

Live Chat Transcript – Julian Humphrys, 27 September 2018

Claire Ridgway23:45
Good evening, Julian!

Claire Ridgway23:45
Hi Amanda!

Julian Humphrys23:47
Hello!

Michelle Enzinas23:49
Hello!

Julian Humphrys23:49
Hello from Leicester in fact. I'm up here ready to lead a tour to... Bosworth

Claire Ridgway23:49
I'm just doing a last minute reminder to members via Facebook and Twitter.

Claire Ridgway23:49
Hi Michelle!

Claire Ridgway23:50
We really do have to talk about Bosworth and the planning situation tonight, you're the man in the know after all!

Michelle Enzinas23:50
I'm really sorry about the driver-less track situation

Julian Humphrys23:51
Yes. A bad situation

Claire Ridgway23:51
I've just got back from the Discover the Tudors tour and was under the weather yesterday so am just catching up on it all today. Truly awful, but I'll wait until the o'clock to ask you to give us all an update.

Claire Ridgway23:51
@Michelle, yes, awful. I'm so cross!

Michelle Enzinas23:51
I'm here to hear anything about Corpus Christi Campus
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Claire Ridgway23:52
Hi RealTudorLady or RTL as I call you!

Julian Humphrys23:52
Corpus Christi College is lovely. It has the oldest residential court in Cambridge

Michelle Enzinas23:53
is it open to tours?

Julian Humphrys23:53
Yes.

Julian Humphrys23:53
Matthew Parker went there and left the college his library

RealTudorLady23:53
Good evening everyone. I volunteered to chain myself to any bulldozers on the site and to protest this afternoon. Can't see it happening though.

Claire Ridgway23:54
@Michelle, do you have links to Corpus Christi?

Michelle Enzinas23:54
I'm dying to see the school and the library. Alas I'm in Canada

Julian Humphrys23:54
Corpus is the only Cambridge college to have been founded by the townspeople. Didn't stop them from trashing it during the peasants revolt though!

Michelle Enzinas23:55
I've done a lot of research on Henry Buttes who was chancellor there

Michelle Enzinas23:55

I hear Buttes haunts it still. wooooOOoooo

RealTudorLady23:57

Hi Julian, I was just watching your video. There are so many lovely colleges in Cambridge and Oxford and they go so far into history. The patrons and connections to so many historical people is very impressive.

Julian Humphrys23:57

If I remember correctly he was master of corpus and Vice-Chancellor of the University. Did he not do himself in?

Michelle Enzinas23:57

I've never learned about Bosworth in school. Why is it significant?

Julian Humphrys23:58

No Bosworth no Tudors!

Claire Ridgway23:58

I make it the o'clock, so let's get started. Welcome to tonight's expert live chat. A big welcome to Julian and also a huge thank you for his wonderful talk on Tudor Cambridge. Tonight is our chance to ask questions on Cambridge but Julian has also said that he is happy to answer questions about the Bosworth Battlefield situation as he has knowledge of that due to his work with the Battlefields Trust. Thank you, Julian! (We might be a bit quieter than usual with it being a Thursday)

Michelle Enzinas23:58

@Julian Humphrys yes he committed suicide Easter Day 1632 by hanging himself with his garters.

Julian Humphrys23:58

Hi there. It's been a tough few weeks

RealTudorLady23:58

Henry Vii became King at Bosworth after Richard iii was killed, starting the Tudors.

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RealTudorLady23:58

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Laurie Duerr23:59

Hi Julian and everyone, yes its certainly very disappoiting news about Bosworth..

Michelle Enzinas23:59

and then Richard III was burried in a car park.

Claire Ridgway23:59

Yes, it was the battle that began the Tudor dynasty.

Claire Ridgway00:00

Hi Laurie! Hi Roland!

Michelle Enzinas00:00

That's crazy that they are loosing the historic site!

Julian Humphrys00:00

Hi Laurie. I know. I keep thinking about Big Yellow Taxi By Joni Mitchell.

Michelle Enzinas00:00

are you all protesting?

RealTudorLady00:00

No he was buried in the Greyfriars friary which became a carpark four centuries after Henry Viii closed it down.

Roland Hui00:01

For those of us who don't know everything about the Bosworth controversy - can you fill us in?

Julian Humphrys00:01

We have signed a big petition and also sent in lots of objectors but the application was successful

Julian Humphrys00:02

OK. MIRA who are a technology firm applied to build a car testing track on part of the battlefield

Laurie Duerr00:02

its just really unbelievable that there will be a racetrack right there..

Claire Ridgway00:02

I think the petition had over 15,000 signatures, there were over 450 official objections and lots of historians etc. interviewed by the press...

RealTudorLady00:02

Hi Michelle, we have signed petition, had a debate in Parliament, gone wild on Twitter, made our voices heard and the vote still went against us. Money talks.

Roland Hui00:02

Aren't historical sites protected in Britain?

Julian Humphrys00:03

Our planning rules are very weak when it comes to battlefields and Historic England failed to object

Michelle Enzinas00:03

That's awful

Claire Ridgway00:03

@Roland, it is a registered battlefield.

Julian Humphrys00:04

Substantial harm to a registered battlefield is not supposed to be allowed - but what is substantial?

Laurie Duerr00:04

Yes, since it could potentially disrupt some of the grounds, correct?

Michelle Enzinas00:04

I believe a race track to be substantial

Julian Humphrys00:05

Because the area in question is quite small it was argued that only minor harm was caused. But it was a key part of the battlefield - on Henry's approach march

Roland Hui00:05

Couldn't MIRA find somewhere else? What was so special about Bosworth that the project had to be there?

RealTudorLady00:05

Some sites do have proper protection, but other parts may be under threat if councils want to do something unless they are owned. This is an area that needs more research and archaeological research.

Julian Humphrys00:06

Good question. MIRA owned the land

Claire Ridgway00:06

I saw that both Michael Jones and Mike Ingram have argued that it was where Henry's mercenaries were located and possibly his cannons. So a key location.

Barbora Bell00:06

I believe I read in the news today that although Bosworth is a registered battlefield, it is not a historically preserved site?

Barbora Bell00:06

Yes - isn't it the place where he "entered?"

Claire Ridgway00:06

Hi Barbora!

Roland Hui00:07

Have any prominent historians spoken out?

Barbora Bell00:07

Hi Claire! My first time in the chatroom. Super exciting

RealTudorLady00:08

Yes, Michael Jones, our leaders at the Riii Societies, Matthew Lewis, many others.

Julian Humphrys00:08

Yes - lots of historians spoke out. The problem is that whilst this development might be argued to 'only' cause minor harm, another might follow, and then another and you end up with incremental damage on a large s

RealTudorLady00:08

Hello Barbara, nice to meet you.

Claire Ridgway00:08

@Roland, yes, lots. I think Chris Skidmore, who is also an MP, brought it up in an MP's debate too.

Julian Humphrys00:09

Yes he did

Laurie Duerr00:09

What is the timing for the actual build of the track?

Julian Humphrys00:10

Well, they can start whenever they want

RealTudorLady00:10

We should find out and stage a protest and occupation.

Laurie Duerr00:11

Yes exactly, RTL!

Michelle Enzinas00:11

Does this sort of thing happen often?

Claire Ridgway00:11

What can we do now about it? I saw Matthew Lewis was sharing information about asking the minister to call in the decision.

Julian Humphrys00:12

One of the problems is that Historic England used to have a battlefields panel to advise them but they disbanded it and I would argue they now lack the expertise to fully assess planning issues when they relate to battlefields

Michelle Enzinas00:13

They just see a field?

Laurie Duerr00:13

That makes sense Julian.

Barbora Bell00:13

I am wondering what is the general "feel" about this in England. Not with professional and laymen historians, but with the general public. Is this talked about on the news? In the pubs? is the general public bothered?

Julian Humphrys00:14

I know. Lots of ideas fly around on FB. The reality is that there has been no illegality, no major failure of process and the judgement reached by the Council is not perverse in so far as they took advice. The failure of Historic England to object was critical

Claire Ridgway00:15

@Barbora, it made the national news and radio, so it was a big thing, but I'm not sure the general person on the street has much knowledge of battles and battlefields.

Roland Hui00:15

Interesting point, Barbora. Is it only historians and Tudor enthusiasts like us who give a hoot? Does the general public care?

RealTudorLady00:15

Unfortunately, Michelle, although it isn't common, it does happen more and more these days. A part of Barnet was under pressure recently as well, another War of the Roses battlefield. There can be a legal challenge in Court?

Claire Ridgway00:16

It's sad that the Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre didn't make a fuss either, but then they're run by the council I believe.

this is very depressing

Barbora Bell00:16

Interesting. Because....and excuse me if I am ignorant, but how many modern-day battles were fought on English soil? Seems to me, that in a historical perspective, Bosworth should be HUGE!

Julian Humphrys00:16

Very good question about the general public's view. This is why we have to keep arguing the importance of battlefields and show that they are more than just fields. For military historians they allow the lie of the land to be understood and for accounts of the battle to be compared with the surviving terrain. This produces a better understanding of battle events. Battlefields separately provide a strong sense of place where momentous events occurred and offer an opportunity to walk in the footsteps of history. They are also places of contemplation where events can be remembered and respect shown for those who fell in battle.

Claire Ridgway00:17

If it does all go ahead, are Mira going to allow an archaeological investigation first?

Julian Humphrys00:17

GAanother good point, Barbara. We have had no major battles since 1746. Bosworth is as important as Gettysburg.

Barbora Bell00:17

@Julian: yes indeed, it is not only a battlefield; one can think of it s a graveyard.

Roland Hui00:18

I think the recent discovery of Richard III's remains has given Bosworth greater prominence, which is a good thing of course.

Barbora Bell00:18

That is exactly what was on my mind Julian. I visited Gettysburg last year you could FEEL the history there. I cannot imagine a race track being built on it.

Julian Humphrys00:18

Yes MIRA will. I think we have to try and work with them now - maybe shame them into carrying out major mitigation

Claire Ridgway00:19

It does look like it's going to go ahead but, yes, there needs to be pressure on them to do archaeology first, and proper archaeology.

Roland Hui00:20

I visited Gettysburg too. The 'National Park Service' in the U.S. is very good about protecting historical sites like that.

Claire Ridgway00:21

I was at Bosworth just the other day and I felt so sad looking at the surrounding landscape. It is so beautiful, so peaceful, and the view too is going to be changed considerably by these plans.

Julian Humphrys00:21

Those who argued for the development (it's a driverless car testing track not a racetrack btw) stressed the economic benefits of the development. If we are going to prevent future destruction we need to be able to show that battlefields offer economic benefits for example by bringing visitors to the area.

I did some sums and I think that since I have been bringing people to Bosworth they have spent nearly £200,000 on accommodation alone. and that's just people who have come with me

Roland Hui00:23

to make this part of Bosworth economically feasible as a tourist attraction - how accessible is it? Is it close to the current Visitors Center (I assume there is one, I've not been to Bosworth).

Julian Humphrys00:24

@Claire I will be there on Saturday. I only hope that we can get MIRA to screen off their track somehow

Claire Ridgway00:24

And they spend a fair bit in the gift shop there too! I took a group and they all bought lots of souvenirs and there was a school trip and all of the children were buying things.

Claire Ridgway00:25

@Julian, yes, I can't quite imagine what impact it's going to have, but I hope they do something to screen it.

RealTudorLady00:25

On Twitter a number of locals said they don't want this ugly thing as it is on the place that many locals go for leisure and relaxing.

Julian Humphrys00:26

@RTL Yes indeed. We can't go around bandying huge figures of potential jobs but the battlefield offers steady employment without ruining the nature of the area

Claire Ridgway00:26

For those that haven't been, the scenery is beautiful green fields, countryside pretty much as far as you can see, it really is stunning.

RealTudorLady00:27

The Rii Societies here and in Canada are furious and are working also to do something about it, especially on social media and during the debates.

Julian Humphrys00:27

I am currently writing a feature for History Revealed Magazine about battlefields and what they offer and why we need to protect them

Claire Ridgway00:28

I really thought after the first council meeting that we were in with a chance, but...

Laurie Duerr00:28

Yes I bet; I wouldn't mess with hard-lined Ricardians!!

Claire Ridgway00:28

Brilliant, Julian!

Julian Humphrys00:28
Or with clever Tudors!

Claire Ridgway00:28
Ha!

Laurie Duerr00:28
LOL yes!

RealTudorLady00:29
Indeed

Claire Ridgway00:30
My main worry is the precedent that this creates and the fact that we then have a new edge to the battlefield, which becomes, in some people's eyes, "only an edge". Will that get eaten into in the future too? Scary.

Julian Humphrys00:31
If you get the chance to listen to Chris Skidmore's speech at Parliament please do. We are hoping that the Battlefields Trust will become a statutory consultee which means that we will HAVE to be consulted about proposed developments on battlefields in future

Julian Humphrys00:31
Spot on, Claire

Claire Ridgway00:31
That would be so good.

Laurie Duerr00:31
Yes, we are all committed to supporting this!

Michelle Enzinas00:32
are battlefields your primary specialty? or is it architecture ?

Michelle Enzinas00:33
Does MIRA have any other industry that I might have heard of?

Claire Ridgway00:33
By the way, feel free to ask Julian about his talk on Cambridge and King's College Chapel too. We can talk about that and Julian's battlefields work.

Julian Humphrys00:33

Hi Michelle - two days a week it's battlefields... but I am a qualified Cambridge guide

Julian Humphrys00:34

So - Who has visited Cambridge and if so what did you like best?

Laurie Duerr00:34

I had the pleasure of Julian's tour at Cambridge a year ago!

Laurie Duerr00:35

Very interesting and entertaining!

Michelle Enzinas00:35

I would love to visit. I've google-maped walking around

Julian Humphrys00:35

It would be lovely to show you round my old c

Claire Ridgway00:35

I haven't been for many many years but would love to go back. As someone interested in Anne Boleyn, I'd love to see that screen in King's College Chapel, but just to get lost in Cambridge would be perfect too.

Laurie Duerr00:35

Yes, it was the highlight for me there, Claire!!

RealTudorLady00:36

Julian, given that Cambridge University and Oxford had so many female patrons, given also that women gained many rights in the twentieth century, why did it take them until 1980 to admit women?

Julian Humphrys00:36

Sorry. That should have read it was lovely to show you round my old college!

Claire Ridgway00:36

Good question RTL!

Julian Humphrys00:37

The Patriarchy, I guess. Having said that the first women's colleges were founded in the 1860s and 70s

RealTudorLady00:37

Thanks, Claire

Michelle Enzinas00:37

what sorts of topics do the tours focus on?

RealTudorLady00:37

Thanks Julian

Julian Humphrys00:38

Well, I like to give a mix of history, architecture and my misadventures as a student

Laurie Duerr00:39

Julian, why were Latimer and Cramner burned at Oxford, though they were more closely associated with Cambridge?

Roland Hui00:39

What are the other Tudor points of interest in Cambridge (besides the screen Clare mentioned)?

Julian Humphrys00:39

Laurie. Because Oxford was a conservative stronghold

Michelle Enzinas00:39

Do you do any work on Tudor student life?

Laurie Duerr00:40

Ok makes sense, thanks!

Julian Humphrys00:40

Hi Roland. Watch my video! Lots happened in the Tudor period

RealTudorLady00:37

Thanks Julian Thanks Julian

Julian Humphrys00:38

Well, I like to give a mix of history, architecture and my misadventures as a student

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Laurie Duerr00:40

Ok makes sense, thanks!

Julian Humphrys00:40

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Michelle Enzinas00:41

your video on here was excellent

Julian Humphrys00:42

Michelle. Yes. The end of the C16th saw something of a change with Cambridge becoming something of a finishing school for the young gentry. Not all colleges were like that, though. My college (which was Harvard's college) was a very puritan establishment

Barbora Bell00:42

OK...have to go.. 🙄 two hungry teen boys coming home from school.

Claire Ridgway00:42

@Roland, here's the link to Julian's talk on Tudor Cambridge - <https://www.tudorsociety.com/expert-talk-kings-college-chapel-and-tudor-cambridge-julian-humphrys/>

Julian Humphrys00:42

Bye bye. Nice to chat

Roland Hui00:43
Thanks for the link!

Claire Ridgway00:43
Bye Barbora! Thanks for joining in!

Laurie Duerr00:43
@Roland, from my perspective, the highlights are the unbelievably well-preserved Tudor roses, portcullis's, and fleur-de-lis all over the interior of Kings College . You're just totally surrounded by them, its really overwhelming!

Julian Humphrys00:43
I'm still here. That bye bye was for Barbora!

RealTudorLady00:43
Although I like the fact that Henry vi wanted a plain but beautiful Chapel because he was super holy I do appreciate the Tudors going over the top to decorate and make the building elaborate. That vaulted ceiling looks breathtaking and they are a favourite architectural feature of mine. I also give thumbs up to Richard iii and Margaret Beaufort on their contribution to Cambridge.

Michelle Enzinas00:43
was it just gentry or the new upper class?

Julian Humphrys00:43
Both I guess.

Julian Humphrys00:44
LMB was a great benefactor

RealTudorLady00:44
Bye Barbara.

Michelle Enzinas00:44
I loved the shots of the Chapel. I'd never seen photos of teh undecorated side before

Claire Ridgway00:46
Which college would you say is the most "untouched"?

Roland Hui00:47

Julian - how does one get info on your tours or talks? Do you have a web site?

RealTudorLady00:48

It was lovely to see the decorations under the screen to Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, rare AB and HA

Michelle Enzinas00:48

the H-A was beautiful

Julian Humphrys00:48

Few of them are untouched because they have grown organically over the years

Julian Humphrys00:49

Tours: Follow me on Twitter. But maybe I should do something for the Tudor Society 😎

Laurie Duerr00:50

And there is an unbelievable original letter from Elizabeth I, housed in one of the buildings there, Julian I can't remember which one?

Michelle Enzinas00:51

<https://twitter.com/GeneralJules>

Claire Ridgway00:51

@Julian, Philippa and I will definitely bear you in mind for future tours!

Julian Humphrys00:52

Was it at Emmanuel? The charter with the Nicholas Hilliard portrait of Elizabeth

RealTudorLady00:52

I have to say it was a pity that the mental problems of Henry VI prevented him from making rational decisions and ruling effectively because if he had appointed wise advisers he may have been revered as a religious King not seen as a disaster who lost everything because of rival claims and poor management.

Laurie Duerr00:52

Yes that's it, thanks! Really lovely!

Roland Hui00:54

Thanks for the Twitter link Michelle.

Roland Hui00:55

Is Flodden, for example, protected from development?

Julian Humphrys00:55

RTL Very true. I heard an interesting talk by Michael Jones on H6. He pointed out that despite all his failings (or maybe because of them) he still retained a lot of loyalty

Julian Humphrys00:56

No. None of our battlefields is protected from development. Fortunately at Flodden Lord Joicey understands its significance

Julian Humphrys00:56

Lord Joicey is the principal landowner

RealTudorLady00:57

Yes, Julian, and people were prepared to hide him and Margaret as well. His wanting to build religious monuments was admirable.

Claire Ridgway00:57

Well, that hour flew by! Thank you so much, Julian, for joining us and answering our questions on such wide-ranging topics! It's been fun and informative. Thank you to TS members too for the wonderful questions.

Laurie Duerr00:57

Yes, he definitely had a strong following, for years later too..

Roland Hui00:57

Thank you Julian!

Michelle Enzinas00:58

Thank you!

Julian Humphrys00:58

Yes, thank you everybody!

Laurie Duerr00:58

Thank you Claire and Julian!

RealTudorLady00:58
Thanks very much, Julian.

Claire Ridgway00:58
This has been a wonderful talk, thank you everyone!

RealTudorLady00:58
Thanks Claire for hosting again

Julian Humphrys00:59
Yes, thanks Claire

Claire Ridgway00:59
It's a pleasure. I love running these, it's so lovely to connect people around the world.

Claire Ridgway00:59
Night everyone!

Julian Humphrys00:59
Good night!

RealTudorLady01:00
Goodnight all. See you all on the battlefield, banners at the ready ha!

Claire Ridgway01:01
Ha! Yes!