

Adelaide Branch Richard III Society



NEWS Congratulations to Margaret Collings

At the UK AGM held Saturday September 30 2017, Margaret and a NZ member were jointly given the [Robert Hamblin Award](#).

This [Award](#) was instituted in memory of former Chairman, *Robert Hamblin*, as a means of recognising work done by members of the Society that is of particular merit and '*beyond the call of duty*'. In their own way, each recipient is, or has been, a tireless worker for the Society or for furthering its aims.

Luckily for us one of our members Anne Devrell was attending the AGM and was able to accept it on Margaret's behalf.

PLEASE DO NOT LET HER KNOW AS WE WILL PRESENT THE CERTIFICATE AT NOVEMBER'S MEETING- HOPEFULLY AS A SURPRISE. And yes I'll delete this section from her copy of the newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP IS NOW OVERDUE Please pay at November meeting especially if you are a UK member. If you are not renewing let me know asap

Full UK membership \$75, Senior (over 60) UK membership \$65, Senior family UK Membership \$75, Junior UK Membership \$45, Student (over 18) UK membership \$65, BOAR membership (members of Adelaide branch only) \$30.

If you wish to pay to our bank account directly through internet banking

Bank SA Richard Third Society (Adelaide Branch) Inc BSB 105-120 Account number 027680340

Please include your name in message to recipient so Kevin knows who it's from and/or email me to say you've paid.

Meetings

At our **November meeting Lyn** is going to conduct an **illumination workshop**- creating a medieval miniature.

If you have any of the following bring them along but Rilla, Sue and Lisa are also organising some of the requirements.

Water colour paints, fine haired paint brush, clear ruler, fine tip waterproof black texta, calligraphy pens, black, blue or red ink, gold or silver leaf, small scissors

Chose a small picture of something to illuminate- animal, bird, flower, coat of arms, your initials, (calligraphy sites on internet if need ideas)

Our **October meeting was our AGM**

Attended by S Walladge, D Haynes, R McEvoy, J Forster, J Carr (+ Ella) L Cortez, M Collings, V Walden, K Jones. Apologies from R Overy, D Mitchell, C Mac, K Jacobs, A Cooper

Our chairwoman, after welcoming everyone, read the letter from the Chairman of the Society Dr Phil Stone

Greetings to the Overseas branches.

Over the years, it has become customary for there to be an exchange of greetings between the main Society and the overseas branches at the time when each holds its Annual General Meeting.

Sometimes, because the Executive isn't always made aware when Branch AGMs are being held, a branch gets missed out. When we find out about it later, we feel bad and we imagine the Branch might feel upset at having been left out. So, on behalf of the Executive Committee, all the overseas branches will be sent a greeting on the occasion of the Society's AGM.

So, as the 2017 AGM of the Society approaches, the Executive Committee extends warm greetings to all our overseas members. We wish you could all be with us in Ealing on this occasion though we know it isn't possible. Just think how large a venue we would need if every member came to the meeting. I'm not sure even our wonderful Secretaries, Sue and David Wells, would cope. I am sure that I wouldn't.

The Society was first founded as "The Fellowship of the White Boar" and although we have changed our name to something more practical, I like to think that we remain a fellowship of like-minded people who want to know more about the life and times of Richard III and who want to propagate the historical truth to the unbelievers.

Wherever you are when the Society meets this year, may you enjoy your day and may you think of us as we are thinking of you.

With all best wishes as we look forward to another successful Ricardian year.

Phil

The minutes of the AGM 2016 were read and accepted, moved V Walden, seconded J Carr

Presentation of reports began with the Chairwoman's. (D Haynes)

Since last year's AGM we have held our monthly meetings with varying attendances. There has been interesting and different topics for discussion each month. September's meeting was a highlight with speaker Sue Garforth talking about The Princes in the Tower. Our secretary will talk about these further in her report.

In June an invitation was extended to our branch to attend the Queen Adelaide room at the Adelaide Town Hall to celebrate the life of King William IV. It was a very pleasant evening.

Thank you, committee and members for your attendance over the last 12 months. Thank you also to our Treasurer Kevin for his monthly reports and a huge thank you to our Secretary Sue for all the research, printing and emails which keep us well informed.

Moved D Haynes, seconded M Collings

Secretary's report (S Walladge)

This year we averaged 10 members per meeting. As Secretary I receive various newsletters from Worcester, NSW, WA , USA, NZ, Victoria, UK Ricardian Recorder and official Richard III Society information. These are all forwarded to our members with email addresses or printed out to go in our library. Our newsletter is sent out (to remind everyone) the week before our meeting on the first Saturday of the month. Subs are paid to the UK usually in October and the yearly report is done around Christmas/New Year.

At our AGM 2016 reports were read including greetings from the UK Executive Committee. Di, Sue and Kevin remained respectively Chairwoman, Secretary and Treasurer and Lisa, Judith and Rilla joined the committee. Afterwards we had afternoon tea with a birthday cake for Richard III and wine for a birthday toast. This was followed by a DVD on Medieval life-Marriage.

November and April meetings were our short talks on Elsewhere in the 15th century- covering tsunamis in NZ changing Maori culture, the Condottieri, medieval medicine, Matthew Corvinus, witchcraft, Margaret of Austria, Vlad the Impaler, tapestries, hunter apprenticeships, navigators and explorers, Prague Astronomical clock, and Scottish migrants in England. As usual a wide and interesting range of topics.

December is always a social lunch to celebrate Christmas. In February Anne Cooper gave an interesting talk on medieval medicine. Being a Doctor herself she added her own insights to the topic.

March was the quiz, making use of the quizzes put together by Margaret Collings over the past 30 odd years our branch has been in existence. I made sure I used some early ones which older members would have forgotten by now. Much hilarity resulted with a frequent comment "I knew that but I'd forgotten"

Last year we had had to cancel our winery picnic due to extremely hot weather so this year we moved it to May and you guessed it- it rained. It was to have been in part of the parklands surrounding Adelaide but we moved back indoors to our usual venue and a good chat and catch up with each other whilst enjoying an indoor picnic.

June and August meetings were also short talks by members but the topic – the latter half of the 15th century and dealing with important people, places and events. Also included authors and writers on Richard III. This meant we heard about Anne Neville, Fotheringhay Treaty of 1482, Robert Stillington, Elizabeth Woodville, Henry VI, Henry Stafford Duke of Buckingham, Richard III's Parliament 1483, Josephine Tey, Edward V, Battle of Towton, Henry Percy, Tewkesbury Abbey, Katherine Valois and the Founding of the Richard III Society.

July is our Coronation lunch where we toast Richard III, Ricardian branches and groups around the world, remember the medieval rules of the table and enjoy a pleasant lunch with each other. We aim to use medieval recipes but it's not always strictly adhered to.

The September meeting was our best attended as we were lucky to get Sue Garforth who gives talks on historical mysteries at the University of the Third Age. Her topic was the Mystery of the Princes in the Tower. Her talk is aimed more at the person with only a passing interest in the topic. However we found it to be an interesting and thought provoking presentation – giving the background, the main characters and the theories.

So that's our year. Our coming year will be similar, a mixture of topics, presentations and events. We will also celebrate 35 years of the Adelaide Richard III society.

Anne Devrell will be in the UK and attending the Society AGM and will be reading a version of this report. Thank you Anne.

Moved S Walladge seconded L Gill

Treasurer's report (K Jones)

Financial Statement 2016-17

<u>Income</u>		<u>Expenses</u>	
Bank balance at July 2016	\$748.96	Rent (2 years)	\$750.00
Membership	\$765.00	Purchases	\$28.88
Door and sales	\$549.00	Subs to England	\$692.60
Interest	\$0.85		
Total	\$2063.81	Total	\$1471.48

Bank balance **\$592.33** but according to the Bank **\$692.33**

Moved K Jones seconded J Forster

Librarian's report (R McEvoy)

Compared to last year, 2017 has been a quiet year on the library front. No more culls but a few additions which have been shown at our meetings. But not all have it onto the library catalogue due to my travels this year. However this will be rectified before long!!

As you aware Sue has put a lot of time and effort compiling folders of all sorts of interesting Ricardian topics. Take the time to borrow one or two and enjoy browsing over a cup of tea or coffee.

A project for our 2018 librarian will be to catalogue all those amazing folders that Sue has done. They are worth recording as part of our library.

If you haven't checked out our library I strongly suggest you do so. We have acquired a wonderful selection of fiction and non fiction books. Also the talks that have been given over the years are very entertaining and well worth a read. They can also be used for anyone wanting to give a talk but doesn't know where to start.

Copies of our catalogue are available from me.

Rilla McEvoy

Moved R McEvoy seconded L Cortez.

R McEvoy takes the Chair as present committee steps down for **election of officers** for the coming year.

D Haynes did not wish to stand again for Chairwoman so after some discussion R McEvoy agreed to be Chairwoman and will rejoin the UK Richard III Society as a senior member. (our constitution requires office bearers to be UK members.) moved J Forster seconded L Cortez, passed unanimously.

Chairwoman R McEvoy Secretary S Walladge Treasurer K Jones Committee members L Cortez and J Carr. Librarian to be shared S Walladge & R McEvoy

General business

New books 3 by John Ashdown Hill- The Mythology of Richard III, The Dublin King, The Secret Queen

And Jeanette Lucraft- Katherine Swynford- The History of a Medieval Mistress.

Newsletters emailed out to everyone- Dickon Independent, Ricardian Recorder, NSW branch's Affinity and our branch newsletter.

Purchase Mike Pitts Digging for Richard if we don't have a copy in the library after a reasonably favourable review caused outrage from P Langley and others.

J Carr mentioned she's been asked to talk at the Noarlunga University of the third age late January- to do her King in the car park- a personal view. She will take membership pamphlets and pens.

L Cortez has re registered our domain name and is moving the website to an Australian site.

R McEvoy- queried chutney as it was really nice.- green tomato pickle- bought. Jubilee cake was also nice and made by Craigh Mac and Ken Jacob. Definitely moreish.

J Forster had been to St Michael's Mount during his overseas trip and saw painting of Perkin Warbeck's wife. He had photos to show.

K Jones displayed 4 statues given to him of knights in full armour.

L Gill had a list of items needed for people to bring along for November meeting- list to go in newsletter and R McEvoy and S Walladge to organise some of the items.

Meeting closed followed by afternoon tea including birthday cake for Richard III and wine for toast. Also C Gill's birthday today so we toasted him too. Presentation was 2 of John Ashdown Hill's talkless talks- The Dublin King and The Mythology of Richard III.

Just a follow up to article in our July newsletter re the performance in Leicester Cathedral

Leicester Cathedral is grateful for the emails, comments and letters arising out of our decision to host a production of Shakespeare's Richard III. We have listened carefully and we have learnt that any decision we

take about such matters will be deemed inappropriate by some individuals or groups and yet entirely appropriate by others. We aim to act thoughtfully and responsibly; weighing the conflicting voices.

These performances will go ahead as we engage in the dynamics between the man and the myths of King Richard III. The performances will take place in the main body of the building. We continue to work with the public day by day to ensure that the King's grave is respected.

Cathedrals are principally places of Christian worship and witness but additionally they provide space for community events, exhibitions, concerts, dramas and debates. The sacred and the secular coexist as they have done since at least medieval times. In the years to come we expect that many artistic responses to Richard III will emerge including Shakespearean performances which we will curate with care whilst also maximising our engagement with our diverse and at times divergent communities.

The original press release and the Cathedral statement is below.

Award-winning theatre company Antic Disposition present a thrilling new production of Shakespeare's *Richard III*. This darkly comic drama will be staged in six of England's most historic cathedrals and London's ancient Temple Church.

The tour will include two special performances in Leicester Cathedral – the first production of *Richard III* to be performed in the building since the king's remains were discovered buried under a nearby car park and reinterred in the Cathedral in 2015. Antic Disposition's *Richard III* also visits Ely, Peterborough, Gloucester, Bristol and Salisbury Cathedrals.

The Wars of the Roses are over and King Edward IV rules England. But his brother, Richard, is in no mood to celebrate. With murder, deceit and dark humour as his weapons, Richard overcomes friends and foes alike to seize the crown. But as the body count rises, he soon learns that a throne founded on blood offers little security.

Richard III concludes at Temple Church in London for a run of fifteen performances. Located in the secluded and tranquil heart of London's legal quarter between Fleet Street and the River Thames, Temple Church was built by the Knights Templar in the 12th Century and is one of London's most beautiful and historic buildings. Known for its unusual circular design, Temple Church recently gained fame as a key location in Dan Brown's novel, *The Da Vinci Code*.

Directors Ben Horslen and John Risebero comment:

After two sell-out cathedral tours with our First World War Henry V, we are delighted to be returning to these spectacular venues with a modern updating of Richard III. The historical Richard had his reputation trashed by his Tudor successors, and Shakespeare's play is packed with 'alternative facts' designed to portray the king as a villain. By bringing our production to Leicester Cathedral, the king's final resting place, we hope to entertain the audience with Shakespeare's version of his story, while encouraging them to look beyond it at the more nuanced assessment of Richard that is now emerging.

Award-winning theatre company Antic Disposition, founded by director Ben Horslen and director/designer John Risebero, is best known for presenting innovative and visually striking productions of classic plays and stories in spectacular historic buildings. Past productions include *A Christmas Carol* in Middle Temple Hall, *The Comedy of Errors* in Gray's Inn Hall and *Henry V*, which recently toured twelve UK cathedrals marking the centenary of the First World War and Shakespeare400.

Staging a production of *Richard III* at a time when leadership challenges are a permanent part of our politics ought to be pushing at an open door. Performing it in the stunning surroundings of the original Knights Templar church, just off Fleet Street, ought to be oiling that door and putting in a cat flap. However, in this car crash of a production the bodies pile up but the princes in the tower aren't the only thing being murdered.

This version by co-directors – never a good sign – Ben Horslen and John Risebero, for Antic Disposition, has been on tour around England's finer cathedrals, including Leicester where Richard III is now interred. These locations should give the production a particular edge, but instead it is about as immersive as a cork life jacket. The acoustics in the Temple Church were made for plainchant, not iambic pentameter, and for the most part the production is the inaudible in search of the undirectable. Toby Manley plays Richard, Duke of Gloucester, with all the guile of the aristocratic half of Ted and Ralph from *The Fast Show*.

Above all this is a play about acting, playing the part, smiling while acting the villain. However, Manley and the rest of the cast run through their lines quicker than the District and Circle that rattles below the church. Manley's Richard is not the crookback of Olivier or the cripple of Kevin Spacey. He has his arm in a sling and occasionally remembers to limp. In fact he spends most of the time running across the church like Usain Bolt at evensong.

The production design of modern suits in 12th century churches is confusing. For example, Chris Courtenay's Lord Hastings looks like he has escaped from a 1980s television drama about an adulterous accountant trying to take over a failing boat yard. As Edward IV, Charles Neville appears in a sumptuous red dressing gown looking like Cyril Fletcher from *That's Life!* and, on hearing news of the death of Clarence, demonstrates a similar emotional range.

The young princes are played as X-Box obsessed millennials and are so annoying that it is a relief to hear that they have been bumped off. By Act III a version of Boris Johnson appears as Lord Mayor, and the production slides towards the comedy of Carry On Dickie. After the interval the production improves with Manley taking a darker turn as the tyrant Richard. However, Alex Hooper inexplicably plays the victorious Earl of Richmond as a Zapp Brannigan military flash-heart.

Who is to blame for all this? Probably the co-directors who do not allow anyone the time to act, except Joe Eyre as the Duke of Buckingham. He overacts so much that he is only prevented from chewing the scenery because it is made of 12th century stone.

Henry VI

Rilla McEvoy

Born 6th December 1421 at Windsor Died 21st May 1471 in the Tower of London.

Henry VI was only 9 months old when his father Henry V died. Paul Murray Kendall writes that in his “blood ran the madness of Charles VI of France, father of the Princess Katherine whom Harry had married at the height of his success in 1420.”

When Henry was 10, Joan of Arc was executed and this was probably witnessed by Henry. Not the usual entertainment for most 10 year olds (although we are talking about the 1400s!!) And of course we are looking at the events from a 21st century perspective.

In early March 1445 Margaret of Anjou was married by proxy to Henry VI at Nancy.

Henry’s greatest pleasure apparently was in prayers and his favourite companions were priests. Because Henry appeared credulous and trusting of his advisors, they were able to pillage lands and embezzle funds.

During his reign there was much turmoil and threatened uprisings but the Queen was made of sterner stuff than the King and these threats were quashed- for a while. England in 1439 was very violent. The nobles fought each other and Henry seemed incapable of preventing it. Margaret and her party controlled the King’s Government and the King. After the uprising between the King’s army and the Duke of York ended in defeat for York, Henry performed an act of kindness – he granted the Duchess of York a thousand marks a year to maintain herself and her children.

When the Yorkist lords marched on London, their army prevailed and Henry VI was captured and conducted to London. An agreement was effected that Henry would remain King for the rest of his lifetime and would be succeeded by the Duke of York. Queen Margaret’s son Edward was disinherited.

The Lancastrian lords and the Queen were not happy with this compromise and raised an army which defeated the Yorkists. King Henry was found under a tree (because for some reason Warwick had taken Henry with him) about a mile from the battlefield- laughing and talking to himself. But as so often happened more fighting ensued in which the Yorkists won. Henry, Margaret and their son fled to Scotland.

But Warwick and Clarence with a train of nobles entered London and took a “shambling and feeble-witted Henry from the Tower.” They formed a government but as we have come to expect more power struggles ensued and Edward IV returned to power. Henry was returned to the Tower.

The death of Henry VI was seen to be the reversal of the civil strife that had ripped the country apart. Naturally there has been some controversy over what caused the death of Henry VI but it wasn’t Richard!!

Tewkesbury Battlefield Society newsletter

Robert Hardy

We’ve been slow in going into print to express our sorrow at Robert’s passing, but I can do no better, I don’t think, than reproduce the letter which our Secretary sent to his family in August:

I write on behalf of the Tewkesbury Battlefield Society to express our sincere condolences at the passing of Robert last week and to try to convey at least some of the gratitude that we feel for his time as our Patron.

It is hard to put into words what the support of someone like Robert means to a Society like ours. Just his name on our letterhead gave us a degree of credibility that spoke volumes for what we aspire to achieve and instantly enhanced our standing in the heritage world.

But his involvement was, as I’m sure it was for all those to whom he put his name, so much more active than the figurehead role that the title suggests. He

was there at our birth in 1997, actively campaigning to save the Battlefield for development and leaving us with the raison d'être for our inception. On accepting the invitation to become our Patron, he was a regular visitor, both to the annual Medieval Festival (whose Patron he also became), and for all our major events. Perhaps the most memorable was the dedication of the sculpture that we had campaigned for many years to create and erect on the roundabout at the entrance to the Town. As ever, his rousing speech added lustre to an occasion that marked the culmination of many years of hard work by our members.

It was the little things, too, that made all who came into contact with him feel so special. There was always time to speak to the many bowmen and other re-enactors who approached him at the Festival, to share a drink with the locals (both historians and others) at the hotel where he stayed, or to sign another copy of one of his books. Those of us lucky enough to visit him at home always came away glowing in the warmth of his hospitality, privileged to be given an insight into some of his personal collection of medieval material. Actor, bowman, historian, gentleman – he embodied all of them with a mixture of pride in his achievements and encouragement for others striving to follow his example.

We will not rush to seek a replacement, for Robert was a unique Englishman. Thank you for allowing us to share in his life.

His memorial service is being held on Wednesday October 25th; Agincourt Day. The Society will be represented by Clive Montellier, our Secretary and someone who knew him well.

We've been considering what should be done to celebrate his contribution to the Society and his long relationship with it. We've decided on two things.

We'll be sponsoring a 'Robert Hardy Challenge Cup' for the archery competition held each year at the Medieval Festival. The winner will be presented with a specially-commissioned badge suitable for display on re-enactment clothing. A cup has been sourced and will soon be engraved.

We will publish a special edition of 'a Bit of a Slap' which will be entirely devoted to Robert. It will contain reminiscences of members of their encounters with him over the years which combined will provide a lasting memorandum of his association with the Tewkesbury battlefield and the Tewkesbury Battlefield Society. If you have anything you'd like to contribute, no matter how long or short we'd be happy to receive it.

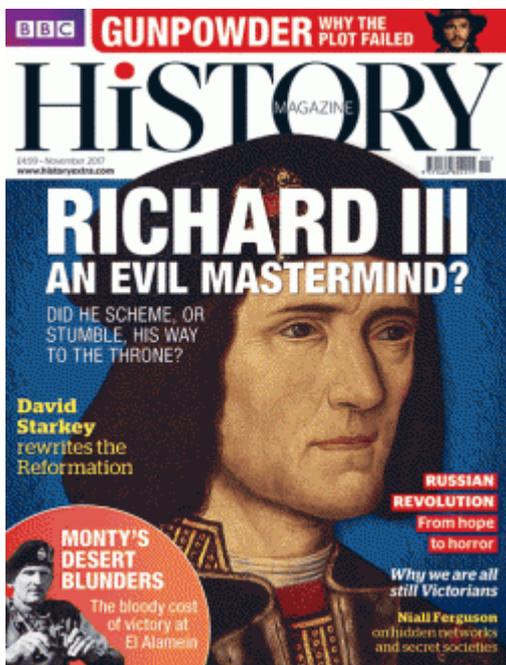


As Siegfried Farnham In All Creatures Great and Small



as Cornelius Fudge in Harry Potter

We have Robert Hardy's book "Longbow" in our library.



Historian and politician Chris Skidmore discusses his major new biography of the Yorkist king, offering his take on pivotal moments such as Richard's seizing of the throne, his death at Bosworth and the disappearance of the princes in the tower

[Walking](#) part of his travel blog

Leicester cathedral There were a few display cabinets with items used for the reinterment ceremony, all of which looked fit for a King.



Was Richard found under a car park?

This part of the whole discovery story makes me angry. The media have had a bit of a field day with this one. Shame on you! The facts are that after losing the *Battle of Bosworth* in 1485 Richard's corpse was brought to a church in **Leicester** and then he was laid to rest by the Grey Friars in their Friary. In 1538, *Henry VIII* dissolved the monasteries and the Friary, along with *Richard's* remains was flattened. Over the years various buildings were built around this site leaving a small quadrangle in the centre, adjacent to a school, which was used for the parking of a few cars. In 2012, to coincide with the 527th anniversary of his death a dig began to find the remains and, as they say, the rest is history. My gripe is that the media made it sound like the council had knowingly built a multi storey car park on the site and had somehow been disrespectful. Why not say the remains were found in an archaeological dig of Grey Friars Friary? Rant over!

We all agreed that the *Visitor Centre* was well laid out and an impressive building itself, being a former grammar school dating back to 1784. As you exit the last gallery is a very low key stone gallery with a glass floor over the actual dig site where the remains were found.

Former Alton Towers worker turned historian and author fights to clear the name of infamous king Richard III (Burton Mail 22nd October 2017)

Author claims brutal legend of the hunchback king is not entirely true



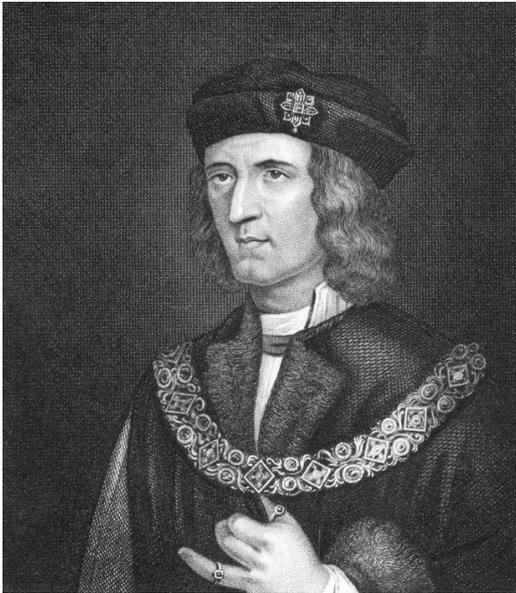
Author Harry Tomkinson, who has written a book, *Treachery at Bosworth Field 1485*, about the War of the Roses

A former Alton Towers worker is fighting to clear the name of Richard III, the monarch whose bloodstained reputation was immortalized by Shakespeare.

Author and historian Harry J Tomkinson has launched a literary campaign to restore the historical legacy of one of England's most notorious monarchs.

Since Shakespeare's day, King Richard III has been depicted as a vile hunchback, an evil brute of a man who plotted his way to the throne – even murdering his own nephews, the two "princes in the tower." Shakespeare's famous play, *Richard III* set the tone for centuries of abuse of the name of the last Plantagenet king.

Now Harry, a retired team leader at Alton Towers, is working to redress that balance. A member of the Richard III Society – and a volunteer at the Richard III Visitor Centre in Leicester – he has written his first novel, published by Austin Macauley Publishers, *Treachery At Bosworth Field 1485*.



An illustration of King Richard III (Image: Georgios Kollidas - iStock)

His novel – a work of fiction, but extensively researched – is told from Richard's point of view, and deals with the events which led to the monarch's defeat and death at the Battle of Bosworth Field.

Sandyford-born Harry, aged 74, who now lives in Kingsley, said: "Having my first book published is a huge moment for me. It has been two years in the making.

"I have always been interested in King Richard III, from quite a young age. I have always thought he was given a bad deal. I have tried to address that by putting the record straight, in my small way.

"I have written this book in the first person, through the eyes of King Richard III. It is a work of fiction, but I have done a lot of research and I have tried to stay true to the facts.



Harry Tomkinson is looking to defend the reputation of Richard III

"The Tudor propaganda machine kicked in straight after the Battle of Bosworth Field. King Henry Tudor (Henry VII), tried to discredit Richard. He destroyed many records, including the Act of Parliament which gave Richard the right to the throne.

"Richard III has been much maligned for hundreds of years. When Shakespeare came along, his reputation was set. I like Shakespeare, but his histories are not very accurate. He was a playwright, not a historian and got most of his information from Sir Thomas More, who was only about five-years-old when the Battle of Bosworth Field was fought.

"Richard is portrayed as evil and he is accused of murdering his nephews, the princes in the tower. A lot of people believe the remains of the princes were found in 1674 under the White Tower, but I don't believe that. There's quite a bit of evidence to show that these bodies were not the princes. My theory is that King Charles II made this up to deflect attention away from his own reign, which was in trouble, by dragging up the story of Richard III.

"Richard did lodge the princes in the tower, but at that time it was not a prison, it was a luxury royal place – and probably the safest place to be."

Harry has teamed up with Philippa Langley – the author who found the remains of King Richard III – in an attempt to clear the monarch of the charge of murdering his nephews once and for all.

"Philippa has enlisted four former chief superintendents from the Metropolitan Police to look at all the evidence," said Harry.

"The consensus is, that if the charges were brought before a court today, Richard would have no case to answer."



Richard III statue in Leicester city centre (Image: Will Johnston)

Harry, a widower – who has two children, a son aptly named Richard, and a daughter, Sarah, four grandchildren and one great grandchild – takes readers through the tumultuous years of the War of the Roses in his novel, an age which pitted the houses of York and Lancaster against each other in what was truly a game of thrones.

Richard III, of the House of York, sat upon the throne of England following the death of his brother, Edward IV, who had in turn taken the crown from King Henry VI. Richard was initially named protector of the realm for Edward's son and heir, the 12-year-old Edward V. The boy king, however, was lodged in the Tower of London by Richard, along with his younger brother, Richard of Shrewsbury.



Richard III's funeral crown, displayed at Tewkesbury Abbey in 2014 (Image: Kevin Fern)

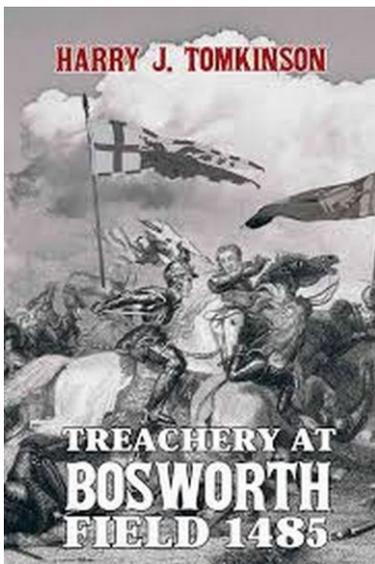
But a publicity campaign, condemning Edward IV's marriage to the boys' mother, Elizabeth Woodville, eventually led to the marriage – and the children – being declared illegitimate, a declaration which was endorsed by an assembly of lords and commoners. King Richard III began his reign the next day and the princes mysteriously disappeared.

However, within two years of King Richard's reign, Henry Tudor – a Lancastrian claimant to the throne living in France – had landed in Wales and marched his army to Bosworth Field, where he engaged Richard in battle. Although the ruling monarch had superior numbers, several of his lieutenants deserted him. Henry was victorious – and Richard became the last English king to be slain in battle.

King Richard III's body was discovered by archaeologists under a car park in Leicester in 2012 – the event which first inspired Harry to write his novel.

"It was just utopia for me," recalled Harry. "I had been a member of the Richard III Society for a number of years, it was amazing that Philippa (Langley) had managed to do this.

"The idea for this novel was already there, but it was that which inspired me to sit down and write it."



Treachery at Bosworth Field, by Harry Tomkinson
Amazon, and from the publishers, www.austinmacauley.com

Treachery At Bosworth Field 1485, is available from all good bookshops, from