

***Louis John Frederick Ashdown-Hill MBE FSA***  
***(5 April 1949 – 18 May 2018)***

***Looking for Richard Project Obituary***

We feel very honoured to have known Dr John Ashdown-Hill and extremely privileged to have worked with him on the *Looking for Richard Project*. John will always be remembered for his ground-breaking discovery of King Richard's mtDNA, and for his crucial work in helping to debunk the widely believed myth that Richard's remains had been thrown into the river Soar at the Dissolution – achievements which led directly to the discovery of the king's grave and international headlines. As well as an astute and inspirational historian and genealogist, John was also a talented linguist, fluent in many languages including Latin. His prolific publishing and research output bequeathed a unique and lasting legacy to Ricardian studies in particular, and late medieval history in general. Perhaps his most important work, *Eleanor, The Secret Queen*, credibly established Eleanor Talbot as the first wife of Edward IV and introduced the evidence for the pre-contract to a much wider audience. John was a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE), a Fellow of The Society of Antiquaries, a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, a member of the Society of Genealogists, the Richard III Society, and the Centre Europeen d'Etudes Bourguignonnes. Less well known is John's love of animals and the environment, for example, he cared for rescued battery chickens in his garden. In all seasons he would take time out from his busy schedule to spend quiet contemplative time enjoying a nearby beach. As a person, John was kind and gentle. Despite his exceptional knowledge, intellect, and achievements, he remained the unassuming, humble, quiet, modest man he had always been. He was a practicing Catholic, and his strong faith was a source of great comfort as his health began to fail. John will live forever in the knowledge he has left to the world - and also in the memories of those lucky enough to have known him.