ISSUE 15 • OCTOBER 2026

The RICARDIAN HERALD

Connecting our global community

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



Leicestershire Branch Secretary Sally Henshaw, left, and branch Vice-Chair Caroline Wright show off the Boar Banner and the Arms of England. They were banner bearers at the service to mark the death of King Richard III in August. Story pages 8-9

The Tudor dynasty *Who really ran the show?*



Margaret Beaufort, or Jasper Tudor? The New Zealand Branch enjoyed a robust debate in which Team Margaret, and Team Jasper, explained why their choice was the ultimate architect of the Tudor regime. Pages 15-19

Ricardian profile



American Branch member Allison Groves recently agreed to take on the task of co-owner of the Branches & Groups Forum Google Group. Page 14

p 2

A year of strain and strength

Chairman Graham Mitchell reflects on a year marked by both organisational change, and continued success.

p 5

New directors

Canadian Branch Chair Tracy Bryce, and author Rebekah Fanning are among four new directors to join the board.

p 10-12

Concrete evidence

History can be full of surprises, but few are quite as unexpected as discovering that a medieval king's supposed refuge now produces ready-mix concrete.

Chairman Graham Mitchell's opening speech to the Society's annual meeting this month.

A year of strain and strength in equal measure



Good afternoon and welcome to members across the globe, specifically from Australia, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, the USA and of course all parts of the UK. Through the electronic wonder of the zoom platform, our colleague members can join us in our first Zoom AGM.

It cannot be denied this has been a difficult year for the board, though paradoxically it has been a very good year for the Ricardian cause.

The resignation of the Chair and Deputy Chair and four other board members in early February, and the subsequent results, cannot be ignored. It is not for me to comment on the reasons why this happened, but it resulted in my being elected as your Chair, a role I had never sought nor desired, but one which I have executed to the very best of my limited ability for the past seven months. It is a significant honour to follow in the steps of Saxon Barton, Jeremy Potter and other past Chairs.

It is sometimes said that the board only respects those who hold a degree in history. But I am an amateur historian, my degree is in Geography, and I have written no books, yet here I am, in post as your Chairman, with a hugely supportive Deputy Chair who holds a degree in Science. We are indeed a broad church.

The composition of the board changed dramatically with the resignations, and it was necessary to add strength with three co-options bringing their own skills and expertise to support the board. It was a considerable tragedy that one of the co-optees subsequently died whilst gardening at home.

Members have expressed regret that we rarely have elections for directors, the last being 2024. The blunt fact is that we have too many posts to fill and insufficient candidates. I have repeatedly said that we need more candidates to come forward, especially if they disagree with some board decisions. Yet we have today nine places on the board to fill and only six candidates, so there is once again, no election. With a smaller board, there would be fewer vacancies to fill each AGM and hence the greater likelihood of an election of candidates.

An important aspect agreed at last year's AGM was to move the meeting to an on-line event, and this is the first such.

From previous page…

In parallel it was agreed to hold a physical Richard III Convention for members, friends and families. This took place in Nottingham last weekend to great acclaim. A total of 119 persons attended, mainly members but also some interested non-members. They heard presentations by Elaine Perkins, Matt Lewis and Andrew Slade. Members circulated and related to each other positively. We now seek the response of members as to whether this arrangement should be the normal way forward.



Service of prayer and plaque unveiling in commemoration of Edward of Middleham at St Mary & St Alkelda Church in Middleham. From left, Rev Jeff Payne, Philippa Langley MBE, Graham Mitchell, chair of the Richard III Society. (Image: Stuart Boulton) Image courtesy *Darlington and Stockton Times.*

Arising from the convention, we have already received complimentary comments and a member has come forward with an exciting new concept which the board is following up. Expect an announcement in the next weeks.

A further decision of the 2025 AGM was to hold regular quarterly zoom Q&As with members worldwide. These were promised by my predecessor, and I have chaired two such sessions, in March and July. Additionally, a third Zoom Q&A was held in September focussed entirely on the motions listed for today's AGM. It is up to you, the membership, to say how useful and informative these were, but until you tell us otherwise, such sessions will be held approximately quarterly.

The Society has been represented strongly at the major Ricardian festivals at Barnet, Tewkesbury, Middleham and Bosworth. Middleham is unique in being the only 'non-battlefield' festival where the Society & Yorkshire Branch co-operate, with the branch organising and hosting at the Church of St Mary & St Alkelda. The Society followed the next day with presentations in The Key Centre, with the entire day themed for young Prince Edward of Middleham.

A new Society plaque honouring the young prince was revealed in the Church of St Mary & St Alkelda during the festival on September 8, the 543rd anniversary of Edward's inauguration as Prince of Wales in York Minster.

A plinth of native English Oak was constructed by the volunteer craftsmen in West Yorkshire – men who use similar tools and employ skills in woodworking which would have been known in 15th century Middleham. A service of blessing was organised by Middleham Co-Rector Jeffrey Payne and the plaque was unveiled in the church by Society Fellow Philippa Langley, viewed by some 50 society members and Middleham residents.

The installation was a project conceived by my predecessor Amanda Geary and was very close to her heart. The sometimes 'forgotten' prince is forgotten no more, and the Society is pleased and proud to have made this possible with full funding of this project.

From previous page…

The committee will explore new ways to promote the Society across social media platforms. The former online forum will be re-instated for in-depth historical debate.

The Society's finances continue to be a significant concern for many members, but I am delighted to say that our Treasurer and Finance Officer, through prudent management of your financial resources, have produced a small surplus in this financial year. Steps have been taken to align the Society's outgoings more closely to income.

Some 12 Society Zoom Lectures have been presented throughout the year. These live broadcasts are enjoyed by up to 200 members each time, zooming in from across the globe. Each of these high-quality lectures given by eminent specialists in their chosen fields are provided entirely free as an important part of your membership, and have now through the valiant efforts of Julia Langham, become a cornerstone of the Society's output.



Created by Broadbent Studio as part of the Bosworth 1485 Sculpture Trail in Market Bosworth, Chapter 1 (of 5) is entitled The Calm Before the Storm. Representing King Richard III in prayer, the stone figure was installed in a carefully excavated, perfectly circular hole at the Church of St James in Sutton Cheney. The statue has been shortlisted for a major award.

The well-established Society Schools Conference is self-funding and creates a small surplus. It covers both the Schools Essay Competition and the annual service charge of the educational website and continues from strength to strength. This year's 5th Schools Conference in March was attended by 950 students from 32 schools and the Society owes gratitude to Iain Farrell and Joanna Laynesmith for the organisation of an event which is hugely important in the education of our rising generation of historians.

It is appropriate to note that the Society has spoken out strongly against the lack of 15th Century study in tertiary education with just six English universities offering undergraduate courses in our period of the Wars of the Roses / Cousins Wars.

This exposes the fact that only a tiny fraction of over 100 English universities provides history degree courses, teaching or research in the pivotal political events of the late 15th century.

The Society will continue to monitor and as necessary, speak out on this topic.

However, interest in Richard is still strong in the general media which is very encouraging.

Many members will have seen the significant short film A Taste of Loyalty directed by the accomplished actor Thomas Dennis from a screenplay based on Matt Lewis's renowned book Loyalty. This is not a Society project, being an entirely privately funded 'concept film' produced to encourage financial backers to fund a full-length feature film.

From previous page…

However, to have an accurate big screen film of King Richard would be an exciting and significant boost for the Society and the whole Ricardian world.

I have spoken on King Richard to many local history groups across the North of England. My experience is that a presentation of King Richard displaying 'Good Lordship' is invariably received positively, with genuine interest in, and questions about, his life and times. We must tap into, recruit and build on that public interest.

In a significant breakthrough in public recognition, the Public Statues and Sculptures Association has recently shortlisted the statue of Richard The Calm Before the Storm in Sutton Cheyney Churchyard for the 2026 PSSA Marsh Award for Public Sculpture. There is a public vote on this award, and I urge you to participate.

It has therefore been a year of change and renewal on many levels but one from which the Richard III Society has in several ways emerged in a strong position.

Leaving the board today, though continuing with other Society duties, are Marie Barnfield, Joanna Laynesmith and Gabriella Williams and I thank them for their commitment, their time and skills.

It has been my experience over the last seven months, and I say this very deliberately; it has been my experience over the last seven months that this board has worked calmly and professionally as a united team for the greater good of the Society and its members, and in accordance with the Mission Statement, and it is my pleasure to thank most warmly and sincerely my fellow directors and officers of the Society plus our scores of unsung and often unrecognised stakeholder volunteers out there in the Branches & Groups for their incredible work in the case of Good King Richard.

Thank you all, your work is much appreciated.

New directors join board

Four new directors joined the board of the Richard III Society this month.

They are **Tracy Bryce, Debra Maria Brown, Rebekah Fanning and Louise Ibberson-Beaumont.**

Tracy has been Chair of the Canadian Branch of the Richard III Society for 27 years.

Rebekah has been a committed Ricardian since October 1987. From 2001 to 2008, Rebekah served the Richard III Society as its Non-Fiction Papers Librarian. Debra Maria Brown is a lawyer with a long-standing interest in Richard III, and nearly 20 years of legal and commercial experience.

Wendy Moorhen is an existing director who stood again.



Rebekah Fanning



Hilary Jones

Hilary Jones was co-opted onto the Board during 2026 and required her position on the Board to be ratified at the AGM.

Branches & Groups Forum:

Strengthening connections across the Society

So, the inaugural international meeting of the new Branches & Groups Forum, bringing together branch and group leaders, has set in motion a new era of collaboration within the Richard III Society.

The forum was the brainchild of Tracy Bryce and Susan Troxell, Chairs of the Canada and America Branches respectively. The meeting was chaired by Tracy, who has recently joined the board of the Society.

Chairs and secretaries from the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and Europe gathered online in August to share experiences, compare challenges, and begin shaping a more connected future for our widely scattered membership.

For me, it was particularly interesting to note that branches and groups seem to share very similar issues – including getting content for their newsletters.

Participants also highlighted the difficulties of engaging widely scattered and often non-society members. Many leaders described the struggle to maintain momentum when members live far apart or rely heavily on online meetings.

Recruitment and retention also emerged as shared concerns.

Leaders compared outreach methods — from local history talks and theatre partnerships to cautious use of Facebook and WhatsApp — with mixed results. As one member noted, branches rely heavily on "word of mouth, and the use of public talks and local outreach to attract new members."

Digital communication is both a lifeline and a challenge. Some groups have thriving newsletters; others struggle to source content. The North Staffordshire group's success in sharing articles with other branches was highlighted as a model worth expanding. Participants also discussed safeguarding considerations, particularly around including minors in activities.



This image was taken during a trip to England in 2019. I was lucky enough to visit the Yorkshire farmhouse where some of my ancestors lived in the 1800s.

Key decisions

The meeting unanimously agreed to establish a new Branches & Groups Forum, meeting quarterly with the option for ad hoc sessions. To support communication between meetings a Google Group email has been set up so leaders can chat at any time.

Branches and groups also agreed to share newsletters and articles, submit regular meeting details for possible inclusion in the *Ricardian Herald,* and continue experimenting with outreach through local organisations and social media.

Susan Grant-Mackie
Ricardian Community Liaison Officer
Richard III Society

Meet Allison Groves: our California-based political organiser and consultant with a background in Classics and Political Science. She is on a mission to dismantle Tudor nonsense—now co-steering the Branches & Groups Forum Google Group. Page 14

Nottingham Convention earns 100% approval from attendees



The inaugural Richard III Convention held in Nottingham last month was extremely successful, says Events Chair Sue Ollier

She says it has received a 100% approval rating from Society members who attended and gave feedback.

"The Society Board has approved a similar Convention in 2027 which is likely to be held in the south of England, probably in late September before the Society AGM, which will be on October 2."











Images: Screenshots from the Society Facebook page.

Leicestershire Branch Secretary SALLY HENSHAW writes about the service to mark the death of King Richard III in August, from the perspective of the banner bearers. She discusses how the banners, which usually stand either side of his tomb, were created.

Bearing Richard's legacy on August 22

The service to mark the anniversary of the King's death is held on the nearest Saturday to August 22 and in 2026 it fell on the actual day.

The Arms of England and Richard's own Boar banner, which stand beside the King's tomb in Leicester Cathedral, form part of the procession during the August service each year.

The drawings for the banners were designed by Peter O'Donaghue at the College of Arms, founded by Richard III in 1484. At that time Peter was Blue Mantle Pursuivant, later becoming York Herald.

The completed drawings were sent to Flag Makers who created the banners that you see today.

One of the founder members of the Leicestershire Branch, Margaret York, who sadly passed away in 2011, before Richard's rediscovery, left a bequest to both the Richard III Society and to the Leicestershire Branch.

The combined bequests went a long way towards paying for the hand painted banners. Margaret, a great champion of Richard, was a lifelong Leicester resident and I feel sure she would have approved of the way her bequest was used.

The procession left the Cathedral headed by a verger, behind whom the banners followed and then the Chair of the Richard III Society Graham Mitchell. The mayors of the boroughs of Leicestershire, the Lord Mayor of Leicester and the High Sheriff of Leicestershire, all resplendent in their chains of office (known affectionately as the Chain Gang) follow behind.



Then come the Crucifer and Acolytes and finally the Canon Missioner and the Canon Pastor of Leicester Cathedral.

The procession gathered at the original site of the King's burial in 1485, now inside the KRIIIVC, where the Canon Pastor read prayers followed by the scattering of rose petals on the gravesite.

The procession then moved to the statue of King Richard III and the Canon Pastor again said prayers before the dignitaries each place a single white rose on the statue.

From previous page…

The procession finally moved to the South door of the Cathedral where the Canon Pastor once again spoke before the members of the procession returned to their seats.

After the Homily, Graham Mitchell led the way to the tomb followed by the banner bearers.

When Graham laid the wreath of white roses, the banner bearers stood either side of the tomb with their banners dipped in respect, while the choir sang Requiem aeternam, before finally returning the banners to their resting place beside the King's tomb.

Requiescat in pace









The concrete factory on the site of what was The King's Garden. While on the run, Henry VI probably spent his time gardening at Crackenthorpe Hall, Cumbria.

Ricardians come up with concrete evidence of where Henry VI went to ground

By Sue Scott-Buccleuch

This year the Penrith and North Lakes Group decided to try and trace the movements of Henry VI as he dodged the Yorkist pursuit after the Battle of Hexham.

We knew that he spent some time in Cumbria before finally being captured in Lancashire, and Muncaster Castle in the southwest of the county is quite proud of having sheltered the wandering king.

We were however surprised to find a reference to Henry being at Crackenthorpe, which is a small village just outside Appleby. Crackenthorpe Hall was in the possession of the Machell family, the present building having replaced the medieval manor house in the 17th century. It is now a holiday let, but its website notes the connection with Henry VI.

We consulted our member Adrian who is a member of the local history society. He found that there was a strong local tradition for Henry being at the hall, but it seemed no more than that – just a folk tale. A local history stated:

"When the Lancastrians were defeated by the Yorkists at the Battle of Hexham in 1464, King Henry VI sought refuge here as the guest of the Machells and is said to have spent his time gardening."

One of the flower beds was said to be still known as 'The King's Garden'.

However, Adrian found a nineteenth century pedigree of the Machell family which recorded that:

"John Mauchell, in whose house at Crakenthorpe, according to Ligard, King Henry VI took refuge after the battle of Hexham."

From previous page…

A bit of digging on the internet soon identified 'Ligard' as John Lingard, who was an English Catholic priest and historian, the author of The History of England, From the First Invasion by the Romans to the Accession of Henry VIII, an eight-volume work published in 1819.

Could we access the appropriate volume? Well, yes, there is a set of the eight volumes available 'from the library of the Duke of Westminster'. They are bound in calf and have the Duke's crest imprinted on the spine. A mere snip at £2111.36! But that was just a tiny bit more than our group funds could manage, so back to the internet where happily Hathi Trust have made a copy available online.

The relevant passage said that Henry had the good fortune to escape after his defeat at Hexham 'and sought an asylum among the natives of Lancashire and Westmoreland, a people sincerely devoted to his interests'.

A footnote added 'He was during this time frequently concealed in the house of John Machell, at Crakenthorp, in Westmoreland. – Rym. xi. 575'. This was taken to mean Rymer's Foedera. Thomas Rymer held the office of Historiographer Royal from 1692 until his death in 1713, which gave him access to the historical documents held in the Tower of London and elsewhere. He compiled the Foedera (meaning 'pacts' or 'alliances') which is a collection of treaties made between England and foreign powers, as well as a great variety of other government documents. Volume 11 of the Foedera is also online and has the following entry under the year 1466:



King Henry VI by an artist of the British School | Photo credit: National Trust Images

On the Reception of Henry, Late King .

An . 6. E. 4. Pat . 6. E. 4. p . 2. m . 18.

The King to All His Bailiffs and Faithful, to whom &c. Greetings.

Know that, when John Maychell , lately of Crakenthorp in the County of Westmorland, Senior Gentleman, against our Royal Majesty, has repeatedly received and entertained in his House, as we have received, Henry the Sixth, lately de facto and not de jure King of England, whence the same John has most humbly supplicated to Us that we would be pleased to impart our special Grace to him, in this part,

From previous page…

We (favorably inclined to his aforesaid Supplication) have, by our special Grace, and from our certain Knowledge and mere Motion, Pardoned, Remitted , and Relaxed the aforesaid John Maychell , or by whatever other Name he may be called, all manner of Transgressions and Offenses, committed by the same John in this part, and the Sect of our Peace, which pertains to Us against the same John , for any Treasons, Rebellions, Insurrections, Riots, Routs, Congregations, Conspiracies, Concealments, Coadunations, Illicit Assemblies, False Conspiracies, Allegations, Felonies, Extortions, Contempts, Impeachments, Forfeitures, and other Evil Deeds whatsoever, done or perpetrated by the same John before these times in any manner whatsoever, whereby he is Indicted, Appealed, Impeached, or Rectified, or may be Indicted, Appealed, Impeached, or Rectified in the future, and also Outlawries if any have been promulgated against the same John on these occasions or any of them, and We grant him our firm Peace therefrom; so however that he may stand Right in our Court, if any one wishes to speak against him about the Premisses, or any of the Premisses.

In whose &c.

Witness the King at Westminster, the twentieth day of November.

By Writ of Privy Seal, and of the aforesaid Date &c .

Rymer's Foedera Volume 11, ed. Thomas Rymer (London, 1739-1745), British History



When King Edward's men came looking for him, they ignored what appeared to be a humble gardener. (Hopefully Henry enjoyed that rare event in his life in which he could be who he really was.) Editor. Image AI generated.

So, there is contemporary evidence that Henry was sheltered on several occasions at Crackenthorpe Hall. What about 'The King's Garden?' Some of the sources said that the garden was situated just outside the gates of the hall, others that Henry was 'hidden in plain sight' working in the garden.

When King Edward's men came looking for him, they ignored what appeared to be a humble gardener. I wrote to the present owners of the hall, asking if we could view the garden. The reply was that the garden had long gone and was now a cement factory! So, on a group visit to Appleby we found Crackenthorpe Hall, and sure enough right outside the gates there is an area enclosed by hedges, which does contain a cement works. Now what would Henry make of that?

Sue Scott-Buccleuch is Secretary of the Penrith & North Lakes Group

Seeking order in chaos: Dr Melissa Reynolds' award-winning research

By Susan Troxell

Members of the American Branch of the Richard III Society recently attended an engaging lecture given by Dr. Melissa Reynolds, Assistant Professor of History at Texas Christian University.

Delivered by Zoom to more than 40 members from across the USA, the talk focused on a handful of fascinating and colourful almanacs made in 14th-15th century England, including the Rawlinson Calendar at the Bodleian Library in Oxford (MS Rawl. D 939). **Pictured below.**

Using a system of charts, illustrations and symbols, these almanacs illustrated the annual cycle of medieval life, by combining liturgical, astrological, medical, and agricultural data. These, in turn, were used by people to make important decisions in their lives - when to sow seeds or harvest crops, do an important household chore, or submit to medical treatment.

Medieval physicians referred to such almanacs to decide when to draw a sick person's blood, and from what vein, depending on the phase of the moon and the zodiac sign. Dr Reynolds convincingly argued that these manuscripts were mostly created in monastic communities for a highly educated audience, but they did get circulated in the secular world.



Dr Melissa Reynolds attributed her success in medieval history, in part, to receiving a Schallek Award from the American Branch while working on her PhD at Rutgers University.

"These practical books contain pictures for predicting the future" she said, "and they capitalized on the medieval belief that patterns within the divinely-ordered universe could be comprehended and anticipated, if only one knew how to read them. They provided a sense of certainty in a world torn apart by plague, war, and religious upheaval."



In 2024, the University of Chicago published Dr Reynolds' research about these almanacs, in her book Reading Practice: The Pursuit of Natural Knowledge from Manuscript to Print. It was awarded the John Ben Snow Prize from the North American Conference on British Studies, and the William H. Welch Medal from the American Association for the History of Medicine.

Dr Reynolds attributed her success in medieval history, in part, to receiving a Schallek Award from the American Branch while working on her PhD at Rutgers University. "It allowed me to travel to England and do archival research there, something I couldn't afford to do otherwise."

Dr Reynold's book can be purchased at a 30 percent discount using code "UCPNew" when ordering it from the University of Chicago Press; follow this link to order your

To learn more about the Schallek Fellowship & Awards Program of the American Branch, go to: https://r3.org/schallek/

Susan Troxell is Chair of the American Branch.

American Branch member Allison Groves recently agreed to take on the task of co-owner of the Branches & Groups Forum Google Group. She is based in California, is a political organiser and consultant with a background in Classics and Political Science.

From Paso Robles to Plantagenets



Hello! I am a political organiser and consultant from southern California, currently living in Paso Robles (San Luis Obispo County) on the California central coast. I graduated from Reed College in 1999 with a BA in Classics and Political Science.

I have been fascinated by the late medieval and early modern period for as long as I can remember. If I had to pick a "moment" that cemented my obsession it would probably be reading about Anne Boleyn as an elementary school student and being thoroughly disgusted by Henry VIII (I still feel the same way about that one).

History and academic discourse have always been my hobbies. I love the life of the mind and connecting with other intellectually curious people. I was not always a Ricardian– in fact, for many years I believed he was the tyrant of Shakespearean legend. After the King was found, I began to delve into the mystery surrounding the princes.

As I learned about the character and actions of Richard as Duke of Gloucester and later as King, I could not help but change my position. I joined the Richard III Society in 2025 in order to help deconstruct the absurd Tudor propaganda surrounding the King's life and to promote the study of this unique period in English history.

I currently live with three wonderful dogs and, as a consultant, can set my own hours and work from home. I am looking forward to assisting with journal articles, helping with logistics, and learning from my fellow Ricardians.

"Loyaulte me lie!"

A Ricardian conversation...

The Tudor family: who was really running the show?





Above: A modern image of Margaret Beaufort developed from Torrigiano's death-mask-derived effigy. Courtesy Royalty Now Studios.

Left: Jasper Tudor's image in Cardiff Castle.

By Susan Grant-Mackie

The September meeting of the New Zealand Branch of the Richard III Society began with a discussion about the logistics involved in organising the Australasian Convention, to be held November 6-8.

Registrations, hotel AV equipment, name badges, raffle items, and the perennial mystery of the two anonymous people who had paid but never identified themselves. Yet once the business of bags, bookmarks, HDMI cables, and chocolate fish was out of the way, our meeting shifted into a different register entirely. The formal agenda gave way to a more imaginative exercise.

Our prompt for the meeting was to bring to the table a dinner guest. Any guest. If you had the choice, who would it be and why.

The exercise of imagining dinner conversations with historical figures allows us to concentrate on them as people - human beings just like us. With the usual baggage of fear, hope, joy, strengths and weaknesses.

So, we discussed: **What were these people like? What did they fear? What did they hope for? What shaped their decisions?**



This iconic image of Margaret Beaufort was commissioned by Bishop John Fisher, Margaret's confessor and executor, immediately after her death. At over 180 cm tall and 122 cm wide, it is now believed to be the earliest large-scale portrait of an English woman in existence, and one of the earliest large-scale portraits of any single individual in Britain.

It was only identified in 2019.

I got the ball rolling with my historic crush – Margaret Beaufort. I figure if Matt Lewis can have an historic crush, Richard, Duke of York, then so can I.

For me, few figures of the late 15th century provoke such fascination or ambivalence as Margaret Beaufort. Mother of Henry VII. I admire her immensely, though I know full well we wouldn't have got on as people. Besides, we would have been in a slightly different class bracket, so our chances of meeting at dinner were precisely zero.

My interest in Margaret probably began when a well-known historian demeaned her with a misogynistic comment in one of his TV documentaries. I needed to know more.

In my opinion, Margaret was the real boss of the Tudor regime. Even though a woman in a patriarchal society, she worked and schemed for years to create that path on which her son walked to the throne. It was her third hubby, the notorious Stanley, who won Bosworth for his stepson.

And she managed things, albeit in the shadows, for her son when he was king. His mum and his chief advisor.

From previous page…

All he brought to the table was the fact he was a man. Had Margaret been male, her brilliant eye on the prize could have made her, at the very least, a powerful high profile player in English politics.

Margaret's life story is one of extremes. Married for the second time at age 12, a mother at 13, widowed soon after, she endured experiences that would have shaped any human being profoundly. It also suggests to me the very small age gap between her and son Henry would have heavily influenced the dynamic between them; more of a sibling partnership than mother and son.

If she were my dinner guest, would I have had the courage to ask her directly about the trauma of childbirth at such an age? Maybe it would be too personal. A fellow branch member suggested Margaret would need a drink before answering such questions: "Would you like another glass of wine, Lady Beaufort? "

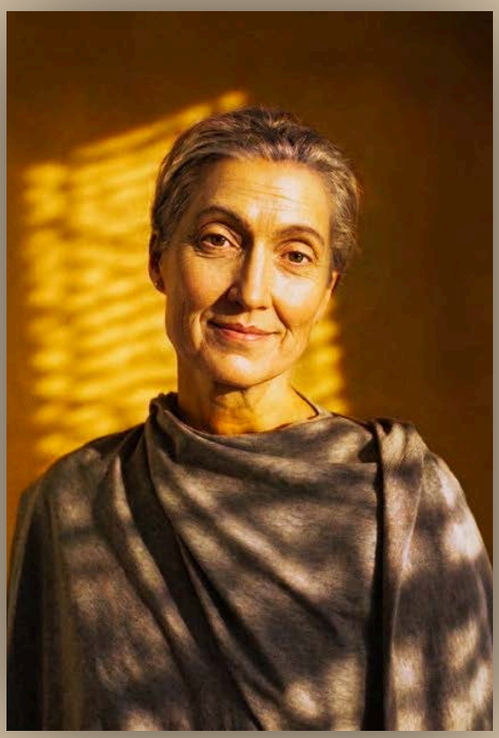
I am drawn to Margaret's political mind and keen intellect. When did she realise her son Henry Tudor had a real chance at the throne? At what moment did ambition crystallise into strategy? And how did she navigate the decades of uncertainty, exile, and shifting allegiances that preceded Bosworth?

Margaret's reputation for emotional volatility, including her well-documented crying fits when things were going too well, raised further questions about how her early experiences shaped her later worldview. The fact she got upset when things were good suggests to me she just didn't trust it - that strife and trauma were her default settings.

In response, branch member Sheila Reed presented Jasper Tudor as the real boss of the Tudors.

She said Henry VI's decision to bring his half-brothers Edmund and Jasper Tudor to court may have been the first spark of a long-term plan, which began with Edmund's marriage to Margaret.

Sheila explained that maybe Edmund married Margaret because he saw a way to the throne.



Lady Margaret Beaufort if she was invited to your place for dinner today. An educated guess based on the bone structure of her effigy. Courtesy Royalty Now Studios.

"So, at the stage in which Margaret is married, she is merely a pawn in their game. And if she had died in childbirth that wouldn't have mattered at all; it would have been of no consequence. They've got their male heir." Sheila said.

The fact that Margaret became a key player further down the track was just a bonus for Jasper and Edmund.

When Edmund died, Jasper could have shrugged his shoulders and said: "Oh well, nice try. I'll get on with my life now."

From previous page…



Vincent Regan played Jasper Tudor in the *White Princess* TV series.

But no, he devotes his entire life to getting his nephew Henry the throne. "So, I think that the plot for the Tudor dynasty started with Edmund and Jasper. Edmund fathered Henry because he was the older brother, but why else would Jasper consent to a life in exile and on the run supporting a nephew. A nephew, not his son."

“So, I'm inclined to think it started with Edmund and Jasper, not with Margaret.”

“I know Margaret was conscious of her birthright, but one woman on her own, could she have achieved that? No, I think the two brothers were the start and Margaret joined in and it was very fortuitous for them that she was as she was, that she was an organiser and a planner and devious and untruthful.”

This interpretation sparked a lively debate among us. One member pointed out Henry Tudor’s French royal blood, another his Welsh connections, suggesting he had multiple potential paths to power. Why England? Why not France, where the political situation was volatile and Henry’s lineage arguably stronger? The conversation briefly veered into alternative history—Henry Tudor as King of France, then conqueror of England.

The third major contribution came from Mark Patrick: Isabel of Cambridge.

Isabel, elder sister of Richard, Duke of York, sits at the hinge point of Yorkist legitimacy. Through her mother, Anne Mortimer, she carried the senior line of descent from Lionel, Duke of Clarence. Through her father, Richard of Cambridge, she inherited a legacy complicated by rumours of illegitimacy and the shadow of the Southampton Plot.

Mark's dinner table questions for Isabel:

· What did she think of her nephew Edward IV’s marriage to Elizabeth Woodville?

· How did she view the sidelining of her first son, Thomas Grey, whose legitimacy was contested?

· What stories did she hear about her mother, who died when Isabel was only two?

· What did she know of her father’s execution for treason in 1415?

Though less famous than Margaret Beaufort, Isabel's life offered a different kind of insight: how dynastic politics shape the private lives of women whose names appear only briefly in the chronicles.

At one point, the discussion drifted toward the later Tudor period, and specifically to Elizabeth I.

From previous page…

One member imagined Elizabeth at the dinner table, listening with wry amusement as Ricardians attempted to untangle the propaganda her regime helped cement. Another noted that had Isabel of Cambridge lived into Elizabeth's reign, she might have found herself immortalised—or caricatured—in Shakespeare's plays, perhaps among the "three wailing queens" of Richard III.

Then the conversation veered weirdly into the unexpected when branch secretary Annette Parry leapt centuries forward, suggesting Arthur Conan Doyle as a dinner guest. It was an inspired choice. Doyle, though best known for Sherlock Holmes, had a lifelong fascination with medieval chivalry, honour, and the romance of lost causes—precisely the qualities that draw many to Richard III.

His historical novels, especially *The White Company* and *Sir Nigel,* reveal a mind steeped in medievalism. Annette said Doyle would bring to the table narrative instinct: how stories are shaped, how heroes are constructed, and why certain figures—Richard III among them—capture the imagination. We imagined asking him:

· How would you write about Richard III if you had chosen him as a subject?

· Would you portray him as tragic hero, misunderstood monarch, or doomed idealist?

· What makes a medieval figure compelling to modern readers?

Doyle's presence at the hypothetical dinner table underscored a key theme: history is not just about archives and facts; it is also about how the story is told.

Finally, we discussed Dr John Ashdown-Hill, whose research transformed modern understanding of Richard III. His work on mitochondrial DNA made the 2012 discovery and identification of Richard's remains possible. His genealogical reconstructions, his challenges to accepted narratives, and his willingness to question Tudor propaganda made him a natural guest at any Ricardian dinner.



Arthur Conan Doyle: a lifelong fascination with medieval chivalry, honour, and the romance of lost causes—precisely the qualities that draw many to Richard III. Photo: The Whitefriars Club

Members imagined asking him:

· What question would you most want to ask Richard III directly?

· Which myth about the period most urgently needs dismantling?

· What discovery surprised even you?

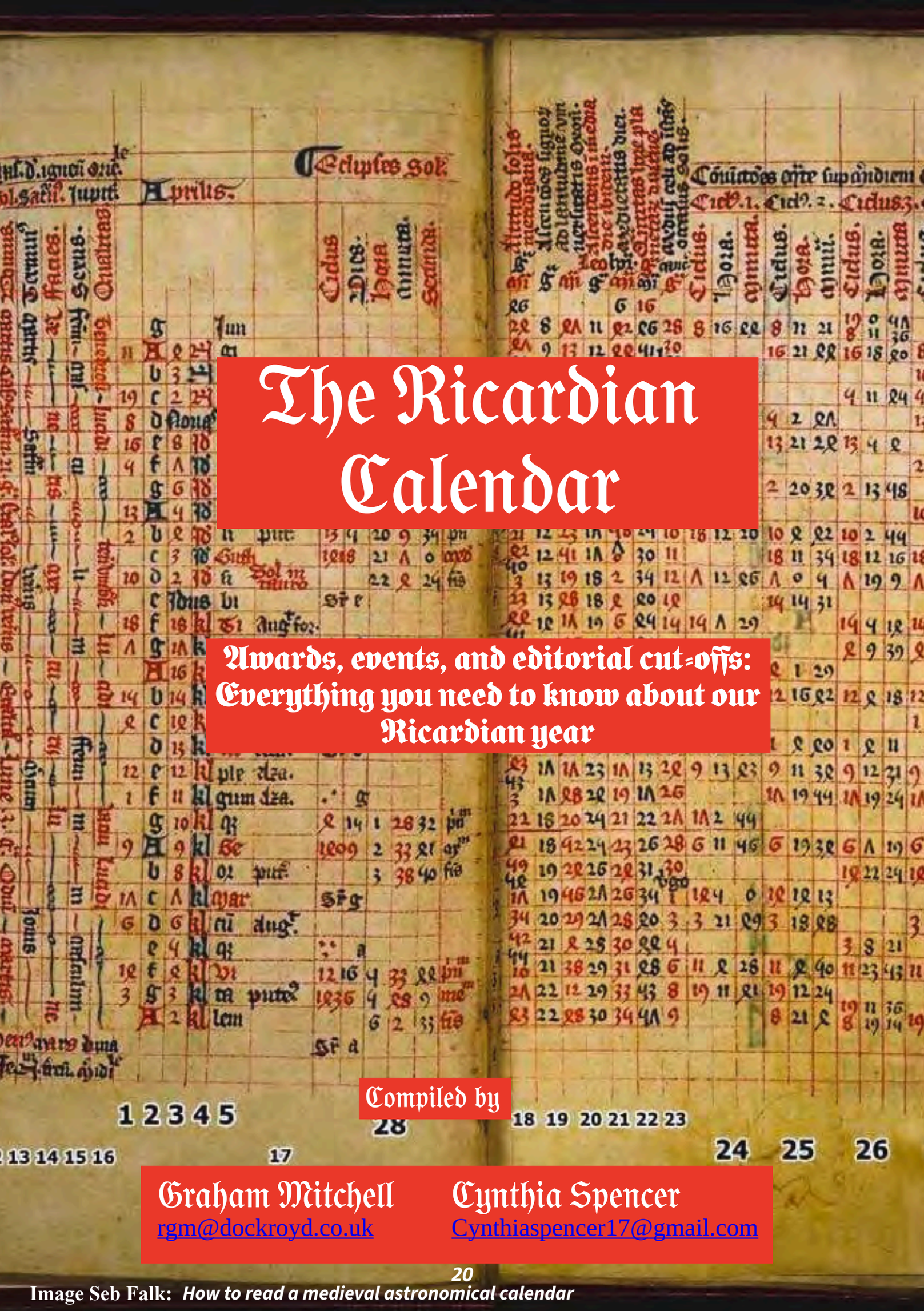
Though we all chose a different guest, several themes threaded through the discussion.

Margaret Beaufort, Isabel of Cambridge, and Elizabeth I represent three distinct modes of female influence.

Questions of legitimacy—of the Beauforts, of Thomas Grey, of Richard of Cambridge—surfaced repeatedly. The discussion highlighted how fragile and contested the concept of "right to the throne" truly was.

Margaret's early childbirth, Jasper's decades of exile, Isabel's father's execution—these personal traumas shaped political choices.

Doyle, and Ashdown-Hill represent ways history is shaped: through fiction, interpretation, and evidence.



The Ricardian Calendar

Awards, events, and editorial cut-offs: Everything you need to know about our Ricardian year

Compiled by

Graham Mitchell
rgm@dockroyd.co.uk

Cynthia Spencer
Cynthiaspencer17@gmail.com

Image Seb Falk: *How to read a medieval astronomical calendar*

Fotheringhay hosts lunch and carol service

Members are warmly welcomed to **Fotheringhay** on **December 12, 2026** for the Society's annual lunch and carol service.

The lunch will take place in the Village Hall at 12.30pm followed by the carol service in the church at 3pm.

For more information, please see page 17 of the **September Bulletin;** or contact Sally Henshaw, 28 Lyncroft Leys, Scraptoft, Leicester. LE7 9UW
Tel: 0116 2433785 email: sallyoftarahill@gmail.com

There is a booking form in the members' area of the website. It will also be emailed directly to all branches and groups shortly.



Image: Fotheringhay Castle by Julian Rowe, reproduced by kind permission of Peter Hammond

Initiated by Society Initiated by B & G Initiated by other bodies

NOVEMBER 2026

Fri 6 to Sun 8	Australasian Ricardian Convention	Lower Hutt NZ	emmaandian@xtra.co.nz
Sat 7	North Mercia Branch Lecture (Childbirth)	2.00 pm Nantwich	tedandbess1943@gmail.com
Sat 7	Gloucester & Bristol Branch Lecture (Rebellions)	2.30 Leckhampton	richardiiigloucester.co.uk
Weds 11	Manchester Branch Podcast & Discussion (Cold Case)	7.15 Stockport	plclarke17@gmail.com
Thurs 19	Leicestershire Branch Lecture (13th C Manor)	7.00 Leicester	sallyoftarahill@gmail.com
Sat 21	Society Lecture (Towton)	2.00 Zoom	Julia Langham
Sat 21	Society Board Meeting	11.00 Zoom	Society Secretary
Sat 28	Yorkshire Branch Christmas Lunch & Quiz	1.00 York	rgm@dockroyd.co.uk

DECEMBER 2026

Sat 5	North Mercia Branch Christmas Lunch	Nantwich	tedandbess1943@gmail.com
Sat 5	Gloucester & Bristol Branch Lecture (Tapestries)	2.30 Zoom	richardiiigloucester.co.uk
Weds 9	Manchester Branch Christmas Social	7.15 Stockport	plclarke17@gmail.com
Sat 12	Society Lecture (Elizabeth of York & Henry VII)	2.00 Zoom	Julia Langham
Sat 12	Lunch & Carols at Fotheringhay	Fotheringhay	sallyoftarahill@gmail.com
Tues 15	Leicestershire Branch Christmas Meal	7.00 Leicester	sallyoftarahill@gmail.com
December 19	The Banquet of Blades and Bloodlines More information on Page 25	6pm - 10pm Leicester Cathedral	Elizabeth Earle Tickets: www.truthandtaletours.co.uk/banquetofbladesandbloodlines
December 31	DEADLINE FOR INNOVATION FUND SUBMISSIONS		Treasurer, Neil Trump at: treasurer@richardiii.net

JANUARY 2027

January 1	Copy deadline for *Ricardian Herald* - January issue		Sue Grant-Mackie siriandponcho@gmail.com
January 1	Copy deadline for the *Ricardian Bulletin* - March issue.		Alec Marsh - editor.bulletin@richardiii.net
January 9	Society Board Meeting	11.00 Zoom	Society Secretary
Sat 16	Anne Sutton Memorial Lecture (TBC)	2.00 Zoom	Julia Langham

FEBRUARY 2027			
February 1	Branch & Group annual reports for the board		Sue Grant-Mackie branches.groups@richardiii.net
Tues 2	Society Lecture (Agincourt)	2.00 Zoom	Julia Langham
February 20	Society Board Meeting	11.00 Zoom	Society Secretary

MARCH 2027			
Thurs 18	Leicestershire Branch Lecture (King's College)	7.00 Leicester	sallyoftarahill@gmail.com
Sat 20	Society Lecture (Women of Middle Ages)	2.00 Zoom	Julia Langham
APRIL 2027			
April 1	Copy deadline for *Ricardian Herald* - April issue		Sue Grant-Mackie siriandponcho@gmail.com
April 1	Copy deadline for the *Ricardian Bulletin* - June issue.		Alec Marsh - editor.bulletin@richardiii.net
April 3	Society Board Meeting	11.00 Zoom	Society Secretary
Thurs 15	Leicestershire Branch Lecture (Murder & Mayhem)	7.00 Leicester	sallyoftarahill@gmail.com
Fri 16/Sun 18	Triennial Conference	Newark	Research Committee
Thurs 20	Leicester Branch AGM	7.00 Leicester	sallyoftarahill@gmail.com
April 23	The Princes in the Tower: How History's Greatest Cold Case Was Solved. A talk by Philippa Langley MBE. More information on Page 25	7.00 Ipswich Minster	Tickets www.ipswichminster.org
April 24	Society Lecture - Medieval Childhood	2.00 Zoom	Julia Langham

MAY 2027			
May 8	Leicestershire Branch Study Day (La Chasse)	Leicester	sallyoftarahill@gmail.com
May 15	Society Board Meeting	11.00 Zoom	Society Secretary
May 20	Leceister Branch AGM	7.00 Leicester	salyoftarahill@gmail.com
May 29	Society lecture (New World Settlement)	2.00 Zoom	Julia Langham
JUNE 2027			
June 26	Society Board Meeting	11.00 Zoom	Society Secretary
June 26	Society Lecture (Armour in the 15th Century)	2.00 Zoom	Julia Langham
JULY 2027			
July 3	Middleham Festival (Yorkshire Branch)	Middleham	rgm@dockroyd.co.uk
July 4	Middleham Festival (Society)	Middleham	rgm@dockroyd.co.uk
July 31	Society Board Meeting	11.00 Zoom	Society Secretary
AUGUST 2027			
August 2	DEADLINE ROBERT HAMBLIN AWARD NOMINATIONS		Society Secretary

SEPTEMBER 2027			
September 11	Society Board Meeting	11.00 Zoom	Society Secretary

OCTOBER 2027			
October 2	Society AGM	2.00 Zoom	Society Secretary
October 16	Society Board Meeting	11.00 Zoom	Society Secretary
October 30	Society lecture (Giles D'Aubeney)	2.00 Zoom	Julia Langham





What if one dusty old jawbone could rewrite a chapter of human history? SIR CREDENCE, JANE CLARKE'S fellow columnist, explores the surprisingly ancient origins of man's best friend and finds a lesson familiar to Ricardians everywhere: sometimes the biggest discoveries begin when someone questions what everyone else takes for granted.

A bone to pick with history

Hello, Sir Credence here with my first solo column for the Herald!



Sir C with his favourite book.

I've done the odd comment here and there over the past 12 months while I have got 'up to speed' with 'history'. I'm more used to getting up to speed on the racetrack, but I've been told that this is not about my glittering career as an elite athlete; I must stick to history now, so here goes!

I thought I'd start at the beginning - well - not the beginning of history - but the beginning of where history gets interesting - the evolution of dogs!

When exactly did wolves become dogs?

We all know the story that dogs evolved from wolves around the end of the last ice age - just over 10,000 years ago. Driven by hunger the wolves drew close to human settlements presumably to scavenge anything considered inedible by the humans. This is a tradition I like to uphold - anything remotely edible left unattended will be dealt with by me!

They then probably started following the humans when they went off to hunt and joined in with the tracking and the kill.

This is another tradition that I'm keen to preserve - I always go to the supermarket with Jane - okay the supermarket is a bit boring but riding in the car is my number one fav pastime!

I guess the humans realised that these animals were rather 'useful' and started to select their companions based on certain traits - the temperament that could be 'tamed and trained', hunting and guarding skills etc.

However, the time frame for all this has had to be re-evaluated thanks to the recent work of Dr William Marsh - a PhD student at the time- based at the Natural History Museum. Marsh decided to have a look at a jawbone that had been discovered about 100 years ago during an archaeological dig at Gough's Cave, Somerset.

Dating from 15,0000 years ago it was assumed to be the jaw of a wolf and considered an unremarkable find and put into 'storage' at the museum. Marsh then proposed to use modern DNA testing and scientific analysis to clarify if this was a wolf - or maybe a dog?



Dating from 15,000 years ago, this jawbone proved the evolution process of wolf to dog began 5,000 years earlier than initial estimates.

His friends and colleagues were sceptical; at 15,000 years old it must be a wolf. But guess what, it was a dog! So, the evolution process started at least 5,000 years earlier than anyone thought.

The DNA profile was used to test skeletons found in Anatolia that had also been thought to be wolf and they too were dogs. This shows that humans had migrated from modern Turkey to Europe accompanied by their dogs. It was also possible to gauge the level of domestication - isotope and chemical analysis showed that the Anatolian dogs ate a diet rich in fish which had been provided by humans, whilst the Somerset dog enjoyed a diet of meat and plants.

The reciprocal relationship between man and dog was already well established 15,000 years ago.
I think another aspect of this story is particularly relevant to Ricardians; narratives that have long been accepted as 'the truth' should always be open to re-evaluation.

There are many significant sources of information that too often have been overlooked - stored away in archives, their significance unrecognised. When someone brave enough to challenge the accepted 'truth' comes along (take a bow Philippa!) they can often unlock so much new information - and change our understanding of 'history'.

They then probably started following the humans when they went off to hunt and joined in with the tracking and the kill.

There! I think I'm now a proper Ricardian correspondent!

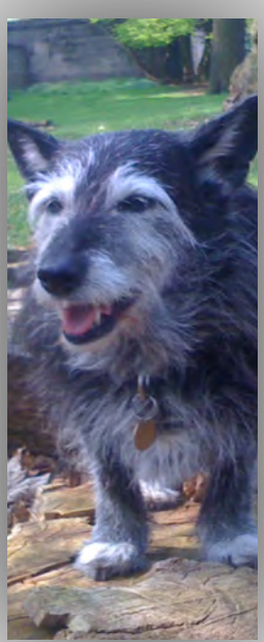
Next time I'll be taking a look at 'the boke of seynt albans' - the book of Saint Albans - written in part by Dame Juliana Berners in about 1486. Dame Juliana was the prioress of St Mary's Priory, Sopwell - so how on earth she had the time to write a treatise on hunting I'll never know. I have to say she has some rather questionable views on greyhounds - so join me next time when I'll be getting my teeth into Dame Juliana.

REFERENCES

BBC News quoting research published in the journal *Nature.*

CORRECTION & APOLOGY

Following a strongly worded complaint from Sir C (delivered with considerable barking), the editor acknowledges a dog-related error in the July *Herald*. Penny, Jane's much-loved collie-corgi cross (pictured), was mistakenly described as a Swedish vallhund. Sir C and Jane have accepted my apology, although reports suggest Sir C remains open to compensation in the form of biscuits.
EDITOR





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.'