



Knitter

The Newsletter of the Worshipful Company of Framework Knitters

Annigoni Revisited: Our Return to Fishmongers' Hall

October saw the Company return to the magnificent Fishmongers' Hall, with its spectacular views over London Bridge and the River Thames, for our annual Banquet. Pre-Dinner drinks were taken in the magnificent Court Dining and Drawing Rooms, the latter dominated by Pietro Annigoni's iconic portrait of the late HM Queen Elizabeth II. The carpet guard leading to the receiving line was provided by our affiliated Croydon Sea Cadets; and during the Reception the Armed Forces Covenant was signed by the Master on behalf of the Company.



Some 160 Liverymen and guests sat down to dine in Fishmongers' opulent Banqueting Hall to a feast of cured salmon and smoked salmon wasabi, followed first by braised beef bavette and then by chocolate cremeux with spiced poached pear and sorbet. Musical entertainment throughout the banquet was provided by the Royal Marine Association Ensemble, culminating in a splendid rendition of the Post Horn Gallop which was well appreciated by all present. Following the ceremony of the Loving Cup and formal toasts to the King, the Royal Family and the Lord Mayor, Corporation of London and the Sheriffs, Under Warden Jonathan Pears introduced Bursary Winners Katie Waller and Helen Kaye, who



were presented with Bursary Parchments by our own Hon. Liveryman and Past Lord Mayor – Vincent Keaveny – as the Lord Mayor's Representative.

Next, Assistant Catherine Fuller introduced our official guests and invited all Liverymen to stand and join her in a toast to all guests. Our principal guest – General Sir James Everard – responded warmly, proposing a toast to the Company. Having thanked Sir James, the Master gave an amusing address, expressing some surprise at finding himself halfway through his year in office before presenting a pair of 'lovingly knitted' socks to Sir James (in addition to the 19 additional pairs which

Signing the Armed Forces Covenant were gifts for all of the Company's official guests and their consorts). The Master concluded by presenting a cheque to Vincent Keaveny for the Lord Mayor's Appeal, who then gave an amusing reply, not only thanking the Company for their generous contribution but also expressing gratitude for not having been 'ambushed' by masked ranks of Liverymen wearing Vincent Keaveny facemasks! The proceedings were concluded by the Beadle, who invited all present to join the Master for a Stirrup Cup.



Assistant Philip Tranter

General Sir James Everard Tells All



**THE WORSHIPFUL
COMPANY OF
FRAMEWORK
KNITTERS**

2024-25

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New ... New... News !!

Our Banquet Court admitted FIVE new Liverymen – here's their stories



Helen D. Rowe was born in Manchester and by the age of 7 was living in a leafy suburb to the north west of the city. She attended the Grammar School for Girls, Chadderton and subsequently studied for a BSc degree in Textile Science and Technology at the University of Bradford. It was here, on the same course, that she met her future husband, Trevor.

Helen was the first female graduate to become part of the management team at Courtauld's Textile Development Unit (Research Division), in Castleton near Rochdale, becoming



Max Ellis was born in Leicestershire and studied at Leicester Grammar School followed by the University of Birmingham where he gained a First Class Honours Degree in Geography.

His family has a rich history in the Livery: both grandfathers were Master, and his father is the current Master. His uncle Peter Corah is the Upper Warden.

Max has now qualified as an Ecologist and lives and works



Annette (Nettie) Ellis was born and brought up in Leicester. Her father – Patrick Corah – was Master in 1989; she is married to the current Master – Matthew Ellis – and her brother – Peter Corah – is the Upper Warden.

After a few years working in London, Nettie returned to Leicestershire where she met Matthew. They have two children – Max and Sophie – both now working in London. After raising the children, Nettie returned to work in HR for the NHS.



Nigel Lugg was Group Chairman of Prominent Europe specialising in fashion apparel supply. Prominent serves a broad client base offering men's shirts and suits, womenswear and casualwear to retailers across Europe. He developed the business into a European operation with offices in Barcelona, Paris and Milan as well as London and Nottingham. It also owns the Chester Barrie brand and holds the menswear licence for Richard James Mayfair and Simon Carter. Prominent has a significant business manufacturing



Susan Pym was born in the town of Dumbarton on the banks of the River Clyde, just a few miles from Loch Lomond. The town is famous for its ancient volcanic rock with castle atop: Susan is therefore a 'Daughter of the Rock'.

She graduated as a Town and Country Planner and worked in local government, with a development corporation and in private practice as a Planning Consultant for a London firm of surveyors. She married her husband Hugh in 1986 when they set up home in London and where they brought up their

Stories continued on Pages 4 & 5

From The Master



I can't quite believe how quickly the first half of my year has flown by, although I should have known: looking back over past Newsletters every Master says the same! I just seemed to have blinked and it's gone since that wonderful Installation at Ironmongers.

I have been privileged to have been invited to some very special events. Just within the first few weeks I had dined with the Lord Mayor, lunched with the Judges at The Old Bailey, attended a very soggy Garden Party at Buckingham Palace and presented socks to Princess Anne at the Big Curry lunch.

Nettie and I have also attended the Masters weekend, held in London, and were invited to the Fanmakers Summer Dinner and the Upholders Installation Dinner.

On a sports theme, we have taken part in the annual Inter-Livery Croquet Tournament in Worthing, where we peaked in the first game, and in the annual Inter-Livery Pétanque competition in Vauxhall where we were beaten in the final. My team also won the annual Brigantes Golf competition held at Ganton Golf Club.

In May, the Cottage Homes welcomed the Almshouse Association Chairman – Willie Hartley-Russell – and this was followed a couple of weeks later by an outing for the residents on the Peter Le Marchant canal boat in Loughborough. The Master's Tea Party was held again by popular demand at Wymondham Windmill.

We also said goodbye to our Groundsman Karl and welcomed officially our new employee Andy, who has settled in very quickly and has already become an indispensable member of the team.

In June I was thrilled to have been invited by

Ruddington Museum to the presentation of The King's Award for Voluntary Service, the highest honour to be bestowed upon volunteers.

The Leicester weekend, held in July for the first time, was a great success. Wigston FWK Museum kindly moved their Ceremony of the Socks to fit

in with us, PM Liz Green won The Howard Ellis Salver at the annual Golf Tournament and the Leicester Tigers ground was a superb venue for our dinner.

More recently I have been imprisoned in the Tower of London to raise money for the Red Cross, and I am delighted (but certainly not surprised) to say that the FWK raised the most money of all those taking part. Thank you to all who donated: you clearly didn't want to see your Master incarcerated for too long!



I would also like to thank the Chair people and members of our various committees for all their hard work: if you are not on a committee and would like to get more involved then please simply contact the Clerk who can point you in the right direction.

The City closed down in August, so having had a break I am very much looking forward to the second half of my year. The Clerk is bombarding me with invitations and I will endeavour to attend as many as possible, particularly entering The Lord Mayor's Show with my Wardens and Clerk in November. Please give us a wave: we'll be with the Ancient Livery Companies.

By the time you read this we will have celebrated the Civic Banquet at Fishmongers' Hall. Please get yourself booked in for our Winter lunch at the beautiful Armourers' Hall in January.

I look forward to seeing you all over the next few months.

Helen Rowe, continued

lead member of the fibre, yarn and fabric testing laboratories. After four years of marriage, Helen and Trevor started their family. While their two girls were small, Helen took up a part-time rôle as a lecturer in Textile Technology at a local college, later accepting a permanent appointment at Manchester Metropolitan University (then Manchester Polytechnic).

Over the next 26 years, Helen expanded her textile knowledge to include some expertise in clothing technology, rising from Senior Lecturer to Principal Lecturer and, for the last 3½ years there, was Head of Department with more than 65 full-time academic staff and almost 1,700 students.

Helen became a member of The Textile Institute (TTI) – the only chartered professional body to offer professional qualifications in textile technology – as a student. Already a member of its governing Council, on leaving MMU she was appointed Chairman of TTI. Since then, Helen has held the position of Chairman on two occasions, covering five years in total, and is now Vice President with a focus on the interface between textile and clothing technologies, especially with regards to education and training. She also works part-time supervising Masters dissertations at several Universities and is an External Examiner for Masters level work. Helen also develops short courses for industry which she delivers on behalf of TTI alongside her husband.

She is passionate about educating anyone with an interest in textiles, particularly with regards to the fundamentals of textile technology.

Helen holds an MSc in Textiles, is both a Fellow and Companion of TTI, and in 2023 was granted Honorary Life Membership. Becoming a Liveryman of The Worshipful Company of Framework Knitters at this stage in her career is, she believes, an honour, a privilege and a pleasure.

Helen and Trevor celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary in August this year. They are extremely close to their married daughters who have blessed them with five grandchildren, and like nothing better than holidaying with them all. They have recently returned from a crazy road trip through Texas, followed by a relaxing cruise to Mexico and culminating in four fun-filled days in New York!

Max Ellis, continued

in London. He enjoys reading – particularly history – and travelling. His most recent trip was to the Himalaya, where he trekked through the Langtang valley.

Nettie Ellis, continued

Nettie has been the Homes Manager of the Framework Knitters' Cottage Homes Almshouses since 2020.

She has recently taken up crocheting (knitting was never her forte!) and enjoys making blankets for homeless shelters as part of the *Knit for the Community* initiative started in 2020. Other hobbies include gardening and walking, both achieved with hindrance and help from the family Jack Russell.

Nigel Lugg, continued

shirts, hosiery and intimates for Marks and Spencer. It acquired the Quantum Clothing Group in 2012 before restructuring it and merging it into Prominent Europe.

Originally a buyer at Liberty and then House of Fraser, Nigel moved on to the supply side of the industry in the mid-80s when he became European CEO of Warnaco Branded Division including Christian Dior and Valentino. In 1992 he became a founding partner of Prominent Europe, setting up the business as a joint venture in conjunction with the Itochu Corporation.

Nigel became Group Chairman in 2001 at the same time as Itochu took full control of the company. He has overseen the company's development from shirt specialist to the broader rôle it has now as one of the largest apparel suppliers in Europe. He has extensive experience of Asian manufacturing, having owned and controlled factories producing shirts, tailoring, lingerie and hosiery, employing 11,000 people and supplying brands including M & S.

He also led Prominent into the branded market, buying Chester Barrie in 1997. From one store on Savile Row, the brand has now grown to 13 shop-in-shops in the UK and Italy and has a healthy wholesale business. The brand has international licences in China and Korea. The Richard James Mayfair licence began at the start of 2012 and has quickly grown to 15 shop-in-shops in the UK and France. In addition, the brand division acquired the Simon Carter licence for men's casualwear in 2014.

In May 2015, Nigel was appointed Chairman of the UK Fashion and Textiles Association. The UKFT has 2,500 members, and it represents the UK manufacturing and textile sector. He remains heavily involved in Government negotiations, ensuring

the industry maintains a strong voice within government. He is passionate about developing a growing manufacturing trade for fashion and textiles in the UK, and representing the wider interests of the industry.

He became Non-Executive Director of T M Lewin in March 2019, representing the venture capital firm Bain Capital. He remained a special advisor to the Itochu Corporation in Japan until March 2020, and was awarded an OBE for services to the UK Fashion and Textile Industry in January 2021.

Susan Pym, continued

three children.

Susan has always been an active member of the Church of Scotland at local and national level, and she is the current Moderator of the Presbytery of England & The Channel Islands. She has served on numerous church committees and the committee of CrossReach, the social care arm of the Church. She is an elder at St. Columba's Church in Pont Street SW1.

She now helps to manage and run two book festivals, the Queen's Park Book Festival in NW6 and the new St. Andrew's Book Festival, which is taking place in central London in November this year.

Susan knits, is learning to crochet, and helps to run the St. Columba's Craft Group in Knightsbridge.

And some new Freemen as well



On Sunday 19th May, we held a Freedom Ceremony for the new Student Freemen at Ruddington Museum.

The Master, Wardens and Clerks were resplendent in their robes, while other attendees added gravitas in jacket and tie, with visiting Court Members wearing their livery badges.

As well as the ceremony there was a chance for visitors – Master, Wardens, other Court members and various guests – to talk to the students about the Company over tea and cakes.

Everyone met up at 1.40pm for a quick briefing by the Clerk, with the ceremony itself starting at 2.00pm.

Tea and cakes followed at 2.30pm, after which there was an opportunity for everyone to visit the museum, which stayed open until 4.00pm, giving all plenty of time to look around and learn a little about the Art and Mystery of Framework Knitting.

The King's Award for Voluntary Service



Museum Volunteers with the Lord Lieutenant

Previously known as the Queen's Award it was created in 2002 to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II's Golden Jubilee, and has been shining a light on the fantastic work of voluntary groups from across the United Kingdom for many years. Equivalent to an MBE, the KAVS is the highest Award given to voluntary groups and it is awarded for life. There were 262 KAVS awarded across the UK in 2023, and The Framework Knitters Museum was one of only five awarded in Nottinghamshire.

The museum received its award, presented by the Lord Lieutenant and her deputies at the museum on Sunday 9th June, along with the following citation.

'The Framework Knitters Museum is a highly valued cultural and heritage asset in Nottinghamshire whose significance far exceeds its relatively modest size. Described last year by the Guardian as one of Britain's 10 best small museums and the recipient of Trip Advisor Travellers Choice Award Winner 2022 – the museum is a unique surviving example of 19th-century Knitters Yard complete with workshops and workers cottages.

'The Museum's success derives from its volunteers who, with remarkable passion, energy and knowledge bring life to physical assets and creatively and poignantly tell the life stories of those who lived and worked within the Yard at a time of great social and economic change. The story telling appeals equally to young and old and regular visitors include schools, families, students, academics and tourists (including direct descendants of Framework knitters).

'The museum is a working museum and through its volunteers, several of whom use, maintain and demonstrate the historic machines, the endangered craft of framework knitting is perpetuated and knowledge and skills are shared with partners and students. The museum has a long established partnership with the Department of Art and Design at Nottingham Trent University and volunteers support academic research, student placements and collaborations whilst the University shares research expertise to enhance exhibits and events.

'Led by a strong Board of volunteer trustees, with a wide range of relevant skills and coinciding with the museum's 50th anniversary, the museum has recently been revitalised and extended to provide a new café, shop, reception area and garden. The project, which was underpinned by over £300k of grant

funding, is the outcome of the inspiration, hard work, thoughtful planning and dogged determination of the volunteer trustees supported by other volunteers who have contributed ideas, research and new displays.

‘Preservation of the physical fabric of the buildings, the machines and other artefacts is an important aim of the museum with much being achieved through the contribution of expert volunteers including specialists in historic buildings, textiles, and museum craft.

‘The museum also serves as a social hub, with volunteers playing an active rôle in the local community supporting craft activity and wellbeing groups including ‘Nature in Mind’, a service for adults which draws on the unique capacity of heritage and nature to improve mental health. The contribution made by the museum to the local community has recently been recognised by the securing of a *Pride of Ruddington Award 2022* for the Culture and Sport Category. The award is based entirely on votes made by the local population and recognises the significance of the museum to its local neighbourhood.

‘The unique appeal of the museum derives from the museum’s ability to reach out across generations, conveying rich educational content but in a way that is accessible and fun with hands on involvement. An achievement which derives from the commitment, knowledge, enthusiasm and warmth of its volunteers. Equally, the museum preserves an important national asset and perpetuates an endangered craft whilst creating at the same time an environment that is safe, welcoming and bright. It is a place you come away from buzzing’.

PM Julian Ellis



Ian Rowson (Chairman of the Museum Trustees) with the Lord Lieutenant and Deputy Lieutenants and (on the far right) Wendy Start OBE DL

BRIGANTES NEWS

For those of you new to the Livery, we thought we'd give a short introduction to one of the City's more unusual organisations – the Association of City of London Liverymen in the North of England. Its purpose is the promoting of fellowship among Liverymen of the City of London with connections or interests in the North of England, whether through residence, business, birthright, family and friends – or simply through general appeal.

Membership of Brigantes is open to all City of London Liverymen in good standing with their Company, wherever they may live worldwide.

Complementing the activities of City of London Livery Companies, the Brigantes Committee arranges events across the North of England. Liverymen attending say how much they appreciate the opportunity to meet in the North with Liverymen from other Companies – with some finding they live close to Liverymen of whom they were previously unaware – leading to many new friendships. Their website provides you with more information about Brigantes, its activities and contact details: see

<https://brigantes.org.uk/home>

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is available at two levels – Subscribing Member and Non-subscribing Supporter. The Lord Mayor of London and the two Sheriffs are ex-officio Members of the Brigantes during their period in office.

Members are required to be in good standing with their Company. All Members receive regular communications from Brigantes, along with the Brigantes Newsletter with reports on past events and notice of future events.

Subscribing Members pay an annual subscription not exceeding £50 which is used to meet the Association's administration costs and operating overheads. Subscribing Members receive invitations to forthcoming events ahead of invitations to Supporters, which is particularly helpful for events that are quickly filled, as many are. Subscribing Members also receive a reduced ticket price compared with Supporters. The current annual membership subscription is £40.

EVENTS

Brigantes arranges events around the North of England for City of London Liverymen and their guests, alternating between East and West of the Pennines.

Subscribing Members of Brigantes receive priority in booking places for events and discounted ticket prices. Two or three weeks later, subject to places still being available, invitations are sent to non-subscribers.

The main Brigantes events are the Brigantes Breakfast (a lunch), the Brigantes Winter Gathering and the Brigantes Golf Day. Details of current known future events are also shown in the diary on the back page.

Membership of Brigantes is open to all Liverymen of the City of London, and to Members of the Worshipful Company of Parish Clerks and the Company of Watermen and Lightermen, wherever they may live worldwide.

Supporters receive invitations to events around two to three weeks after Subscribing Members.

And on the page opposite we have pleasure in attaching a copy of their latest Newsletter, which we hope will encourage many more of our members not only to join but also to participate in one or more of the various activities listed. It should be noted that The Framework Knitters regularly provides the largest number of delegates from any Livery Company !!



September 2024 Newsletter

In this Edition :

Dates for your Diary

2024 Winter Gathering – Sheffield

2025 Brigantes Golf – Royal Liverpool, Hoylake

2025 Brigantes Breakfast – Spa Pavilion, Scarborough

2024 Winter Gathering

Friday 13th December

Our Brigantes Winter Gathering this year takes us to the splendid City of Sheffield, which we last visited in 2016.

We shall be enjoying two wonderful venues – Cutlers Hall, home of the Company of Cutlers of Hallamshire and, immediately opposite, Sheffield Cathedral.



The Association's AGM commences in Cutlers Hall at 15.30, followed by a reception at 16.15 hosted by the Master Cutler and an early evening supper at 17.00 in the Grand Hall.

We then cross to Sheffield Cathedral for an evening Concert of traditional Festive music, commencing at 19.30.



For those able to arrive earlier, at 14.30 Paul Iseard, a specialist in antique Sheffield cutlery, will give a talk on 'The History of the Humble Fork' - very appropriate for Cutlers Hall.

2025 Brigantes Golf

Wednesday 30th April

Brigantes Golfers will be out in force at the end of April, playing over the British Open Championship Links of Royal Liverpool at Hoylake.

A Fine Dining dinner in the Clubhouse on the Tuesday evening, to which non-golfing Brigantians are most welcome, will be followed by golf on the Wednesday and an early evening dinner and prizegiving. Details will be circulated in early February.



Once more our appreciation goes to Mike Barton, Past Master Spectacle Maker and his wife Annabel, Liveryman Spectacle Maker, and both Royal Liverpool Members, for their help in organising another superb golfing occasion.

2025 Brigantes Breakfast

Thursday 24th July

A further date for your diary is 24th July for next year's Brigantes Breakfast. We are off to the historic seaside resort of Scarborough and its famous Spa Pavilion overlooking the South Bay, shown below. Full details and booking forms will be sent next March.



To recommend Liverymen for inclusion on the circulation for events, please email Fiona Robinson, Brigantes Administrator, at livery@brigantes.org.uk or let us know through our website at www.brigantes.org.uk

Cottage Homes Update:

A Brief Résumé of The Cottage Homes Residents Events

12th March 2024 – Pub Lunch at The Coach & Horses, Kibworth

A number of residents and Cottage Homes committee members joined together for a traditional pub lunch. The food was delicious, the talking loud, and everyone had a great time.

22nd May 2024 – Visit to Peter Le Marchant Trust

The weather was wet and windy – not ideal for a canal trip. The boat trip was cut short owing to flooding, but it gave an opportunity for the residents to get out and chat to those members of the Livery who also attended. Because of the weather we had to stay inside and so miss the different aspects gained from floating down a canal. When it was announced that we would be going to the pub early, I was amazed that the zimmer frames went into overdrive and there was no holding back most of the residents. The pub did us proud, plenty of food, all cooked to perfection, drinks for those who wanted one....or two, and a great time was had by all.



5th June 2024 Master's Tea Party at Wymondham Windmill

This was the third time the residents had been taken to tea at the Windmill, my first time, and I can see why they like going. There is something very British about a proper afternoon tea: sandwiches, cakes, scones with jam and clotted cream. A considerable amount of time was taken up with discussing whether the jam or cream goes on first. There were about 14 residents and a number of the Management Committee who also attended, and we made sure that we all mingled. A great time was had by all; and I especially enjoyed it as it is the first (and probably the last) time the Master has paid for my tea!

28th June 2024 – Karl's Retirement Party

Unfortunately I was not able to attend, but from all accounts many of the residents turned out to say their farewells to Karl. A magnificent spread was put on by our 'go to' café – Zeph's, in Oadby. Our Master then thanked Karl for his dedication and enthusiasm over the years and our very own Calligrapher – Eric of No 12 – presented a farewell card. We all wish Karl a happy retirement.



The Residents at Karl's Retirement Party

6th July 2024 – Leicester Weekend Dinner at the Tigers Ground

A smaller number of residents – five in total – joined us this year for our annual Leicester dinner, mainly owing to ill health and holidays being booked. This was the first time we had been to this venue. The weather was beautiful, although rather warm for a number of the older residents, but this did not stop them enjoying a lovely meal, plenty of wine and a fascinating talk by Chris Sturgess about the history of the Sturgess Motor Group. The residents were chauffeured to and from the Tigers Ground by members of the Management Committee.

7th July 2024 – BBQ at The Cottage Homes

What a fantastic day – the barbies were lit, the burgers, sausages and chicken put on, and then it started to rain. This made no difference to the party atmosphere as we had a number of residents and Liverymen sitting down together in Corah Hall, mixing, laughing and having a great time (see also Page 19)



7th August 2024 – Visit to Ruddington Framework Knitters Museum

A very successful trip: it was their first visit, and the residents really enjoyed themselves. I was very glad that I drove independently, as apparently the conversation in the bus got quite interesting!

Escape from the Tower

The Red Cross has traditionally organised this event annually and previously it has been held at The Old Bailey. However, owing to restrictions imposed it has been moved to The Tower of London.

On Thursday 5th September, around 25 Masters, some with consorts, were met at The East Drawbridge Gate of The Tower on a balmy evening by The Yeoman Gaoler. We were marched to The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers Headquarters where we were fingerprinted and asked to confirm the crimes that each had been charged with.

I'm delighted to say that rather than being marched down to the cells we were treated to a rather delicious three-course 'last meal' in the Fusiliers Dining Room. As coffee was served the Sheriffs – Dame Susan Langley and Bronek Masojada – read each charge as the individual Masters stood with their heads bowed in shame. Some were sentenced to life imprisonment, others simply condemned to a swift execution.












Off to meet their fate

The evening concluded with The Ceremony of The Keys, a tradition going back some 900 years.

I am delighted (but not surprised) to say that the Framework Knitters were individually named on the evening as having raised the most money of all present – a fantastic sum of £2,067 – and a grand total of £30,000 was raised on the evening for The Red Cross.

Thank you to everyone that supported me: I was a very proud Master.

 <p>THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:</p> <p>Matthew Russell Ellis</p>					
					
<p>Master of the Worshipful Company of Framework Knitters</p>					
<p><i>Escaped the Tower of London on 5 September 2024</i></p> <p><i>after being confined for</i></p>					
<p>Deserting the Knitting Industry in the early 1990s to pursue a career as a Pension Advisor, no doubt leading to the demise of the British Fashion Industry!</p>					
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<p>A total of £2,067 was raised as a 'release sum' in aid of the</p> <p>British Red Cross.</p>					

Crime of the Century

Matthew Ellis, Master

Our first lady Liveryman Honoured



Sheila Mason from Woolerton, Nottingham has been recognised in the King's Birthday Honours for her services to the textile industry. As an 85-year-old lace maker, she said she is 'very honoured' to be made an MBE but has no plans to retire despite working with lace for 60 years.

Sheila has written several books on both the history of lacemaking, and in 2000 our livery made her the first woman liveryman in its history. She said that she was dedicated to keeping alive her family business – Derbyshire-based Clooney Lace – with her son and two daughters who are the ninth generation of the family to run it.

She said she never thought she would be made an MBE and admitted to thinking the letter that arrived at her house was a tax bill, before she put her glasses on!

Clooney Lace has been making fabric for nearly two centuries which has been exported all over the world. It has also dressed royals such as Diana, Princess of Wales, and the current Princess of Wales. The business supplied lace for Catherine's wedding dress, which the family said was fantastic but did not know about it until they saw her wearing it.

Sheila said "we had no idea: we knew we were selling lace but we didn't know to whom we were selling it. We had no idea until we saw her emerge from the Goring Hotel and it was our lace".

Sheila moved to Nottingham when she married in 1964 and began her research into the history of lace and framework knitting, about which she has written several books. She said "I was always interested in history, I was talking to my father-in-law, and he pointed out that unfortunately it was one of those histories that was not quite accurately reported. It had been muddled up. So, I wrote the history of it before it completely went".

But she will not retire from the lace industry. "To me, it's a life's work to try to promote lace. The more one has on show, the better as far as I'm concerned. We have done quite a lot of work for the trade and I'm very proud. We must have been one of the first ones in the trade, and we're the last ones left. We're thin on the ground but we've kept going because the family works together".

The Leicester Weekend

This June, the Master announced that he had changed the dates of the Leicester weekend specifically in the hope that more Liverymen, Freeman and their guests might be available to join us in our ancestral home. He was delighted to say that the dinner on the evening of Saturday 6th was fully subscribed, and added that he would like to make sure that our annual church service at St. Peters in Oadby at noon on Sunday 7th was also well attended. This is such an important service in our calendar where as Liverymen we take part in the Rededication of the Livery.

Also this year by special request we had the Ashley village choir singing a couple of popular pieces when your Master joined the Bass section!

The BBQ which followed is always such a good opportunity to get to see the excellent work that we are doing at the Cottage Homes where, for a ridiculously small sum, we provide a meal cooked by our specially trained trio of chefs – Upper Warden, Under Warden and Clerk.

Here's how it all went.

First – The Golf

Our annual golf competition and dinner were held as usual at The Leicestershire Golf Club, on Friday 5th July on a lovely warm summer's afternoon. The golf scores were mixed, with the long rough and slightly slow and bumpy greens causing a few problems.

However, the Howard Ellis Salver was, for the first time, won by PM Liz Green who came in with an excellent 34 points, with Tony Jarvis in second place. Our guests play annually for the lovely Byford Trophy, and this was won for the second year running by Sue Barrett with a superb 37 points, followed by Mary Jarvis as runner-up.

After the golf, we were joined by several other Liverymen and their guests for a very pleasant supper, although The Master was very disappointed not to have been able to play in the golf due to a damaged knee from the evening before. Nevertheless, he put on a very brave face when presenting the prizes after dinner.

PM Tony Jarvis (substituting for Liveryman Adrian Keene on the day)



Liz Green



Tony Jarvis



Sue Barrett



Mary Jarvis

Next – The Ceremony of the Socks



Joe Orson (Chairman of Leicestershire County Council) presenting the traditional ‘tithe’ of a pair of socks to Councillor Jasvir Chohan (deputy Lord Mayor of Oadby and Wigston), overseen by The Master on the morning of Saturday 6th July

Tucked away from the busy Bushloe End ‘cut-through’ in Wigston stands the Wigston Framework Knitting Museum, consisting of a kerbside house (which used to be a shop), outbuildings, a two-storey Frame-shop, and some wonderful gardens. Mr. Bill Boulter – Co-Director of the museum and Oadby & Wigston Borough Councillor – welcomed the assembled crowd (which included several of our Liverymen) into the compact tearoom with its wonderful exhibits and pictures of framework knitting and the museum, including an amazing working ‘apprentice piece’ framework knitting machine made over 150 years ago by a local watchmaker, for the Ceremony of the Socks.

The Ceremony of the Socks is the formal ‘payment’ to Oadby & Wigston Borough Council by means of a pair of knitted socks of the annual peppercorn rent for the Museum. Bill recounts that the rent used to be only one sock, but when our own Liveryman Michael Griffiths was the Mayor, he ‘doubled’ the rent!

The Museum is unique: it is a time-capsule, because in 1952 after 100 or so years of successful production of gloves, mitts, scarves and wonderful fancy designs of rib tops for golf socks, the last Master Hosier – Edger Carter – locked the frame-shop and left it as it was, sadly dying, never to return. It was left untouched until 1986 when the Council put in plans to demolish the site. It was saved by local volunteers, but the Council did not want to run it so a Trust was created, which evolved into the Wigston Framework Knitting Museum Ltd., to upkeep and run a Museum for the princely sum of one sock per year. Now it is a wonderful exhibit of a past method of knitting. In the Frame-shop they play an audio extract of the knitting machines working, all manually operated, an eerie sound of machinery in operation, instantly transporting one back into the last century.

The gardens are well-kept with vegetables, fruits, herbs, and room for pigs and chickens as it would have been when feeding the owning family and knitters.

Thanks to our own Michael Griffiths, the current rent of a pair of socks was presented to Oadby and Wigston Deputy Mayor – Mrs Jasvir Chohan – and Chairman of Leicestershire County Council – Mr. Joe Orson – along with our Master, in the photo above.

Jonathan Pears – Under Warden

A Grand Dinner that night

For the Master's Leicester Weekend, not only had he brought it forward to the early summer, but he had booked a new venue for the Saturday Dinner. Although familiar to a few Leicester Tigers season ticket holders, the Clubhouse Bar and Dining Room were new to most members of the Company.

Adjacent to Aylestone Road the Clubhouse sits atop the Robin Hood Stand with a magnificent view over the pitch towards the Mattioli Woods Stand, with the vastness of the Holland & Barrett stand on the viewers left. From the balcony, as the company sipped their pre-dinner champagne, the strains of the famous Leicester group Kasabian drifted over from nearby Victoria Park. As the concert – their first in Leicester for ten years – was expected to attract 35,000 fans, Liverymen were encouraged to ensure that they were not late arriving at the Clubhouse, thus allowing plenty of time to enjoy both the views and the wine before dinner.

After a short grace, which the Master had found in his father's wallet when he died, 70 Liverymen and their guests, including residents from the Cottage Homes, sat down to a meal of cured chalk stream trout, roast chicken, and an assortment of desserts.

The whole meal was bathed in glorious sunshine which, as the architects had not made any provisions for curtains, streamed in through the panoramic windows blinding those facing in that direction. After much encouragement from the assembled Liverymen, the staff of the clubhouse jerry-rigged a series of black tablecloths held up by bottles, crates, and indeed anything which could hold them in place. Although it looked vaguely akin to the inside of a nomad's tent, it had the desired effect, and those facing the sun could see those with their backs to it.

During Dinner, the Clerk rose to his feet to announce that the England Football Team, which had been playing throughout the evening in the European Cup, had won through to the quarter-finals, raising a resounding cheer.

After proposing the Loyal Toast, and a brief résumé of his time so far, the Master introduced the guest speaker, Chris Sturgess – Chairman of Sturgess Motor Group – who regaled us with a potted history of the group. This included its various buildings around Leicester, occupied since the business was founded back in 1897; recalling some of his father's adventures as a racing driver and some details of the cars in which the family have dealt.

The Master concluded the evening by thanking Chris for his fascinating talk, and wished everybody a safe journey home.



The Master and Assistant Philip Tranter enjoying the view over the pitch

The Sunday Church Service

The Livery gathered at St. Peter's Church Oadby for the annual Service of remembrance and rededication. This year, the singing was significantly boosted by the presence of the Ashley Village Choir which counts our Master amongst its talented membership. Not only did they help us 'raise the roof' during the hymns but they also entertained us with a number of beautifully sung pieces.

Readings were given by The Master and IPM Elizabeth Fox, and the Rev. Steve Bailey delivered a thoughtful sermon. Following a moment's silence for deceased residents and Liverymen, the whole Livery rose and rededicated themselves to the 'City of London and this ancient Company'.



And Last but by no means Least: The Fabulous Barbecue

Following a quick change into more comfortable clothing the famous (or should that be infamous!?) annual livery BBQ got underway at Corah Hall. The Master seemed to be slightly uneasy, having reluctantly handed over 'head chef' duties to Upper Warden Peter Corah. Relishing the opportunity, he had provided himself and his trusty sous-chefs with new aprons for the day – it was observed by some that this was his last duty of the day as he appeared to take on a more 'managerial rôle' after this, leaving the kitchen work to his wife Claire and the grilling to the Under Warden and Clerk! Liverymen and residents enjoyed some early afternoon sunshine on the benches while the cooking crew got to work rustling up a feast for all to enjoy.



With rain forecast and memories of last year's 'soaking' still fresh in the minds of many, it was decided we would eat in the hall. A wise choice, as just as the last sausage was lifted from the grill the heavens opened. Nevertheless, all present were treated to a hearty spread of food, with the burgers and sausages having made their way across from the Clerk's farm in Lincolnshire. As always, the BBQ provided a relaxed and enjoyable end to the 'Leicester Weekend' – make sure you get booked in next year!

Russ Gleeson, Clerk

Also at Corah Hall: A New Bench



Our picture above shows the Master, PM Julian Ellis and Freeman Anthony Lowe enjoying the new bench that remembers his father – Past Master W K Lowe – and his brother, Martin Lowe.

As you can see, the clever design offers an excellent opportunity for two people to enjoy a drink or two in the delightful – and recently renovated – Corah Hall gardens.

And speaking of Corah Hall

Our archivist – Assistant Simon Burrows – has come across an old postcard featuring it: see opposite.

He writes: ‘Interesting to note the changes at the site over the years - the various Cottages re-built, sale of the allotments, building of Corah House and subsequent conversion, etc. It’s most likely an artist/architect impression pre-build, rather than a photograph, as the roofline differs from what is currently there.

Our original almshouses in London were demolished, but the Ironmongers Almshouses next door are still standing and open as a museum – perhaps one for the Social Committee?’



Assistant Simon Burrows

While on the subject of the Corahs



Then



Now



The Future ??

The battle to save a landmark of Leicester's heyday as the UK's centre of knitwear is intensifying. SAVE Britain's Heritage has joined other campaign groups to try to prevent the almost complete demolition and redevelopment of the historic Corah Factory in central Leicester.

The planning application submitted in 2022 by Cityregen Leicester Limited and Galliford Try Investments seeks to demolish the former factory, excluding two chimneys and the façade of the 1865 Old Textile Building, and construct in its place a six-storey building to provide 45 dwellings. The developers are also seeking Outline Planning permission for the construction of further 1,100 dwellings housed in buildings up to 18 storeys tall.

Originally known as St. Margaret's Works, the Corah Factory was constructed in 1865-66 for hosiery and knitwear firm Thomas Corah & Sons to designs by William Jackson, and was further expanded in multiple phases up to 1940. This distinctive industrial complex soon became Britain's largest hosiery factory, one of the three key industries that shaped Leicester's economic growth in the mid-19th and 20th centuries and employing up to 6,000 people.

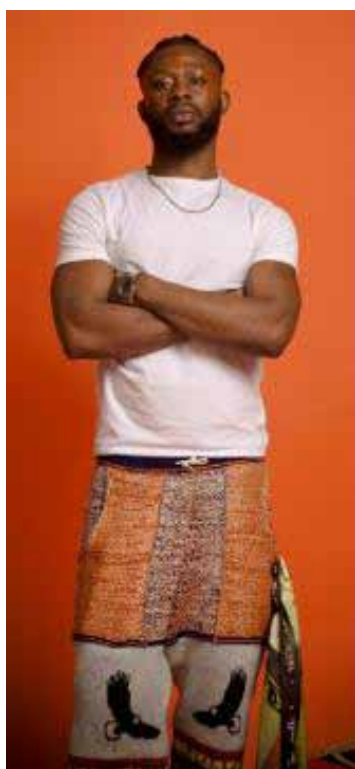
The factory, which was one of the largest of its type by volume and footprint, survives remarkably intact today and occupies a prominent plot within the city centre, with the art deco style of shipping and printing department, along with the 'horseshoe' building, which began in 1937, creating a distinctive industrial complex which has shaped the character of the city for over 150 years.

SAVE's objection goes alongside those from the Twentieth Century Society and Leicester Civic Society, and calls for the sustainable redevelopment rather than demolition of the former factory site to meet housing needs. The factory occupies a strategically important location within Leicester's city centre and presents an unique opportunity for a heritage-led, sustainable regeneration scheme which celebrates the city's industrial past and historic development.

The Government's heritage advisor – Historic England – has also raised concerns about the far-reaching harm the proposals would have on the city's historic character; and indeed, SAVE thinks that the demolition would contravene Leicester council's own planning strategy, which states that 'new development should respect the historic environment by encouraging heritage-led regeneration'.

In contrast, the demolition of the site as proposed under the current plans would sever these historic links. The 18-storey tower proposed would overshadow and dominate the setting of the city centre and nearby heritage assets, including the Grade I listed St. Margaret's Church, compounding the already significant harm which would be caused by the almost total loss of this impressive factory. The scheme also represents a significant and unjustified embodied carbon footprint, making it further unsustainable in environmental as well as heritage terms.

News of a Bursary Winner



Clifford Amponsah is a Ghanaian-born fashion designer and the founder of StarOnCliff who has been living in the UK since 2013. He is an alumnus of De Montfort University, where he completed his BA Hons in fashion design in 2023. During his university days, Clifford was awarded an FWK Bursary, gaining funds for his final year collection (Afro Future). He has gone on to become a freelance designer for upcoming and established brands like Agape Clothing, Brempong etc., while at the same time working on his fashion brand (StarOnCliff). During his college days at Oaklands College in St. Albans – where he studied fashion design – he was an intern at F&F, assisting the company's design department by designing garments and verifying fashion trends between the company's competitors. He was selected for another year with the footwear department looking at footwear trends and preparing the designer's PowerPoint presentation for the company's meetings. Clifford is aiming to elevate and expand his brand to the world whilst learning and growing in another field of the fashion industry, also helping other upcoming brands and creatives in achieving their goals.

It was his final project (Who am I?) during his second year of university that secured him an interview for an award. He dedicated himself to working tirelessly on and off campus, juggling two jobs to cover his university expenses. During the interview, he succeeded in conveying the value of his work, resulting in his being awarded the funding to complete his final collection (Afro Future). The award played a crucial rôle in funding his final year collection and enabled him to showcase his work at Graduation Fashion Week in London last year, which was also selected for the Cultural and Heritage Award.

In addition, it was short-listed for the Highstreet Menswear Award at the Fashanne Awards in



Some of Clifford's imaginative designs

Nottingham in 2023. With the remainder of the bursary funds and a little of his own savings he was able to start his brand StarOnCliff.

StarOnCliff fashion is a pedestal for a new young generation that is inclusive of all cultures, fashions, sports and lifestyles. Through our fashion, it targets the core features and beauty hidden within each community, ethnicity, and society. Their statement pieces are for any individual who is ready to be a light within their world. "The young will forever look young and the old will look young again" says Clifford.



Finally, he would like to express his sincere gratitude for the support and award he received from the company. As a result of that support, he has successfully launched his StarOnCliff brand, and is sure we will love the pieces he has created. He would love you to extend your support in growing the brand and gaining recognition – if anyone is interested, he would be happy to provide more details about the brand direction and his vision for StarOnCliff. He truly appreciates our help and is eager to receive any responses.

Big Curry Lunch: A Postscript

Following the huge success of our contribution to The Big Curry Lunch in April, the Master was delighted to receive the letter below.



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

23rd April 2024

Dear Mr. Ellis,

Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal has asked me to thank you for the socks and beautiful cashmere scarf presented to her during the Lord Mayor's Big Curry Lunch 2024.

The Princess was delighted to be back at the Big Curry Lunch and pleased to see how it has grown in success over the years. Her Royal Highness much enjoyed touring the Livery and military stands and having the opportunity to meet so many guests.

I am asked to send The Princess's thanks to the Worshipful Company of Framework Knitters for supporting the Big Curry Lunch in raising money for such deserving causes.

Yours sincerely
Susanna Cross.

Lady-in-Waiting to
HRH The Princess Royal

Matthew Ellis, Esq.

Luncheons with the Master

To make a change from the regular Saturday-morning outings, our Master decided to have post-dinner informal lunches to enable Liverymen, Freemen and their guests to mingle in an informal atmosphere, catching up with old friends and perhaps even making new ones. Here's how they went.

On Saturday 13th April, the morning after the newly installed Master Matthew Ellis's splendid Installation Dinner at Ironmongers' Hall, over 25 Liverymen, family and friends gathered for Brunch at Côte Brasserie in the Barbican. It was a time to reflect on the previous evening while enjoying a superb late breakfast. The atmosphere from the previous night carried over and gave everyone the chance to continue conversations and also catch up with those that were missed. This, I think, is the first time the after-dinner social has taken the form of a Brunch, and it proved a total success. Many thanks to the Master for introducing this; and hopefully it will be the first of many.



At the Barbican's Côte Brasserie

Upper Warden Peter Corah

Encouraged by the success of his first foray into the world of 'social brunches', the Master elected to try out another branch of Côte Brasserie to follow on from the banquet the night before, this time visiting Hay's Galleria.

Situated on the south bank of the Thames, just coming to this venue offered the opportunity to see some of the more famous sights on and across



Choosing from the varied menu at Hays Galleria's Côte Brasserie



Enjoying each others company

the river, including HMS Belfast. Also en route we passed The Navigators – a 1987 mobile sculpture by David Kemp – before descending into the restaurant for another chance to mingle with the Master, Wardens, Clerk and the many liverymen and guests.

We understand that the Upper Warden is minded to repeat the exercise next year; so if you missed this one do look out for similar events next year.

Clerk's Corner

Membership Changes

They say time stands still for no man, and I am sure there have been numerous changes to our great Company since 1657 when Oliver Cromwell first incorporated the Company as a Guild. Over recent months the Strategy and Vision Committee has been taking a close look at our membership categories to ensure they are fit for purpose. Particular focus has been our Freeman category of Membership, as that has not been looked at for some time. The current cadre are made up of several types of members who no doubt have different aims and objectives from their membership, and as such greater clarity is needed. Additionally, it was felt that we simply cannot continue to charge a fee of £12 a year – as you can imagine, after bank charges this sum does not go very far to help run the Company or provide services to members. As such, the Court Meeting in October agreed it was time for a change; and as of 2025 we will have the following types of membership available:

1. Liveryman

Unchanged.

2. Freeman

The rights and privileges remain unchanged. It is envisaged this group will now consist solely of those who wish only to be Freeman of the Company and those who wish to join the Livery but have not yet taken the Freedom of the City.

Quarterage of £75.00 pa.

3. Friends of the Livery

This category is aimed at Ex Liverymen or Freeman who wish to stay in contact with the Livery but are unlikely to attend functions for whatever reason. They would still get a Newsletter and the regular updates about the Company from the Clerk.

Quarterage to be £50.00pa.

4. Associate of the Framework Knitters Company

This Category is aimed at our Students who complete the Bursary interviews Free for the first three years, at the end of which they would be offered the chance to become Freeman and/or progress to the Livery.

It is important to stress that no current Freeman will be 'moved' to another membership category without wishing to do so, and all current 'Student' Freeman will continue to have their 3-year free membership honoured. The Company will also be applying our very generous discount policy to the Freeman Category (see below). I will be writing out to all Freeman in the New Year to explain the changes and clarify what it will mean to them.

Discounts

Did you know the Company offers an extensive Discount package to various Membership Groups? If you think you could be eligible, please do get in contact with me and I will clarify and update our records as appropriate.

Category	Admission Discount	Admission via Bursary/Award winner/ Affiliated Military Unit/ relevant Lecturer/Trade Discount	Quarterage Discount
18-25	75%	80%	75%
26-35	50%	55%	50%
36-44	25%	30%	25%
45+	--	25%	--
Overseas	--	--	50%

Dates for your diary

2024

11th December	Inter-Livery Carols & Luncheon, Stationers' Hall	The Clerk
13th December	Brigantes AGM, Dinner and Christmas Concert, Sheffield	See below

2025

17th January	Winter Luncheon, Armourers' Hall	The Clerk
28th March	United Guilds Service, St. Paul's Cathedral	The Clerk
10th April	Big Curry Luncheon, Guildhall	The Clerk
11th April	Installation Court and Dinner, Saddlers' Hall	The Clerk
29th April	Brigantes pre-golf dinner in the Hoylake Clubhouse	See Below
30th April	Brigantes Golf, British Open Championship Links, Hoylake	See Below
24th June	Common Hall for the election of Sheriffs, Guildhall	The Clerk

27th to 29th June – The Leicester Weekend

27th June	Golf Match & Dinner at Leicester Golf Club	Adrian Keene
28th June	Morning: Ceremony of the Socks, Wigston Framework Knitters Museum	The Clerk
28th June	Evening: Livery Dinner, venue to be announced	The Clerk
29th June	Morning: Annual Church Service, St. Peter's Church, Oadby	The Clerk
29th June	Lunchtime: Barbecue at The Cottage Homes, Oadby	The Clerk
24th July	Brigantes Breakfast, Scarborough	See Below
29th September	Common Hall for the election of The Lord Mayor, Guildhall	The Clerk
10th October	Livery Court and Banquet, Merchant Taylors' Hall	The Clerk
7th November	Silent Ceremony for the admission of The Lord Mayor, Guildhall	The Clerk

2026

23rd January	Winter Court & Luncheon, Butchers' Hall	The Clerk
24th June	Common Hall for the election of Sheriffs, Guildhall	The Clerk
29th September	Common Hall for the election of The Lord Mayor, Guildhall	The Clerk
13th November	Silent Ceremony for the admission of The Lord Mayor, Guildhall	The Clerk

Brigantes Events:

For further details of Brigantes Events, please email the organisers at livery@brigantes.org.uk, where you can also ask to sign up for their Newsletter.

Booking Events

Please remember that further details of most of the above events – and more – can be found in the Members' section of our website.

And more importantly, most can (and should, if possible) be booked through the website too: this not only ensures that your booking is recorded but will also give you an emailed confirmation of your booking for your records.

And Your Events

Do you know of an event that's not shown above that you think might interest your fellow Liverymen? Or are you thinking of organising an event yourself? Perhaps there's an event that you'd like to see in the future?

If any of the above applies to you, do get in touch with the Editor or the Clerk, who are always delighted to receive suggestions for the diary.