

Admin Tim

April 20, 2015 - 8:30 pm

Welcome everyone to tonight's live chat with Derek Wilson. I hope you all had a chance to watch Derek's amazing video - well done Derek! So. Without further ado ... please feel free to say hello to Derek and ask your questions



Claire Ridgway

April 20, 2015 - 8:31 pm

Welcome and hello everyone!



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 8:31 pm

Which do you enjoy more Derek? Factual or Fictional history?



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 8:32 pm

Glad to have you with us again Sandra



Sandra Vasoli

April 20, 2015 - 8:33 pm

Good afternoon / evening everyone, and Derek. Thanks Derek for a really wonderful talk. I was inspired.



Derek Wilson

April 20, 2015 - 8:33 pm

They provided different kinds of pleasure, Lorna. With the solid history writing the fun lies in the research - finding out new things. Fictioneering gives scope for imagination - writing what I would like to think could have happened.



Donna McLean

April 20, 2015 - 8:34 pm

Hi Derek, Thank you for your talk. I really enjoyed it. When you were reading sections from your book there was an amazing portrait in the background of a lady in Elizabethan dress. Could you tell us about the picture.



Admin Tim

April 20, 2015 - 8:35 pm

@donna - we wanted to know that too!



Sandra Vasoli

April 20, 2015 - 8:35 pm

Derek, do you have a process or a 'ritual' for getting inside the heads of your characters - whether they are fictional or factual?



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 8:35 pm

I agree totally there Derek. I've said this a few times now, that the deeper one digs into the background of one of our historical heroes and villains, the more we are amazed by what we find



Derek Wilson

April 20, 2015 - 8:36 pm

Thanks, Sandra. Glad that the talk wasn't AS BAD AS I THOUGHT IT WAS!



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 8:36 pm

Fictional writing although fun, can of course bend the facts slightly,



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 8:37 pm

As long as you don't suddenly have a double decker bus suddenly come in to the story whisking the hero and his lady off to kill a few camels. Dear *** I'm startig to sound like SWMNBN now...
YAAAAAAAh Help..



Sandra Vasoli

April 20, 2015 - 8:37 pm

haha!!! It's not easy to record like that - but it was just great.



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 8:39 pm

What is your favourite period in history Derek, or do you just love it all?



Derek Wilson

April 20, 2015 - 8:40 pm

Donna, I collect period portraits - in a very small way. She is simply an unknown lady of c. 1610. Can't tell you more - except that I like her.



Admin Tim

April 20, 2015 - 8:40 pm

Derek - how do you keep fictional ideas out of your factual writing?



Olga Hughes

April 20, 2015 - 8:42 pm

Derek when did you first start writing novels? We were discussing authors who write both fiction and non-fiction on the Tudor Society forum recently and were wondering if fiction is a way for a historian to let loose with ideas, so to speak.



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 8:42 pm

Have you seen Holbien's painting of "A woman with a squirrel" Derek? I'm not a lover of Holbien's portrait's I find them quite severe in appearance but I do like this one



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 8:44 pm

Olga, I don't know if this is just me here, but since I've started my mammoth essay, I read something factual, and bend the truth slightly, sometimes it works, but not always



Derek Wilson

April 20, 2015 - 8:44 pm

I am fanatically keen, Lorna, not to bend the facts. That's why I stick as far as possible to completely fictional characters below the radar of political history writing. Having said that, FACTS ARE PRETTY ELUSIVE AT THE BEST OF TIMES, and novelists are not the only ones who tend to 'adjust' things sometimes.



Claire Ridgway

April 20, 2015 - 8:46 pm

I do like it when historical novelists use fictional characters as main characters as it does create distance then between the story and history. You don't get people thinking that C J Sansom's novels are completely true but you do get that with some authors' works.



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 8:47 pm

That makes sence.



Derek Wilson

April 20, 2015 - 8:48 pm

Keeping fictional ideas out of factual writing largely comes down to the training I received as a university student many moons ago, Tim. My teachers then wouldn't have let me get away with sloppy research and I hope that lessons learned then have stuck.



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 8:48 pm

I do love all history although I do tend to stick around the Tudor/Stuart era.



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 8:50 pm

I just have a bizarre and very vivid imagination to fall back on Derek. That comes out quite strongly sometimes, in our forum here and in a big sister's home..



Derek Wilson

April 20, 2015 - 8:51 pm

Olga, I think I wrote my first novel back in the 1970s. IT WASN'T VERTY GOOD. My basic love is story telling. Some of the stories are real, some made up. But I do try to keep the two well apart - honest!



Sandra Vasoli

April 20, 2015 - 8:53 pm

As a very fledgling writer, I have found it enormously fun to take very accurate facts - as accurate as possible, and then extrapolate, thinking about how any human being might respond in the same circumstance. Not sure if this is the best way forward??



Olga Hughes

April 20, 2015 - 8:54 pm

I haven't read your novels yet Derek but I suspect they have a good authenticity about them

That can be quite lacking when an author hasn't done enough research on a period.



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 8:54 pm

It was good enough to be published Derek, and people obviously liked it enough for you to carry on with your writing.



Derek Wilson

April 20, 2015 - 8:54 pm

Yes, Claire, keeping beneath the radar does avoid the pitfall of rewriting history. If I have serious 'message' in my fiction, it's saying 'This is what I believe it must have been like for ordinary people in extraordinary times.



Claire Ridgway

April 20, 2015 - 8:55 pm

Olga, Derek's Thomas Treviot thrillers are brilliant, I really enjoyed them.



Admin Tim

April 20, 2015 - 8:56 pm

Do you mostly read primary sources or other historian's perspectives on the past?



Sharon Conrad

April 20, 2015 - 8:58 pm

I just finished The First Horseman. Excellent. I couldn't put it down. Looking forward to The Traitor's Mark.



Derek Wilson

April 20, 2015 - 8:59 pm

Sandra, I think that is exactly what I do. Take the opening of 1st Horseman. It describes - I think accurately - Anne Boleyn's execution but then goes on to say how one audience member might have reacted.



Roland Hui

April 20, 2015 - 9:00 pm

Hello Derek,



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 9:01 pm

I quite agree Derek, if everyone thought the same it would be a very boring story



Derek Wilson

April 20, 2015 - 9:02 pm

Tim, a trained historian uses both. One can't get away from the original documents but then neither should one ignore the reflections of other - usually better - experts.



Roland Hui

April 20, 2015 - 9:02 pm

Hello Derek, I enjoyed your book on the Tower of London. How do you feel about the glass monument commemorating those who died on Tower Green? Some have said it's a poignant tribute, while others have criticized it for being too modern and out-of-place.



Sandra Vasoli

April 20, 2015 - 9:04 pm

Derek, I loved that scene. It felt very very real to me. Can't wait to read both books.



Derek Wilson

April 20, 2015 - 9:07 pm

Helo, Roland. Alas, I haven't seen it - living as I do in darkest Devon. I have a personal dis-ease about OTT World War 1 hype. Yes, it was awful. Yes we must be grateful to those who faced it's horrors at first hand, But as a historian I know that there were lots of other wars which have shaped our nation, some just as bad, though in other ways.



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 9:07 pm

we all have our own thoughts and feelings about our colourful heroes and villains, and one of the many benefits of our tudor home is that we can share our own ideas, we may not always agree with each other on a certain point, but we are adult enough to agree to disagree.



Derek Wilson

April 20, 2015 - 9:08 pm

Absolutely, Lorna.



Claire Ridgway

April 20, 2015 - 9:08 pm

Derek, what is your favourite primary source?



Admin Tim

April 20, 2015 - 9:10 pm

20 minutes to go ... keep your questions coming in!



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 9:11 pm

Another benefit of course is the fact we get a chance to talk with people like yourself Derek.



Derek Wilson

April 20, 2015 - 9:11 pm

Looking back on various projects, Claire, the greatest fun I had was when writing about the Dudley family and spending long hours at Longleat immersed in the Marquis of Bath's papers.



Derek Wilson

April 20, 2015 - 9:13 pm

And, Lorna, I have the privilege of receiving your feedback.



Claire Ridgway

April 20, 2015 - 9:13 pm

That sounds fantastic. One of my favourite things is to be immersed in primary sources and that setting would be wonderful.



Olga Hughes

April 20, 2015 - 9:13 pm

Ah the next book of Derek's I have on my list is the book on the Dudleys. I was really pleased to see a full book written about them, what made you decide to write about them Derek?



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 9:13 pm

Strange you mention that Derek, I've been playing with an idea about poor Amy Dudley's death.



Sandra Vasoli

April 20, 2015 - 9:14 pm

Derek, did you get good at - or used to - deciphering 17th and 16th c handwriting?



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 9:15 pm

I believe it was nothing more than a tragic accident. But I'm kind of playing with a murder storyline to tie in with what I'm writing



Sharon Conrad

April 20, 2015 - 9:17 pm

That is the book that is at the top of my list.



Derek Wilson

April 20, 2015 - 9:17 pm

Olga, you might be surprised to hear that it was really quite a struggle. It had always seemed to me that the Dudleys were completely bound up with the Tudor dynasty - right the way through from HVII to EI. But could I convince a publisher? Could I heck! It took ages to get Constable Robinson to take it on.



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 9:18 pm

Latin isn't too hard to read once you have the basics down Sandra. I can read it after a fashion, but not always decipher it.



Derek Wilson

April 20, 2015 - 9:18 pm

Ah, yes, poor Amy's death. As the lawyers say, CUI BONO.



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 9:20 pm

do you think she was murdered Derek, if so why? what did Dudley hope to gain from it, taking out the obvious king bit.



Derek Wilson

April 20, 2015 - 9:21 pm

Like modern handwriting, some is easier to read than others. I find it helps to keep your hand in. It's easy to get rusty.



Claire Ridgway

April 20, 2015 - 9:21 pm

The ones who'd benefit would be those who wanted Elizabeth to keep her distance from Dudley by tainting him with a scandal.



Admin Tim

April 20, 2015 - 9:22 pm

Just 10 minutes to go. We're working out who the lucky winner of "The Traitor's Mark" will be...



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 9:22 pm

I personally feel that the growth in her breast (cancer) had spread to the bones in her neck and on the afternoon of her death she was perhaps in some sort of delerum from pain and slipped down the last few stairs, the jolt was enough to break her neck



Sandra Vasoli

April 20, 2015 - 9:22 pm

YIKES! To read the handwriting, and have it be in Latin ???! That would be a challenge and a half. The Dudley story sounds like a must read for me...



Derek Wilson

April 20, 2015 - 9:22 pm

The only person who could possibly have benefited is Cecil but you've got to go pretty recklessly down the conspiracy theory route to make that stick.



Olga Hughes

April 20, 2015 - 9:24 pm

I sometimes wonder what publishers think we actually want to read about Derek! If interesting books on under-represented historical figures are hard to sell.



Sandra Vasoli

April 20, 2015 - 9:24 pm

Derek, how long did it take you to write each book?



Claire Ridgway

April 20, 2015 - 9:24 pm

Yes, I agree, Derek, Cecil is the only one I can think of but I don't think he'd have gone that far.



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 9:26 pm

I believe Cecil was most annoyed by Elizabeth behaviour towards Dudley. So yes a murder scandal against Dudley would have put pay to Elizabeth reliance on Dudley once and for all.



Olga Hughes

April 20, 2015 - 9:27 pm

I still have a hard time believing it was murder...



Sharon Conrad

April 20, 2015 - 9:27 pm

Was Amy dying or not? If she was dying, why would anyone murder her?



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 9:28 pm

But there again, what about Norfolk? Get Dudley out of the way, the way would be open for him to have his finger in the pie.. Remember there was a feud between Norfolk and Dudley at some point during Elizabeth reign



Olga Hughes

April 20, 2015 - 9:28 pm

Ah common sense Sharon



Admin Tim

April 20, 2015 - 9:29 pm

Just a few more minutes to go.



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 9:29 pm

The Norfolks were always close to the throne, except in Elizabeth's reign



Roland Hui

April 20, 2015 - 9:29 pm

What will your next book be?



Derek Wilson

April 20, 2015 - 9:30 pm

Sandra, it depends where you start your calculations from - the first idea? the first plot outline? the first setting of pen to paper? The novels, I must confess come fairly easily to me but I guess that's because I'm steeped in the period. A year- more or less - from start to finish.



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 9:31 pm

Yes they were distrusted in Lizzies reign due to their religion but when Norfolk found no favour by hook or by crook who did he turn to. Mary QoS who always said Elizabeth had no right to the throne anyway.



Admin Tim

April 20, 2015 - 9:31 pm

Well ... congratulations ROLAND HUI - you're the winner of "The Traitor's Mark". Everyone is more than welcome to keep chatting, but Derek, you are excused if you want to leave us (though by all means feel free to carry on chatting). Thanks Derek for your time and your wonderful video!



Derek Wilson

April 20, 2015 - 9:31 pm

Roland, thanks for asking! I'm just about to deliver a MS about the participation of women in the Reformation.



Sandra Vasoli

April 20, 2015 - 9:31 pm

wow , that is so impressive! But I am not surprised...you just seem masterful at what you do.



Roland Hui

April 20, 2015 - 9:33 pm

Wow-thanks!



Claire Ridgway

April 20, 2015 - 9:33 pm

Derek, thank you so much for joining us this evening, we really appreciate it. Your talk was wonderful.



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 9:33 pm

Many many thanks for your visit here tonight Derek. I hope you will visit us again soon. I also hope you will pop into our Forum pages when you can. We are a mixed bunch of Scallywags but we have a lot of fun.



Sandra Vasoli

April 20, 2015 - 9:33 pm

Thanks Derek - the new MS sounds very interesting... I will be curious to see who factors large in the female movers and shakers of that era.



Lorna Wanstall

April 20, 2015 - 9:33 pm

Happy reading Roland



Claire Ridgway

April 20, 2015 - 9:34 pm

Roland, Derek has been blogging about women of the Reformation on his blog – see <http://derekalanwilson.blogspot.co.uk/2015/03/women-ran-renaissance-europe-3.html> for example.



Olga Hughes

April 20, 2015 - 9:34 pm

Thank you Derek!



Sharon Conrad

April 20, 2015 - 9:34 pm

Thank you Derek. Congrats to Roland!



Derek Wilson

April 20, 2015 - 9:34 pm

My pleasure. Thanks everyone.



Claire Ridgway

April 20, 2015 - 9:34 pm

We'll keep recommending them Derek!



Claire Ridgway

April 20, 2015 - 9:34 pm

Congratulations, Roland, it's a brilliant book.



Claire Ridgway

April 20, 2015 - 9:35 pm

If you want to carry on talking about Amy Dudley then feel free to do so here or on the forum. Good night everyone and thank you.



Roland Hui

April 20, 2015 - 9:37 pm

thank you! Look forward to it. And thank you Derek for this interesting chat with us..



Donna McLean

April 20, 2015 - 9:37 pm

Thanks Derek

