

# RICARDIAN CHRONICLE



Vol. 8 No.2

December, 2022

Newsletter by and about members of the American Branch of the Richard III Society

## Celebrating 60 Years at 2022 GMM

The American Branch celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a branch of the Richard III Society with a hybrid in-person and remote gathering at the Hyatt Regency Dulles in the Washington DC area from October 28, 29, and 30, 2022. The remote attendees were able to join us via zoom Oct. 29<sup>th</sup> for presentations from Carol Ann Lloyd and Dr. Devries and for the business meeting where we voted for officers and updated bylaws.

Photos of the GMM submitted by Liz Bateman, Lynn Rubini, Sandra Lastowka, Tim Mulligan, Susan Troxell, David Stifel, Nance Crawford and others.



Dinner with friends, new and old  
Joan Szechtman, Pauline Calkin,  
Nance Crawford, Sandra  
Lastowka, David Stifel, Ed Monahan



Banquet dress  
Kate Skegg, Joyce & Tony  
Tumea, Wayne Ingalls



End of Festivities  
Carol & Willow, Joan

See full article and more photos on page 3 following the table of contents.

# Contents

<b>2022 GMM A RESOUNDING SUCCESS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Ricardian Encounters</b>	<b>5</b>
Canadian & American Branches Debunk Shakespeare at Stratford Festival	5
Richard III: Discovered and Uncovered	6
My Ricardian Journey	7
<b>Introducing 2023 Schallek Fellowship winner: Amy Juarez</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Off the Beaten Path Reviews</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>In Memoriam: Bertram Fields</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>The Missing Princes in America Project</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Board, Staff, and Chapter Contacts</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Membership Application/Renewal Dues</b>	<b>14</b>

## Publication schedule and submission deadlines:

The *Ricardian Chronicle* is published semi-annually, June and December. Submission deadlines are:  
May 15<sup>th</sup> for the June issue and November 15<sup>th</sup> for the December issue.

## What type of article will be published in the *Chronicle*?

The *Ricardian Chronicle* is a newsletter by and about members and chapters of the American Branch of the Richard III Society. This is the publication to share your stories about Ricardian and related trips and events.

## Submission guidelines:

Text: 12 pt Times New Roman, Calibri, or Arial font, document file type can be rtf, doc, docx, or odt. (Sorry, I cannot accept pdf document type or non-standard fonts.)

Please contact me at [info@r3.org](mailto:info@r3.org)

## 2022 GMM A RESOUNDING SUCCESS

Susan Troxell

After a long pause due to Covid-19, the General Membership Meeting of the American Branch of the Richard III Society was held on October 28-30 at the Hyatt Regency Dulles Airport hotel and business center. Thirty-five members and their partners traveled from Arizona, California, Colorado, Delaware, Illinois, Oklahoma, Ohio, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. An additional twenty members attended by Zoom. This was the first time the American Branch did a “hybrid” conference, and it allowed representatives of the UK Richard III Society CLG to participate from the other side of the Atlantic.

Members began to arrive on Friday, and were so happy to see each other again. The last in-person GMM was more than four years ago in Detroit, so there was much to catch up on while browsing the numerous delightful Ricardian items on the silent auction, used book sale, and raffle tables, at which over \$750 would be raised during the weekend.

Saturday’s session got off to a smashing start following a delicious breakfast buffet with speaker Carol Ann Lloyd, whose talk, entitled, “A Network of Power and Politics: The Family of Richard III,” captivated the audience with a concise yet sweeping account of the tangled histories of Edward III’s children. Bobbie Franks followed up with a presentation on the Missing Princes Project in America, and amazed the audience by showing how many medieval English documents were located in American collections, as well as the challenges that existed in deciphering them.



Following lunch, Professor Kelly DeVries of Loyola University-Maryland gave a talk on the use of gunpowder weapons before and during the Wars of the Roses, on the Continent and in England. It was fascinating to learn that this new technology was used more widely in battle than previously thought, and prompted poets like Geoffrey Chaucer and Shakespeare to use them as literary devices.



The business meeting followed, and members had the opportunity to review and discuss the American Branch’s current position and future goals, approve the 2023-24 budget, approve the proposed new Bylaws, and elect the incoming Board of Directors, the following of whom will serve until the 2024 GMM:



Chair of the Board	Susan Troxell
Vice Chair	(Vacant)
Treasurer	Deborah Kaback
Membership Chair	Wayne Ingalls
Secretary	Sally Keil
Director at Large	Carole Bell
Director at Large	Mary Miller
Director at Large	Joan Szechtman
Immediate Past Chair	Dr Compton Reeves

UK Chair Matt Lewis and the Branches and Groups Liaison Officer Jane Trump were able to contribute verbally to the business meeting and take questions. Matt Lewis explained the current outlook for the UK Richard III Society CLG, and how their future decisions might impact overseas branches. Jane Trump helpfully explained her role as BGLO in acting as an intermediary between the UK’s Board of Directors and the Society’s branches and groups.

Saturday night saw the medieval-themed dinner banquet, with many members wearing historical garb and uniting in joy to celebrate King Richard’s good name and the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the American Branch. David Stifel began by reading “King Richard’s Prayer”, and our chair Susan Troxell offered a toast to the longevity of our branch. She announced the following winners of the Dickon Awards for exceptional volunteer service in the past 2 years:



Pauline Calkin	Current Fiction Librarian
Liz Bateman	Chair of the Tidewater VA Chapter

Congratulations to Pauline and Liz for receiving these well-deserved honors!

Susan also announced that the Board had voted unanimously to bestow a Lifetime Honorary Membership to the American Branch on the following member:

Dr. Compton Reeves      Lifetime Honorary Member  
Former Chair and Current Research Officer

Dr Reeves has been a dedicated patron since he first joined in 1968, writing many articles for the Branch's and UK Society's publications, giving talks at our GMMs, using his academic connections to procure excellent speakers, and serving on our Executive Committee. We are deeply grateful for his many years of service.

Following dinner, we were treated to a concert by the early music ensemble Hesperus Trio Nova, who performed music from the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries, with voice, lute, and viola di gamba. Beautifully expressed in an intimate setting, it felt like we had been transported back in time to the chamber of a great medieval lord or lady.

Sunday morning's program started off with Dr Compton Reeves' excellent talk on how older people in the medieval age worked and enjoyed their lives. He shattered many myths, including that people did not live past the age of 30 and found life cruel and harsh if they did live after 30. There was a panoply of ways older people would find themselves to be of use and to engage in leisurely recreation.

Wrapping up the GMM was a live broadcast from the UK of Matt Lewis's interview with Philippa Langley about "The Lost King" movie - to be released in America on March 23, 2023. Philippa answered many questions about the movie, how it got started, where it was filmed, and why she was thrilled with Sally Hawkins' portrayal even though she sports short brunette hair rather than Philippa's signature golden locks. She shared many insights on her relationship with the University of Leicester and addressed some of the ongoing controversy about how certain officials are depicted. We will have to wait until its March 23 release in America to enjoy this film.

The success of the 2022 GMM was due primarily to teamwork and a stellar group of people from both the branch, especially Liz Bateman and Susan Troxell, and the venue. We had a wonderful event coordinator, Jaime Issa, and a terrific audio-visual technician, Gabe Lungu, who saw that our hybrid "experiment" went off smoothly, professionally, and without a hitch.

Perhaps the GMM's success is best summed up by all the feedback we received from members, both new and old. Bobbie Franks commented: "What truly amazed me was the Ricardian fellowship and the enthusiasm. Although I didn't meet everyone personally, the folks I did meet were friendly and welcoming." Maria Torres observed that "the speakers were absolutely enthralling—I could have listened to Compton's thoughts on old age in our period all day long". Carol Frisbee told us this was her first GMM, "and I loved it! So many people of like minds, now friends. This GMM was totally a wonderful experience for me, and I hope to be able to participate more often, health permitting." Tim and Bonnie Mulligan wrote that "the time passed so quickly, we did not get to meet everyone who attended, but we greatly enjoyed talking with everyone we did get to know. The food was great (we were stuffed on Saturday), the books for sale represented some really outstanding titles, my wife [Bonnie] was fortunate with her raffle tickets, and she was delighted to win the auction for the beautiful print of Richard at Middleham Castle!"

We also had someone come to our GMM who was not a member but was very eager and curious to learn more about Richard III and our society:

Being in attendance at the GMM this past weekend was a dream come true and another priority on my bucket list. Well run, professional with terrific speakers, the GMM made such a positive impression on a newbie Ricardian like me. Also, having the opportunity to meet like-minded proponents of the King's true legacy opened my eyes intellectually, spiritually and emotionally. Each and every member was kind enough to provide me, literally and figuratively, a seat at the table. The comradery was contagious. I would highly recommend to anyone interested in finding the truth and assisting in fulfilling King Richard III's true legacy, to join the Richard III Society of America. Thanks again for a wonderful time. Cordially,  
Sandra L.

Hopefully, we will see many members at our next GMM in 2024. We are thrilled to announce that it will be held in Santa Fe, NM and will be hosted by Dawn and Pete Shafer from the Rocky Mountain Chapter. We are in very good hands with Dawn and Pete in charge.

**See you in Santa Fe in 2024!**

~Contents~



## RICARDIAN ENCOUNTERS

### Canadian & American Branches Debunk Shakespeare at Stratford Festival

Sheilah O'Connor, Susan Troxell

Two Society branches participated in a panel talk about *Richard III* as part of the Stratford Festival's Meighen Forum series. The talk, *Richard III: Discovered and Uncovered*, featured Sheilah O'Connor of the Canadian Branch, Susan Troxell of the American Branch, Shakespeare expert Professor Randall Martin, and moderator David Prosser, former Literary & Editorial Director of the festival. The talk was a tie-in to the festival's staging of the play, starring Colm Feore in the leading role.

Addressing a full-capacity audience, Sheilah and Susan took aim at the many inaccuracies in *Richard III* and showed how the 2012 discovery of the king's remains upended the traditional narrative. Special credit was given to Philippa Langley and the *Looking for Richard* team in achieving one of the greatest archaeological discoveries in recent memory. A lively Q&A followed and time ran out before all the audience's questions could be taken, but the last one was particularly interesting: "What does it feel like to be part of a Society that is challenging received history?"

Sheilah reported her experience of the event:

One of the subjects that I was asked to speak about were the problems with the play, so I made a point of seeing it well before our event. It had already been clear that Artistic Director Antoni Cimolino was more aware of the real Richard III than many directors and indeed, as the audience came in and found their seats, we saw what was clearly the Dig in Leicester. There was an interesting piece of business as one person in a hazmat suit climbed down into a pit while a woman in wellies spoke to reporters – all in silence. Then all that was swept away and Colm Feore as Richard III climbed out of his grave to speak those famous first lines. There was no hunchback in this production but cleverly sewn clothing indicated the scoliosis beneath. Yet Cimolino's knowledge of the real Richard did not change the essential story. Indeed, in one horrifying scene, the older of the two princes is smothered to death on stage, not off. This powerful production was a useful reminder of why so many people believe Shakespeare's version and so I was determined to use my 15 minutes at the Meighen Form event well, talking about the Society, the inaccuracies in the play and the real Richard.

The audience was eager to hear us, laughed in all the right places, and were silent and attentive as Susan discussed how everything came together 10 years ago. Many people rushed to speak to us when it was over and clearly, we could have gone on for much longer.

Susan recalled:

I had been asked to talk about the 2012 discovery of the king's remains. I was immediately struck by the energy in the audience, they came loaded with curiosity about Richard III and the Society. I was so glad that Sheilah and I brought materials for a promotional table - they took almost all of the Ricardian Bulletins we had set out and so many of our brochures, too! Another thing that impressed me was how open-minded the other panelists were. Professor Martin emphasized that Shakespeare's play was not meant to be taken as literal history; it had been written at a time of great uncertainty about the successor to the aging Elizabeth I and there was a widespread fear of civil war and tyranny in the air. Antoni Cimolino, who directed the play, took that same interpretation, saying in his Director's Notes that the Tudors needed to smear Richard III in order to deflect from their own negligible claim to the throne and to minimize their years of unlawful executions and political assassinations. Maybe I'm being optimistic, but I felt a shift had happened in the way the public was beginning to see the king versus the play. Of course, many Ricardians turned out for the event, so maybe we were "preaching to the choir", but afterwards, I spoke with many

people who were previously unaware of the Society and very eager to learn more. In all, it was a brilliant event that I hope can be repeated in future seasons of the Stratford Festival. I would certainly encourage the Society to participate again.

The Stratford Festival began 70 years ago as Canada's premiere Shakespeare festival. It has since grown to become one of North America's largest fine arts festivals, featuring diverse performances ranging from classical Greek drama to Broadway musicals to experimental theater. In its first season, Alec Guinness played the lead role in Shakespeare's *Richard III*, establishing a long association between the festival and the play.

Sheilah O'Connor is Secretary of the Canadian Branch. Susan Troxell is Acting Chair and Research Librarian of the American Branch. For information about these branches, go to [richardiii.ca](http://richardiii.ca) and [r3.org](http://r3.org).

~Contents~

Richard III: Discovered and Uncovered

Antoni Cimolino, Artistic Director

The Stratford Festival

Meighen Forum Event—Peer into the Playbill

Thursday July 7, 2022

Lazaridis Hall

The Tom Patterson Theatre

The participants at this event were Sheilah O'Connor, Membership and Corresponding Secretary of the Canadian Branch of the Richard III Society; Susan Troxell, Chair of the American Branch of the Richard III Society; Professor Randall Martin, Adjunct Research Professor at Western University and former University Research Professor at the University of New Brunswick; and David Prosser, the former Literary and Editorial Director at the Stratford Festival.

Lazaridis Hall seats 199 people and there were 175 at this event. You could feel the excitement in the air! Sheilah O'Connor did a wonderful, and very informative, presentation about the "real" Richard III. We heard about his public life and his many good works, his relationship with his brothers, his love for his wife and son, and Richard's deeply felt grief at his son's death. Ms. O'Connor also spoke of the actual dates and timelines of people and events, as opposed to Shakespeare's version. With the use of very interesting slides, Ms. O'Connor revealed many of the truths, and "Shakespearean" untruths, about Richard III. She also spoke about The Richard III Society, its Mission Statement, and why people generally join the Society. It was a fascinating presentation, and the audience was completely captivated. There were many murmurings throughout the presentation and much nodding of heads.

Susan Troxell went through the process of how, who, and when the search for Richard III's remains began. Ms. Troxell showed slides of the parking lot, the dig, Richard III's skeleton, and of the coffin at the reinternment ceremony at Leicester Cathedral. Many in the audience had obviously followed this miraculous discovery in 2010, as people recognized such names as Philippa Langley and John Ashdown-Hill. The various tests done on the skeleton were explained by Ms. Troxell and she showed the picture of the people who are descendants of Richard III through his mother. Again, many nods of heads and murmurings throughout the audience!

Professor Martin focused on the play and provided many insights into the characters, and how many of the speeches in the play reflected the political atmosphere and issues of the time in which the play was performed, such as the question of succession when Queen Elizabeth I would eventually die. He pointed out how the play is so relevant to current times and, without naming names, the tyrants we see in the world today. More murmurings and nods! Professor Martin explained that Shakespeare wrote entertainment, and that actual historical events were sacrificed for a piece of good theatre. This play was one of Shakespeare's most popular and was always a bestseller.

The audience was totally engaged during the presentation. People asked all kinds of questions from, what happened to Richard's feet, to why didn't Richard make a statement, at the time, about the disappearance of the Princes in the Tower? David Prosser did a wonderful job as moderator, asking his own in-depth questions, and passing on the questions sent up from the audience. The presenters agreed that the common perception of Richard III is perpetuated by the play. They hoped people would remember that it is a play, and would make the effort to

discover the real Richard III. When the Forum event came to an end there was a huge round of applause, and dozens of people surged toward the stage to speak further with the presenters. One lady said she was so thrilled by what she had just heard that she plans to join The Society as soon as possible. All of the audience, no matter what level of their knowledge about the topic, came away definitely knowing more about the real Richard III, the "digging for Richard," and the reasons underlying Shakespeare's portrayal of Richard III. The panel talk was a great success! Congratulations to Sheilah O'Connor, Susan Troxell, and Randall Martin.

~Contents~

## My Ricardian Journey

James F. Minor

I have always been interested in how people found Richard III and came to be proponents of the King. As a sort of "Thank you" for all of your hard work, I thought you might be interested in my story. Perhaps others have more interesting or compelling stories...this one is mine.

I first became aware of King Richard III of England around 1962. During the last period of school on Fridays, we were allowed to read whatever we wanted, I chose *The World Book* encyclopedia. Most entries had suggestions for related entries. Eventually, after starting with "airplanes," I came to the Kings of England and France. Reading about monarchs made it possible to move around the classroom, having to constantly change volumes from Edward to Henry to Richard, and so on. I could even stand at one of the large casement windows and read. I was interested in Richard I, the Lionhearted, but he was disappointing, as was Richard II. But Richard III caught my imagination.

Every other king seemed to get a fair shake but not Richard III. Right from the start, in every encyclopedic source I could find, it was usurpation, misshapen monster, murderer, the most evil of all uncles, etc. Having been myself several times the victim of mis- or mal-information (it's an old problem, tattle-tale classmates and tattle-tale sisters...one could not escape them). I felt a sort of kinship with Richard III. The 1956 edition of *Compton's Pictured Encyclopedia*, Volume 12, Q-R, said that under the Tudors "feudal anarchy gave way to centralized government" and the modern age. My first thought was, "Who wrote this?" Even at the age of 12, I knew this was bunk. We Catholics are not fond of the Tudors (if we think of them at all anymore). I thought, without Henry VII there would have been no Henry the V-8. We called him Henry the V-8 because with six wives, and thousands of Catholics dead, he always had his motor running.

As a Catholic, I was very disappointed to find that much of the bad material about Richard III came from the unfinished writings of Saint Thomas More...and that More influenced Shakespeare, thus giving us the unsavory portrait most people have of Richard today. I wondered if St. Thomas would have written differently or more carefully if he had known he himself would be executed by a Tudor king? I don't think he set out to be a famous martyr.

After college and marriage, an encounter that brought me back to Richard III was a visit to the Tower of London in 1977. My wife and I were there during the Summer of No Rain and the Queen's Silver Jubilee. It was there that I really began to understand and appreciate the efforts the founders of the US went to in writing the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. It was a real attempt to protect individuals from the mob and to protect "we the people" from the government itself.

Our guide at the Tower of London was very good and helped to fill in the missing pieces I needed to understand the world that Richard III and others lived in. No protection from the bad mouths of neighbors back then...oh...we now do harm to people in this way again with cancel culture...and we apparently also once again try to hold the children responsible for the sins of the fathers and mothers. Are we stepping back into the Middle Ages' feudal environment?

One of my supervising officers in the Army, a female captain named Laura, listened to me talk about Richard III and what little I had been able to learn. It was not long before she brought me a copy of Josephine Tey's *Daughter of Time*. I was hooked, really hooked on Richard with that book. I read every scrap I could find on Richard, not easy in those pre-internet days.

While teaching a university class on the US Constitution to police officers, I included an interlude about the murder of the two princes. I presented the facts and speculations fairly. But they were not interested. One female

detective sergeant told me, "Like we don't get enough of this at work. I got five murders on my plate right now...I do not need another one. I don't care about the princes. I don't care about Morton's Salt or fork or whatever. Sheesh, it's a five-hundred-year-old cold case!" This was back in 1996 and 1997.

Finally, in about 2001, *The Other Boleyn Girl* came out and then was made into a movie. There was interest in the right time period again. And then it was, to paraphrase Admiral David Farragut at the Battle of Mobile Bay, "Damn the Tudors and full speed ahead" (he said "Torpedoes"). All kinds of stuff came out about this period, including *The Red Queen* and *The White Queen* and some other colored queen and *The Tudors* on HBO. Then there were works coming out such as *Royal Blood: Richard III and the Mystery of the Princes* by Bertram Fields, *Richard III: The Maligned King* by Annette Carson, *The War of the Roses: The Fall of the Plantagenets and the Rise of the House of the Tudors* by Dan Jones, and then my favorite, *The King's Grave: The Discovery of Richard III's Lost Burial Place and the Clues It Holds* by Philippa Langley and Michael Jones.

I also loved watching such shows on TV as *Richard III: the King in the Car Park* and *Britain's Real Monarch*. I have newspaper articles, Google printouts and my Ricardian journals. And I believe that Philippa Langley should be elevated to a professional level. But regardless, her name will always and forever be linked to a king.

I am a private pilot and I was slammed by what I assume were two violent dry wind shears on the same day. I ended up in physical therapy. My wife had just given me a copy of *The King's Grave* and I held back on reading it until I was going to physical therapy twice a week. It made me feel a little like the policeman in *Daughter of Time*.

On the day the therapy began, while I was being warmed up and stretched, the guy at the next table said, "Whatcha readin'?" I said it was a book about finding the resting place of Richard III of England. And this friendly redneck (I guess I'm an Oklahoma redneck, too), said, "Man, I heard a that guy. I just saw a thing on PBS or the History Channel. I dunno which. What's his deal?"

I actually looked forward to going to physical therapy, but soon the nine weeks were over. The therapists had heard all the Richard III they ever wanted to hear. I've often wondered if the guy who was next to me ever thought of Richard again. Now I only have my family and potential new friends to talk to when I hear anything new about Richard, the Plantagenets or the Lancasters. My family usually saves newcomers by taking them by their arms and saying, "If he brings up Richard III, run."

Not long ago the documentary, *Britain's Real Monarch* was on TV again. I forgot that Michael Abney-Hastings, the once possible real heir to the British throne, who died in 2012, was an anti-monarchist. Well, he would be an anti-monarchist, wouldn't he? No one's going to give him a crown and a scepter. All he is likely to get, if that, is "Not sorry for the last 500 years...just be happy your people somehow survived."

So maybe Richard should have never been king. It comes down to what the young people say, "...this is what we got." Richard III was king, and his line did not survive. Clarence's descendants were not kings, but they did survive. Which family was luckiest?

To Richard III, every time I think of him in the morning, I salute him with a cup of Folger's and a hearty, "To the King!"

~Contents~



## Introducing 2023 Schallek Fellowship winner: Amy Juarez

Cheryl Greer, Webmaster

(First published at [r3.org/2023-schallek-fellowship/](https://r3.org/2023-schallek-fellowship/))



The American Branch is thrilled to announce that the winner of the 2023 Schallek Fellowship is Amy Juarez, a Ph.D. candidate in English Literature at the University of California-Riverside. The \$30,000 fellowship will help support Amy with writing her dissertation next year.

Amy writes:

My dissertation, entitled “The Poetics of Embodied Architecture in Medieval and Early Modern Europe,” takes as its central concern how Vitruvian craft undergirds late-medieval and early modern conceptions of embodiment, and how writers from these periods use these ideologies in and through their own literary discourses. My project argues that the “Vitruvian Man” is the basis for more complex and nuanced depictions of the body-as-building dynamic than previously understood in late-medieval and early modern cultures from the twelfth to sixteenth centuries. Accordingly, this dissertation explores four modes of Vitruvian technology in literary texts, tying theories of architectural embodiment to ekphrastic encounters, to microarchitectural experiences, to humoral diagnoses, and to a miniaturized version of the “Vitruvian Man” himself. Literary representations of these four processes make visible a deep interest in Vitruvius’s ancient philosophies in the medieval and early modern periods; at the same time they simultaneously complicate Vitruvian notions of architecture as an embodied form of expression. As my project will show, Vitruvian craft, or *techne*, is more than mere metaphor in medieval and early modern poetry; in fact, the Vitruvian Virtues are evoked as real architectural tropes in rhetorical practices from these periods.

Under the tenure of the Schallek Fellowship, I plan to research and write my first and third chapters. I’ll dedicate the beginning four to five months of my time as a Schallek Fellow to researching and writing for the third chapter, while the subsequent 4-5 months will be spent on chapter 1. My third chapter, in specific, requires me to look at John Lydgate’s *The Dietary*, found in MS. Ashmole 61, which is housed in the Bodleian Library: I expect to travel here to gain access to the archival materials in the Fall of 2023. The Getty Research Institute also holds archival objects of importance to my project, some of which include editions of Alberti’s treatise, and is located within driving distance of my home institution. Because of my proximity to this institution, I plan to visit the Getty to conduct research also during the beginning phases of my Schallek tenure ship

The privilege of the Schallek Fellowship will enable me the dedicated time and financial support to complete my dissertation. My home institution requires me to teach whilst in my dissertation year, which places pressure on me to balance my role as a teacher and researcher—both of which are extremely important to my professional development. Having the Schallek Fellowship would allow me to focus solely on the dissertation, alleviating me from my teaching responsibilities, and providing me space to prioritize my research and writing. While I work on my dissertation, the Schallek Fellowship would provide sustained financial security which will allow me to put more mental energy and labor into the project than possible without funding.

### **The American Branch congratulates Amy on her achievement!**

The Schallek Awards program memorializes Dr. William B. Schallek, whose vision and generosity established the original scholarship fund, and his wife, Maryloo Spooner Schallek. Today the program is supported by a \$1.4 million endowment and is administered by the Medieval Academy of America. Beginning in 2004, the program offers five annual dissertation awards of \$2,000 each and a dissertation fellowship of \$30,000 annually.

## Off the Beaten Path Reviews

For the most part, our reviews have focused on both fiction and non-fiction books, but there are many other forms of media that hadn't been reviewed. So, for the newsletter, I'm introducing a different sort of review section, where our focus will include movies, art and graphic novels, puzzles, video and board games, pod casts, and of course, movies.



Kanno, A. *Requiem of the Rose King Issues 1-10*. San Francisco. Viz Media, 2015-2019.

While I was working in a public library I frequently shelved the *Requiem of the Rose King* series by Aya Kanno. As a mixed media artist, the artwork on the covers and within each volume always caught my eye. I am glad I picked up the series to read and found it to be far more multidimensional than I had previously assumed Manga to be.

As mentioned the artwork is absolutely fantastic and above all I personally appreciated the level of artistic talent involved. There are some necessary artistic liberties taken in the series to connect ancient norms and dress to modern ones. For example, Richard's modern and somewhat modern Goth appearance makes it clear that from the start Richard felt and looked different from other people. I do not think his Goth appearance is so much Kanno's idea of Richard being "evil", but that this draws in modern young adults, or even older ones such as me who went through a Goth phase, because we can relate more to Richard through his appearance.

Characters such as Richard III Duke of York, Edward IV, and a few other people close to Richard appear magnificently larger than life, handsome, and intelligent. However Edward and many others eventually fade over time as Richard learns of their weaknesses and vices. In contrast some characters such as Richard's mother Cecily, brother George, and Henry VI are all troubling figures for Richard (and the reader) to understand. The artwork and dialogue portraying them through the story is decidedly darker, crueler, predatory, or ambiguous.

Kanno includes moral or personality struggles that Richard has throughout the storyline. For example Joan of Arc begins to appear to him as a taunting witch while he was a young child and was struggling to fit in with his family. Additionally Richard forges a friendship with a white boar who functions as a guide when Richard feels lost. Last after Richard's father dies, he appears to Richard and continues to encourage Richard providing him with love and acceptance, especially since he knows that Richard is intersex.

As Richard grows he interacts with more people outside of his close family who suspect that there is something different about him. Like many kids who are different in some way, he becomes a target of people who want to figure out why he is different. Some find ways to take advantage of him, spy on him, or outright assault him. To counter this he tries to prove himself as a worthy son of York, brother, and later as a warrior. Others continue to attempt to hold him back in achieving these goals.

Since I did not read past Volume 10, I cannot say how Kanno finishes the series. I can say that she incorporates many of Shakespeare's ideas. These include playing on light, dark, and grey personalities as well as moral questions to be pondered by the main character. However Kanno also includes modern situations such as LGBTQAI+ experiences. Homosexual, bisexual, asexual, and nonbinary people have lived among us since the beginning of time. Today more people are open about their gender or sexuality than in the past few centuries, but unfortunately as with the story, sexual, physical, and emotional violence against the community, and sometimes within, is still rampant.

Kanno also includes the specter of child abuse. These issues in the story were actually quite personal for me and anyone who experienced any one or all of these forms of abuse may have gut wrenching responses to the story. I do have issues with the portrayal of Henry VI because Kanno links homosexuality with child sexual abuse predators. Certainly there have been non-heterosexual child predators, but the majority are not and people in the LGBTQAI+ community do experience violent attacks because people conflate them with predators.

On the other hand for some young adults who experienced the abuses that Richard does in the story, he could be seen as a kindred spirit. I know for me, as a minimal speaking Autistic child, who had a mother who could not accept that I am different, I related strongly to Richard and Cecily's relationship in the story. I also have a father

who has always been there for me so I related to Richard and his father. I can understand how one parent may be seen in a heroic light as Richard sees his father.

In conclusion *Requiem of the Rose King* by Aya Kanno is fantastic in its depth, artistic talent, and integration of many of today's issues in society. Many of Richard's experiences hit too close to home for me to continue it, but I do think it's brilliant. The series was definitely influenced by Shakespeare's Richard III and Henry VI and his way of using moral questions to shape the main character. Most readers will be able to relate to Kanno's Richard in some way, whether through his relationships with his family, friends, and community or through his struggles with himself.

One final point I want to make is that it is important to know that Manga is read back to front rather than front to back. Additionally following each picture and dialogue can be tricky but I was able to figure out Kanno's style fairly easily. I think people should definitely give Manga a try, if not *Requiem of the Rose King*, then maybe another series.—CGoos

### ~Contents~

## In Memoriam: Bertram Fields

Susan Troxell

Bertram Fields, prominent Hollywood attorney and author of *Royal Blood: Richard III and the Mystery of the Princes*, passed away on August 7, 2022, aged 93, due to complications of Covid-19. *Royal Blood* is a lawyerly analysis of the accusation that Richard III murdered the Princes in the Tower. The book garnered commercial success and positive reviews in the Wall Street Journal, Publisher's Weekly, and other media outlets.

Fields became a member of the American Branch of the Richard III Society in 1994. In an interview with Charlie Rose on American public television, he explained how he became interested in writing about Richard III. 'My father asked me "when will you do something serious with your life?" I thought, I have spent 40 years trying cases and have written two novels – wasn't that serious enough?' Fields had always been fascinated with English history, and he sensed that the case against Richard III was riddled with holes.

I approached it (*Royal Blood*) as I would a law case: We were trying Richard III. We look at motive, opportunity, proclivity to kill, other suspects. The conclusion: No jury in the world would convict this man based on the evidence. Can I prove he didn't do it? No,' Fields told Rose. He examined the historical material that blamed Richard for the princes' demise, and determined those sources were demonstrably unreliable. As for Shakespeare's play, it was 'clearly libelous' but the ultimate fault for its portrayal rested with Henry VII and later Tudor monarchs, who had 'almost no claim to the throne, therefore [they] had to create this myth that Richard was this terrible guy.

Ricardians around the globe welcomed Fields' book as a breath of fresh air, coming from someone outside the established historical community. And they might have savored a particular irony: it was by reading Charles Ross's often-negative biography of the king that he learned about the Society and joined up. In researching *Royal Blood*, he was a frequent user of the American Branch's non-fiction library. 'The Society library is a great resource, especially for articles, and [then-librarian] Helen Maurer went out of her way to be helpful,' he said in an interview with Laura Blanchard. He and his wife became benefactors to the branch's research library fund.

Those whom Fields represented as a lawyer reads like a roster of the internationally famous: the Beatles, Michael Jackson, Tom Cruise, Madonna, Warren Beatty, Dustin Hoffman, George Lucas, and Steven Spielberg, just to name a few. 'In the entertainment business,' said one of his former clients, 'walking into litigation without Bert Fields is like walking into the Arctic without a jacket.' Richard III would probably agree, if he could speak from the grave.

The Society sends their heartfelt condolences to his family and friends, including his wife Barbara Guggenheim, son James, grandson Michael, and granddaughter Annabelle.

Sources:

L. Blanchard, "A Celebrity Defense", *Ricardian Register*, Winter, 1998, p. 11-13.

A.E. Smith, "Charlie Rose's Interview with Bertram Fields", *Ricardian Register*, Winter, 1998, p 14.

J. Berger, "Bert Fields, Lawyer to the Hollywood Elite, Dies at 93," *New York Times*, August 8, 2022.

## THE MISSING PRINCES IN AMERICA PROJECT

Sally Keil



We are moving towards the conclusion of this massive effort to hunt for primary source documents residing in the US or Canada that might offer us a clue as to the fate of the Missing Princes. From the outset we set very rigorous constraints on our work: we are only interested in primary documents – letters, rolls, etc. – that were written between 1483 and 1509. When we started four years ago (!) our target list of institutions to contact was 499. However, the list grew ‘organically’ and we wound up searching more institutions than that: some 525 at last count. **We have 49 to go!!!** Over these past four years we have uncovered some fabulous documents (and hair!) that may prove to be valuable ‘pieces of a puzzle’ that fit into and help support a future theory of what actually happened to the sons of King Edward IV.

~Contents~

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