edition), showing how erudite our membership is and how timeless certain accounts are!

New Acquisitions:

D. Embree & M. Tavormina, *The Contemporary English Chronicles of the Wars of the Roses* (2019, reviewed in the 2020 Ricardian journal)

Alexander Brondarbit, *Power Brokers and the Yorkist State 1461-1485* (2020)

Mike Ingram, *Richard III and the Battle of Bosworth* (2019)

Rosemary Horrox, *Richard III: A Failed King?* (2020)

The non-fiction research library accepts donations of books, but please be aware that we cannot accept duplicates or books of general historical interest. Please contact Susan Troxell, Research Librarian, at researchlibrary@r3.org should you wish to borrow or donate.