

The Richard III Society

Promoting research into the life and times of Richard III since 1924

Patron: HRH The Duke of Gloucester KG GCVO, Founder S Saxon Barton



EMBARGOED:

00.01 HOURS SATURDAY 13 JUNE 2015

PHILIPPA LANGLEY AND JOHN ASHDOWN-HILL RECOGNISED IN THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST

- Richard III Society acknowledges MBE awards to Philippa Langley and John Ashdown-Hill;
- Philippa and John's key role in the *Looking for Richard* project saluted;
- Quotes from Philippa Langley, Dr John Ashdown-Hill and Society chairman Dr Phil Stone.

The Richard III Society congratulates Philippa Langley and Dr John Ashdown-Hill on being awarded the MBE in the 2015 Queen's Birthday Honours. These awards are a recognition of their key roles in the *Looking for Richard* project and recognition also for all Ricardians who helped make its success possible.

Philippa and John have been awarded the MBE in recognition of their services to 'the Exhumation and Identification of Richard III' (London Gazette). The MBE is given in recognition of a significant achievement or outstanding service to the community, and for local 'hands-on' service which stands out as an example to other people.

- Philippa Langley's successful *Looking For Richard* project marked the first-ever search for the lost grave of an anointed King of England;
- The project took seven and a half years, including four years of research and remarkably on the first day of the dig, King Richard's remains were discovered in the place Philippa Langley had indicated;
- Vital to Ms Langley's search getting underway and its successful conclusion was the identification by Dr John Ashdown-Hill of the mtDNA sequence of Richard III in 2004/5.

Philippa Langley stated: *'I'm very honoured to receive this award which is totally unexpected. I'm delighted the discovery of the King's grave has increased employment and boosted the local economy in Leicester but what has really excited me is the impact it's had on young people; their knowledge and education. For the first time, King Richard III is being read with the true facts surrounding his life and times. In my talks to schools and colleges I am meeting the next generation of historians who are eager to question and make their own discoveries. My prediction is the study of late medieval England will never be the same again.'*

Dr John Ashdown-Hill stated: *'It seems that various people - including members of the Richard III Society – started campaigning in 2013, and that it's thanks to their efforts that, early in May of this year, I received the most amazing letter from the Cabinet Office! How wonderful that all the work which Philippa and I did has now been officially and publicly recognised.'*

Dr Phil Stone, Chairman of The Richard III Society stated, *'The Richard III Society welcomes the recognition given to the Looking For Richard project in the Queen's 2015 Birthday Honours List and congratulates the recipients. It is particularly pleasing to see Philippa Langley's crucial role in the search for King Richard's grave acknowledged and rewarded in this way. The finding and honourable reburial of the King has raised public awareness and provided new opportunities to promote a more balanced view of his life and character. For this we are grateful.'*

Ms Langley added; *'The abiding ethos of the Looking For Richard Project was to retrieve the remains of King Richard III and to give them the dignity and honour which had been denied when King Richard III was killed on the field of battle. We achieved this and in so doing made peace with the past. I would like to dedicate this award to my late beloved father who taught me that you don't give in, and you don't give up. I didn't, and because of this we found Richard.'*

-ENDS-

About the Richard III Society

With a worldwide membership and local branches the Society is actively engaged in original research through its own initiatives and through collaboration with other institutions bodies and scholars. Through the Richard III and Yorkist History Trust, a charitable body established by the Society, we publish important academic works and make research grants

The Society publishes an annual journal, *The Ricardian*, with original articles on fifteenth century history and a quarterly members' magazine the *Ricardian Bulletin*.



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