



NEEDLEMAKERS' NEWSLETTER



AUTUMN 2025

FOREWORD

WELCOME to the latest round up of news from the Worshipful Company of Needlemakers.

This newsletter follows the installation of Nick Macrae at Vintners' Hall as Dr Sue Sumners steps down after a highly successful year. Sue writes about her last quarter as Master, and Nick about his plans for the year.

We reflect on the range of social and fellowship events that we have shared, along with our charitable work and the extended involvement of the Needlemakers in London and the City.

We also give thanks for the life of Liveryman Colin Finch.

Many thanks to all without whom the production of this newsletter would be impossible, particularly all the contributors and those behind the scenes, including the Clerk. Thanks too to Andy Sillett for the excellent photographs of the Installation Dinner.

Assistant Kimball Bailey
October 2025





CONTENTS

Master's Message	4
Her Last Bow	8
If Music Be The Food Of Love...	11
Colin Finch In Memoriam	16
Installation Dinner	19
The Cotswolds Tour	21
Boules in Vauxhall	24
Tennis at Queen's	26
Royal College of Surgeons	27
A Variety of Events	29
CLGS Bursary Students	33
Audrey Shattles	35
Welcome to Our New Friends	36



A MESSAGE FROM THE NEW MASTER

NICK MACRAE was installed as our Master at the Vintners' Hall on 30th September. Here he sets out his programme for the year.



DEAR FELLOW NEEDLEMAKER

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to greet you as Master.

The Installation Dinner was a hugely enjoyable evening and Ivan and I were touched by the good wishes we received from so many of you. Thanks to Sue – the newly-minted Immediate Past Master – it had a subtly different flavour to it, with the passing of the Master's baton taking place at the start of dinner. This captured perfectly one of the things that has characterised her successful year as Master – a willingness to look with fresh eyes at how we do things. I'm sure we have all appreciated Sue's warmth, energy and good humour, and Ivan and I wish her and David all the best as they enjoy the change of tempo and look back with pride at a job well done.

In my installation speech I outlined my over-arching theme for the year: Renewal. This is a thread which runs through all that we do as a company, be it in finalising our Supplemental Royal Charter, ensuring that we make prudent decisions about how we distribute

our charitable giving, or expanding our engagement with those who use needles. The successful launch earlier this year of the Needlemakers' Award for Advanced Needle Technology is a fine example of this, and I very much look forward to seeing how this progresses in its second year.

Above all, renewal is at the centre of my ambitions for our membership. While it has been a pleasure to clothe a good number of new liverymen in my year as Senior Warden, overall in recent years our membership has remained stagnant. I will be doing my utmost to ensure that our outreach efforts are accelerated, and that we make a compelling case for our company and all that it represents.

Renewing what we offer to members old and new is also central to this ambition, and I am excited to present a broad and varied programme of



events. This will include taking us to the impressive surroundings of the Haberdashers' Hall next April for Common Hall, providing a welcome opportunity to showcase the scope of our activities, hear from some of the recipients of our awards, and open the doors for members to attend a meeting of the Court.





In May 2025, Ivan and I will be hosting the Master's Trip to Ghent – one of our favourite European cities, rich in architectural gems and with excellent cuisine. In the sixteenth century, Flanders was considered one of the foremost centres of textiles and embroidery, and a highlight will be visiting the fine collection of tapestries and silverware at the museum in the splendid Town Hall of nearby Oudenaarde. In Ghent itself we will



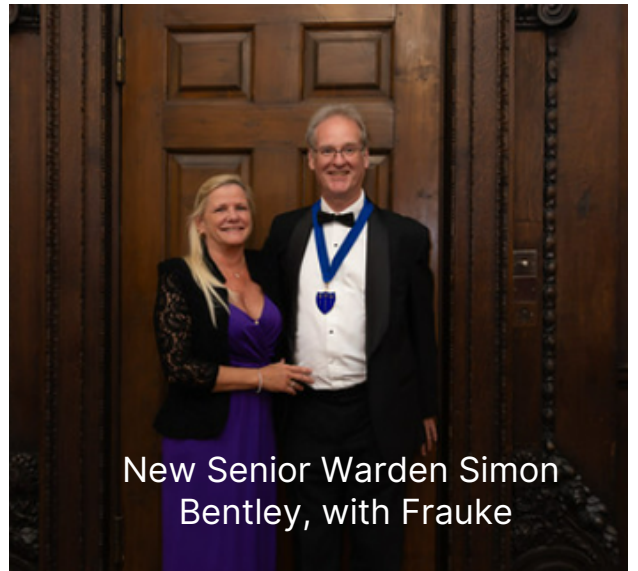
stay in a recently restored Baron's palace and find time to admire van Eyck's stunning cathedral altarpiece. The trip will straddle a weekend, and our hope is this will make it easier for those Needlemakers juggling busy work lives to join us.

Being a Needlemaker these last 12 years has given the opportunity to forge many new friendships and delivered much fun along the way. Adding to the mix our reputation for good fellowship, Ivan and I invite you to join us in celebrating these three Fs in the coming year: Friendship, Fellowship and Fun!

All the very best.

NJ Macrae

**Nick Macrae
Master Needlemaker
2025-2026**



New Senior Warden Simon Bentley, with Frauke



New Junior Warden John Scott, with Honorine and daughter Esenam



MASTER SUE SUMNERS: HER LAST BOW

“Serving as the Master of our Company has been a great honour and an immensely rewarding experience”, writes Immediate Past Master DR SUE SUMNERS, after handing over the reins of the Needlemakers to Nick Macrae.

THIS PAST YEAR has offered a rich and varied tapestry of engagements, from the ceremonial to the charitable, the historic to the highly personal, each reaffirming the value and vibrancy of our Livery.



Among the year's highlights was attending school prize-giving ceremonies, seeing pupils receive their Needlemakers' prizes and then talking to them afterwards to hear about their future plans. It was uplifting to meet such talented young people, and to see first-hand the impact of our Company's longstanding commitment to education.

Our support for the Guildhall School of Music & Drama remains a core part of our Company. Attending performances and meeting the scholars we support has reinforced the vital role we play in nurturing artistic talent. I was pleased that Jonty was able to play the saxophone at the Awards Dinner and Hanna the flute at the Installation dinner, displaying how talented they both are.



The Advanced Needle Technology Award has shown how as a Company we are relevant today.

We also strengthened our ties with the Armed Forces. A landmark moment of the year was the signing of the Armed Forces Covenant, a formal declaration of our continued commitment to supporting those who serve. This was more than just ceremony: it reflected our genuine gratitude and enduring respect for our affiliates. All our affiliates joined us for the signing. Earlier in our Court meeting, Lt. Col. Nathan Horsman from 3PWRR received his Freedom of the Company. Later in the year I was aboard HMS Trent to meet the Captain and crew before sailing the “high seas”.

Following the signing, our guest speaker at lunch was Christine Rigden, an Ale Connor. We learnt and saw an

ancient tradition in action, though she must get through a fair number of leather trousers!

At Company dinners, the spirit of fellowship was alive and well. The Mansion House Dinner was a particular highlight, held in the grandeur of the Lord Mayor's residence. We were privileged to welcome Professor Sir Jonathan Van-Tam as our guest speaker, and found his address to be both enlightening and deeply engaging.

A lighter but no less memorable moment came at our Awards dinner, when fans were flying – quite literally – as part of a highly enthusiastic celebration. It was a joyful and slightly unplanned spectacle, but one that perfectly captured the warmth and character of the evening.

Beyond the City, I had the opportunity to explore the roots of our trade with a



visit to the Forge Mill Needle Museum in Redditch. It was a moving experience not only to walk through this part of our Company Heritage and see the craftsmanship, but also to reflect on the cost to workers' health.

A different but equally fascinating visit was to the Kelly Bronze Turkey Farm, where I saw the exceptional care and detail involved in their traditional farming practices. The lunch was rather good too.

It has been such a varied and amazing year and I thank all of you for engaging with me on the journey.

As I reflect on this remarkable year, I do so with deep gratitude – to the Court, the Clerk, the Wardens, and all Liverymen for your support and encouragement. It has been a true privilege to serve as your Master, and I step down with a renewed sense of pride in our heritage and confidence in our future.



With Liveryman Emily Sumners



And with David - with so many thanks

IF MUSIC BE THE FOOD OF LOVE, PLAY ON...

The newsletter editor asked NICK MACRAE to share a bit about himself so that fellow Needlemakers can have a better idea of who the new Master is. This is the result...



With Ivan in New Zealand

THOSE WHO KNOW me well will appreciate that this is not my natural territory! I am much more inclined to ask questions of others and listen attentively to their responses. Happily, I do enjoy writing, so have decided to weave together a brief timeline of my life so far and some over-arching themes that punctuate it: music, law, history, travel and people.

I was born in Taunton, Somerset, the youngest of four siblings, and lived in a small village next door to a farm until I was eight. The farmer would occasionally ferry me and his daughter to the local village school by horse and cart, which always caused a stir as we reached the school gate and was perhaps the seed for a love of spectacle.

The headmistress encouraged this early propensity for performing, and I joined the local church choir at the age of seven. I took to singing like a duck to water and for a few short years I was to west Somerset what Aled Jones was to Wales and beyond, a regular feature as a soloist in local church and choral society concerts and in Wells Cathedral, Bath Abbey and Salisbury Cathedral.

Alas, this early promise as a singer did not translate into a burgeoning adult solo career, but I did find plenty of time for singing and playing in my county youth orchestra during secondary school, as well as being organist at a local village church.

I was fortunate enough to study music at Clare College Cambridge and took full advantage of all that was on offer. As well as singing in the choir at nearby Queens' College and performing as viola player in countless orchestras and quartets, in my final year I was treasurer of the University Chamber Orchestra and helped engage professional conductors and soloists for our concert season. Somehow, I also found time to leave with a respectable degree.

I arrived in London in 1990 and, after a music Masters at King's College London, decided to follow in the footsteps of my oldest brother and become a solicitor. On qualifying



As an undergraduate on Clare Bridge in 1988

I joined the Corporate Department of Clifford Chance, specialising in cross-border mergers and acquisitions. This gave many opportunities to work with clients and fellow lawyers across multiple time zones and from different nationalities, feeding my love of meeting people and foreign travel. I was less excited about the excessive working hours curtailing my musical activities, so after a few years moved in-house to work at Warner Bros.' European headquarters in Central London. The timing worked well, as my division was experiencing rapid growth thanks to the launch of the DVD format and subsequent expansion into online streaming and downloading services. I was soon heading up the legal function for the Home Entertainment Division across Europe, Middle East and Africa and served as part of the international management team.

This coincided with Warner Bros. producing the Harry Potter and Lord of the Rings franchises and the re-booted Batman films. Attending both the first and last Harry Potter



premieres was a memorable highlight, particularly arriving just behind Madonna on the red carpet in Leicester Square and experiencing the glare of the global press pack. Regular visits to the studio HQ in Los Angeles were also fertile ground for celeb-spotting, not least being in the audience for an episode of the final season of Friends.

Travel was not only part of my work life but increasingly essential to my personal life. I got together with Ivan in 2008, and we married in Mallorca in 2011.

Being an international opera executive, he was on duty at frequent weekend performances, causing me to travel regularly to spend time with him at his homes in Barcelona and Berlin. Ivan and I share a love of foreign travel and have a good number of friends and family who live abroad. Memorable trips recently have involved admiring the stunning nature and wildlife in Namibia and New Zealand.

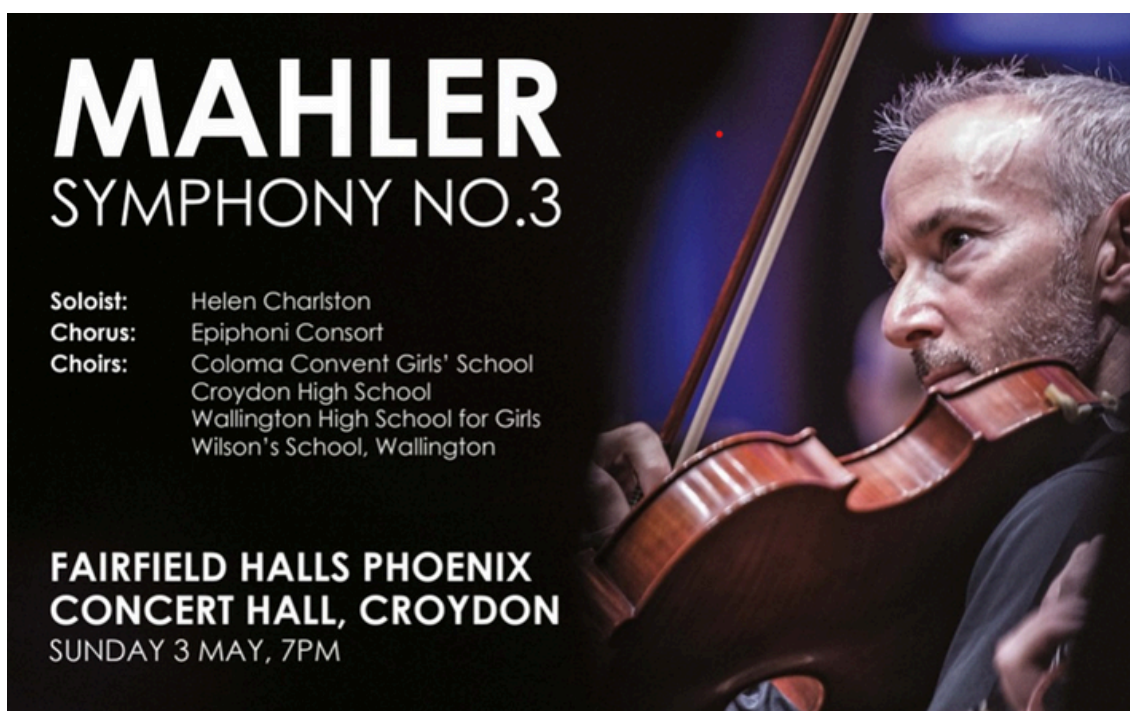


Eventually our career locations aligned, allowing us to live together in London and then in Amsterdam, where we found ourselves during the pandemic. This coincided with my recognising that I had accomplished all that I wished to as a lawyer, and I sought new professional challenges. I re-trained as an executive coach and continue to work with clients across a range of sectors and locations.

Music has the potential to transport you to different places – in the metaphorical and literal senses of the word. It also led me to the Needlemakers. In 2012 I was living behind the Honourable Artillery Company on City Road and serving on the advisory board of Spitalfields Music. It was at a fundraising reception with representatives of the City that I met Past Master Pamela Goldberg and was invited to the installation dinner of Past Master George Borthwick. I was by no means new to the livery world, having attended receptions in some of the

livery halls and also provided musical entertainment at one or two as part of a string quartet! My life had also circled around the City professionally and musically, with periods of time when I had both lived and worked in the square mile. All to say I was fair game as a prospect, and the friendliness of the crowd at that installation dinner clinched the deal. By chance the first people I fell into conversation with at pre-dinner drinks were the late Dan Docherty (founder of the Entrepreneurs with whom we are collaborating on our Award for Advanced Needle Technology) and Junior Warden John Scott. A particular delight was sitting opposite Derek Foster, and being enchanted by his recollections of the City in the aftermath of World War II, not least the pile of rubble which is now the Barbican centre, in which I once lived.

In short order after becoming a Needlemaker I joined a committee or two, and from there the Court. In fact, Senior Warden Simon Bentley and I



Poster boy for his orchestra in 2019



Sporting the Macrae tartan at Glyndebourne

were admitted to the Court at the same time in a rare court meeting south of the river in the chapter house at Southwark Cathedral.

Being a Needlemaker has brought many opportunities to indulge my interest in history. My own family is not without interest on this front. My paternal grandfather, Colonel Stuart Macrae, was second-in-command of the top-secret WWII weapons development organisation known as MD1, and co-inventor of the limpet mine. My grandmother worked at nearby Bletchley Park as, more memorably, did the uncle of my mother's best friend (no less than Alan Turing). At the start of the war they lived with my paternal great-grandfather, Revd Reginald Wynter, who had been a minor national sensation when he was deprived of his living in 1920 by an ecclesiastical inquiry ordered by the Bishop of Bath and Wells which found him guilty of 'papist practices' and resulted in his being deprived of his living.

My love of engaging with people and their life stories was given a boost during the pandemic, when PM Andrew Whitton enthusiastically responded to my pitch to set up virtual webinars. Having secretly harboured a dream of being a TV or radio presenter, it was a joy to engage with a range of individuals from both within the company and wider afield. My infinite curiosity in people also played a part, and I enjoyed brazenly inviting external speakers who in non-COVID times would doubtless have had much better things to do than respond positively to a cold call. My hope was always that it was a mutually beneficial arrangement and a welcome outlet for their passions.

During my year as Master, I look forward to continuing to feed my interests in music, law, history, travel – and, above all, people. It will be a privilege and pleasure to share this adventure with you and to help write this next chapter of the Needlemakers story together.

LIVERYMAN COLIN FINCH

1936 – 2025

In Memoriam

St Mary's Church, in Shenfield, Essex, was packed to the rafters on 4th August as many old friends and colleagues came to remember and give thanks for the remarkable life of their dear friend. Hon. Almoner GILL LOFTUS was among them.



BORN ON 10th July 1936, about a mile from St Mary's in which he was also christened, Colin then attended St. Mary's School across the road.

He and Susan married in the same church in 1961 and were regular attenders. They celebrated their Diamond Anniversary in 2021.

In 1947, Colin won a County Scholarship to Brentwood School, where he took an active role in sports activities. His abilities as a player and as a team organiser and coach were legendary and, a few years later, The Society of Old Brentwoods and its

associated sports club were beneficiaries of his talents.

Colin was proposed for the Needlemakers by Geoffrey Bayman in 1987, and was clothed in January 1988. He and Susan regularly brought their characteristic warmth and charm to events and featured in most of the Masters' holidays. Good humour and laughter were hallmarks of their presence, especially when in the company of the Essex and Brentwood coterie. He was a much-loved friend to all and a strong part of the Needlemakers' network, greeting new members and making all welcome.



Enjoying lunch at his favourite restaurant, Smith's in Ongar: Susan, Simon Fradd, Colin, daughter Clare, Philip Grant and Hon. Almoner Gill Loftus. This photograph was taken only four days before Colin's death.

Colin's greatest love was Brentwood School, and he played an active role in the wider school community, chairing the General Committee of the Society of Old Brentwoods for 19 years and serving as its President in 1985. Throughout, he inspired respect, admiration and affection.

Following a successful career as a chartered surveyor, Colin brought his professional expertise to the School's governing body, joining the Board of Governors in November 1984.

His deep knowledge of property management was quickly recognised and he became the driving force behind the School's property management committee. He served as Chairman of the Board for 15 years, during which time he helped oversee significant developments. A flagship building was named in his honour in 2021 and Sir Michael Snyder paid tribute to Colin, describing his time as Chairman as "a tour de force", characterised by his enthusiasm, his drive and commitment, and his dedication and vision.

In 1964, Colin applied for a position as Head of the Surveying and Valuation Department at Bairstow Eves, only to discover that he was the only member of staff in the department! He eventually became Managing Director and Deputy Chairman of Bairstow Eves, the only company of Estate Agents, Surveyors and Valuers to be listed on the London Stock Exchange. Many transactions followed, including Hambros Bank acquiring a controlling interest – ultimately the business became Countrywide plc. The success of these ventures was in part due to



Taken in Edinburgh during George Borthwick's Master's holiday in 2013

Colin's ability to bring people together to follow a shared direction. Combining the blue-blooded Hambro chaps and the BE Essex lads must have tested his mettle!

Colin later became Chairman of Countrywide Surveyors plc, the largest company of residential surveyors in the UK.

He passionately believed in giving his time to others wherever he saw the need, acting as Chairman of Brentwood Citizens Advice Bureau and Chairman and Guardian of the Brentwood Foyer. He was also a past Captain of Thorndon Park Golf Club in Brentwood.

Above all, his unfailing courtesy, charm and consideration for others were characteristic of his whole life. His warmth and kindness were always present. As his son, Stephen, said in his moving tribute, "he was fortunate to do what he loved, to do it with people he loved, who in turn loved him."

ONCE AGAIN, THE VINTNERS DID US PROUD

The Installation of our new Master, Nick Macrae, took place at Vintners' Hall during the evening of Tuesday 30th September 2025. Past Master PHILIP LAW was there.

THE DINNER was preceded by a brief Court meeting at which two new candidates (Iain Fidler and Lt Col Nathan Horsman, pictured towards the end of this newsletter) were admitted as Liverymen of the Company.

We then had our Annual Service at St James Garlickhythe. Our Honorary Chaplain, the Rt Revd Christopher Chessun, Bishop of Southwark, officiated at what was his final Annual Service in that role, and his sermon harked back to his first, over 30 years ago.



The Hall was packed full of Needlemakers and their guests for the dinner, some attending for the first time, and very welcome. There was a surprise “starter” inasmuch as the Installation Ceremony took place before and not after the meal. For decades we have had the meal first, with the new Master installed just before 10pm, which means that he/she, before making one of the most important speeches of our Livery Year, has to push the plated food around with greater or lesser degrees of anticipatory nervousness without recourse to any meaningful quantity of wine. And for that to happen at Vintners’ Hall, of all places, seems a double punishment.

The outgoing Master, Dr Sue Sumners, rounded off her year with some well-chosen and amusing remarks, and after the meal we were treated to an excellent speech by the new Master, Nick Macrae. His theme for the year is “Renewal” and his plans for the year are set out in an earlier piece in this newsletter. Nick has promised a full and entertaining programme of events, including a



Welcoming new Court Assistants
Kimball Bailey (L) and Bob Som

trip in early May to the city of Ghent in Belgium; this will be the first overseas Master's holiday since PM Anthony de Lacey's trip to Portugal in 2019.

The musical interlude was provided by flautist Hanna Wozniak, winner of the Needlemakers' Woodwind Prize at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama earlier this year. She played three pieces beautifully – and unaccompanied to boot, her performance drawing a thunderous applause from her audience.

The Consort's badge was handed over by Dr David Sumners to his successor, the Master's husband Ivan van Kalmthout, after which many of the guests retired to the Courtroom for a stirrup cup to conclude an excellent evening.



Parading to St James



HOUSES AND GARDENS IN THE COTSWOLDS

Dr Sue Sumners added a highly entertaining trip to Gloucestershire in September to her already full programme. And what fun it was. Liveryman KIMBALL BAILEY was part of the group.



AFTER THE NEAR-BIBLICAL rain on the Sunday ("the Cotswolds are lovely, if you can see them"), we were all delighted to arrive at Chavenage (pronounced Chay-venage, by the way), near Tetbury, for a fascinating tour.

In the gardens at Highgrove. L-R Nolan Shaw, SW Nick Macrae, Jane Samuels, PM Pamela Goldberg, David Sumners, John Goldberg, PM Malcolm Samuels, Kimball Bailey, Master Sue Sumners, Philip Grant, PM Philip Law, Russell Dawes, Gill Loftus, Vincent Rousselet, Melissa Longley, Pippa Rousselet, Mark Brailsford, Clare Brailsford, Carol Law



Chavenage

Chavenage, a real gem of an Elizabethan manor house, is privately owned, and our guide (whose property it is) took us on a whistlestop tour that ranged from the Huguenot-created Mortlake tapestries, to the Cromwell Room (and bed), and to the ghosts that allegedly haunt the oldest parts of the house. Who knew that Humpty Dumpty was actually a cannon used in the Siege of Gloucester in 1643, and which blew up so that the King's men couldn't repair it?

On the subject of Cromwell, past owner Nathaniel Stephens was lucky to avoid the fate of the other regicides... Stories of more recent family members included that of Angus M'Corquodale, a Coldstream Guards' officer killed outside Dunkirk – and our host showed us the Bren gun that he himself found there.

Chavenage is also frequently used in films and TV: Barry Lyndon, Poldark and Poirot to name but a few.

A short drive to the Hare and Hounds, which was very comfortable and where we were looked after very well at dinner.

Tuesday morning dawned bright and sunny, and there was free time to enjoy the fleshpots of Tetbury; Melissa and I were among those who also walked round the beautiful Westonbirt Arboretum.

Then it was time to assemble for our tour of the gardens of Highgrove, His



The Cromwell Bed

Majesty and Queen Camilla's private home. We started with a talk on (and display of) some of the millinery and stitching skills of students of the King's Foundation, which supports and encourages traditional crafts. Some very impressive output, and the young people we met were hugely enthusiastic about the King and his active involvement.

The gardens are just stunning – and remembering that not long



An example of the brilliant needlework by students at Highgrove



The Master, behind her tea at Highgrove

ago they were farmland, represent a huge achievement. I would leave the pictures to speak for themselves, but we weren't allowed to take any, for security reasons – so if you haven't been, go!

His Majesty takes a very active interest in the planning and development of the various areas and plots within the garden.

He apparently has a fine instinct for what should go where, and an excellent memory for plants that are not quite where he thinks to meant them to be!

Then there was an absolutely top tea, with enough scone and cake to sink a battleship, before the drive home beckoned.

Special thanks not only to Sue and David, but also to Court Assistant Pippa Rousselet for her organisational efforts.

BATTLE OF THE BOULES

Interlivery sport ranges from the near-professional to the fun and maybe a little bit silly. Liverymen **VICTORIA PAGE** and **KIMBALL BAILEY** found that the Pétanque competition in July fell into the latter category...



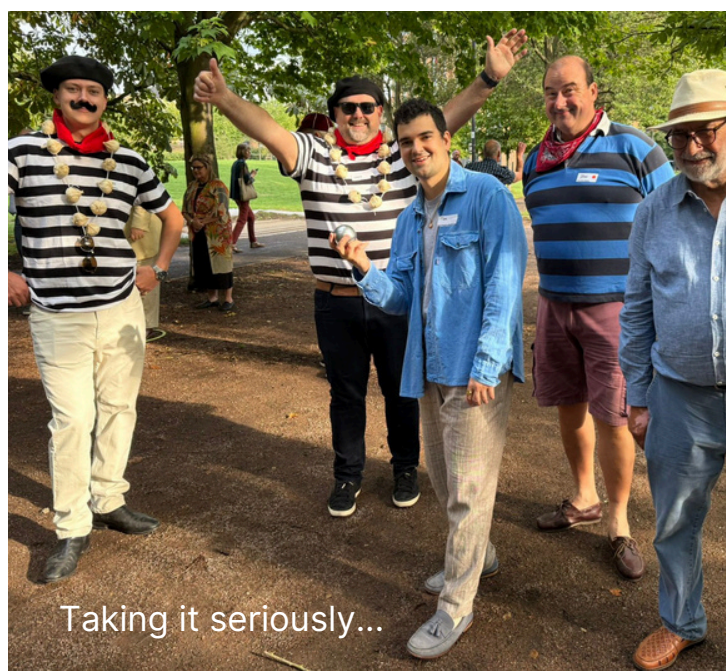
L-R: Terry Neville, Kimball Bailey, Fiona Sedgwick, John Mill, Tom Jaques, Victoria Page

IT WAS, THANKFULLY, a dry and warm evening (despite the threatened biblical conditions) when two – yes, two – spirited Needlemakers teams joined representatives from some 30 other Companies in the London Pétanque Club in Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens.

Needlemakers A (PM John Mill, Liveryman Kimball Bailey, and the Clerk, Fiona Sedgwick), were named on the toss of a coin; Needlemakers B (Liverymen Victoria Page and Terry Neville, and Freeman Tom Jaques), may have been a better team, at least on paper, boasting as they did a semi-professional. Not that this affected the results...

Both teams enjoyed an evening of friendly rivalry and a touch of competitive spirit. Both teams faced formidable opponents, and neither team disgraced itself. And both teams enjoyed the splendid hospitality on offer (largely rosé). Both teams started well, with Team B taking full advantage of a confusion over the exact rules to beat the Innholders. Team B then lost closely to the Framework Knitters, a team whose skill and precision were immediately evident – they had clearly been practising and also knew the proper rules. The rounds were competitive, and we came back to beat the Entrepreneurs (or at least the Entrepreneur, as their one remaining player was supplemented by a supportive Needlemaker).

Elsewhere on the park, Team A had a corking start against the Playing Card Makers and the Educators, but was then roundly stuffed by the Tobacco



Taking it seriously...

Pipe Makers and (with a sense of déjà vu) the Framework Knitters.

Neither of our teams qualified for the finals, but no one cared: on a warm summer evening, fellowship was the only winner. There was fun and laughter at every stage, showing the best games are not always the ones you win, but the ones which bring people together – for which many thanks to the organisers. There is always next year!



Competitive? Us?

COURT IN THE ACT

The Needlemakers were once again able to put their collective heads above the parapet to compete in yet another interlivery sport, as new Freeman TOM JAQUES stepped up to take part in the tennis at Queen's in September.

FROM THE PERSPECTIVE of a tennis fan, playing at the famous Queen's Club was an incredible experience. We played on the clay courts, with lunch and then a formal dinner in the President's Suite in the evening.

The Feltmakers very kindly found me a partner – Allison, a friend of a member of the Playing Card Makers – and we played as the Needlemakers together. In our group stage we beat both the Constructors and the Feltmakers 6-3, but lost 6-1 to the Tallow Chandlers (who were eventually runners up).

Having been runners up in that group, we progressed to the quarter finals and lost narrowly to the Mercers (4-3, in a first to four games format).

This is the first time that the Needlemakers have entered the competition in many a year – if you want to take part in 2026, please contact me direct, or the Clerk.



ANNUAL VISIT TO THE RCS

The Master, Junior Warden and PMs **PAMELA GOLDBERG** and John Mill met our grant recipients at the Royal College of Surgeons in Lincolns' Inn Fields in August.



AT THIS ANNUAL review we met the RCS England President (Tim Mitchell), the Head of Learning – Operations (Dr Kenny Webster), the Fundraising Manager – Partnerships and Impact (Scott Willoughby), and the Chair of the Learning Committee (Rachel

Hargest), as well as seven of this year's cohort of bursary recipients.

This is the sixteenth year of this award. We heard presentations from all the above, not only thanking the Needlemakers for their continued and

valued support, but also describing how the award has changed over the years. The award comes at a critical time at an early stage in a surgeon's career, and from the reaction of the winners they are welcomed and very much valued.

There were 110 applicants – they have to be members of the College to go forward – so the long list was 80 and, out of a short list of 30, 12 were awarded. We were satisfied that the process is open and transparent, with all the surgical specialties represented on the judging panel. The courses are very varied, encompassing not only surgical skills but also courses on “training the trainer” – passing on knowledge is vitally important.

The younger surgeons' group has the most difficult time and, while in theory they should be able to get all the training in the course of their daily work, it may not give the confidence required. They are generally first in line when a patient comes in, and one course which has proved very valuable is CCrISP – “Care of the Critically Ill Surgical Patient” – which not only imparts knowledge but also instils confidence.

The grantees and staff all emphasised that the fidelity of the courses is excellent – and close to the reality in the clinic. One of the tutors of the CCrISP course, for example, was responsible for treating the young girls who were stabbed in Southport.

The group of grantees was truly diverse, from Cardiff to Sheffield to Cambridge and points in between, and from a range of specialisms. One of the critical elements in the application process is a statement of “values” which goes beyond academic excellence and technical skills, but goes to the heart of what is important to these young doctors.

The Master presented each of the awardees with one of our new needle packs – perhaps for more domestic tasks. We are very grateful to the RCS for giving us this opportunity to meet some of the awardees, and to them for giving up a day to meet us. We can confidently say to our Liverymen that their money is very well spent.



HERALDRY, TULIPS AND SHEEP

On a warm summer's evening a group of Liverymen and guests toured the College of Arms under the expert guidance of Mark Scott, Somerset Herald. Assistant PIPPA ROUSSELET was one of them.



THE COLLEGE OF ARMS was founded in 1484 and since then has created and maintained official registers of coats of arms and pedigrees. The Heralds who make up the College are members of the Royal Household and act under Crown Authority. As such, they are employed on medieval salary levels of approximately £15 per annum!

The current site was granted to the College by Queen Mary and her husband, King Philip of Spain, in 1555. The original building burned down during the Great Fire but was rebuilt in the 1670s. The building remains relatively intact from that period, apart from the demolition of the south facade to make way for

In the early medieval period, Heralds were responsible for the proclamation and organisation of Jousts. The knights taking part in tournaments were recognised by the arms they bore on their shields and the crests they wore on their helmets. Heralds soon acquired an expert knowledge of these and became responsible for recording arms, and later for controlling their use.

Nowadays, anyone can apply for a coat of arms. In case you are considering this as the answer to a significant birthday present conundrum, the process will cost in the region of £9,000. When making design choices, we were advised to avoid choosing lions as they have been extensively used and are virtually impossible to incorporate in a unique and therefore ownable way - badgers and rats are far more accessible. In the court room we saw Sir Edmund Hillary's crest, a three-dimensional rendering of the arms, and were amused to see it was a blue kiwi holding an ice axe. They do have a sense of humour at the College of Arms...



Sir Edmund Hillary's crest

Mark kindly showed us the records containing the official grant of our own Livery coat of arms. It appears that we had already been using it, or something like it, for several hundred years before it was made official in 1986 (among other sources, see Kimball Bailey's article in the last newsletter).

We rounded off this fascinating evening with food, wine and chat in classic Needlemakers' fashion.

BACK IN JUNE, six Needlemakers gathered for a Tulip-Making workshop held by Past Mistress Elizabeth Whitton. After a rather good breakfast on arrival, we got started making these beautiful tulips.



Results from the tulip workshop

As a group, we varied from the novice stitcher, which included Liveryman **CLAIRE CHITTY**, to those with much more skill.

Under Elizabeth's guidance (and regular top-ups of coffee) we quickly and successfully made several tulips and were sufficiently proud of our creations to take them home with us. No previous experience was needed, and this was a fine opportunity to both use and learn more about modern stitching needles. We quickly realised this was not just fun, but as it was impossible to focus on any stresses and strains of the day and stitch at the same time, it proved to be a wonderful way to relax.

We will be running the workshop again: do come next time; if, like Claire, you can't stitch, it doesn't matter; if you think you won't enjoy it, you will.

AND THEN THERE WAS the sheep drive. The one thing that everyone knows about becoming a Freeman of the City of London is that you can drive your sheep over London Bridge.



Results from the tulip workshop



Liverymen **CAROLINE BEASLEY-MURRAY** (sporting a wonderfully appropriate woolly jumper) and **TERRY NEVILLE** joined the flock in September, along with Liveryman John Ryan, PM Pamela Goldberg and husband John, the Master, Paul Beasley-Murray and Fran Neville.

In true Needlemakers fashion, the team assembled at the Sugar Loaf for a tasty pub lunch. It had to be done.

Over lunch we found out more about the rights (and rites). It was only in 2013 that the Worshipful Company of Woolmen decided to resurrect the custom of exercising the ancient right of Freeman to drive sheep across London Bridge. or Southwark Bridge, as has become the even newer custom. This helps with the traffic and leaves more space for the livery trade fair that accompanies the event. Christmas presents a-plenty were procured.

But soon it was time for us to venture on to Southwark Bridge. It seemed to take an age before we were actually in charge of our nine large, handsome sheep.

The sheep are top of the flocks, selected from a 600 strong contingent on a farm in Bedford. And they even receive media training, like the celebrity who traditionally starts the drive across the river – this year Adam Henson from BBC's "Countryfile" did the honours.

None of us had shepherd crooks and we were not dressed as Little Bo Peeps – we simply gesticulated and urged the sheep on. They were largely well behaved; of course, by this stage they were certainly more experienced than we all were apart. Though one sheep on our watch did get frisky and affected the whole group! All we, like sheep, have gone astray!

It may have been drizzling when we left Southwark Bridge, but our spirits were not dampened. If you have never done the annual Sheep Drive, we would encourage you to do so. The pleasure of the fellowship (and not to mention the whiff of the sheep, some of whom had no sense of occasion) will stay with you.



CITY GIRLS: UP ON THE ROOF

In July, Hon. Almoner GILL LOFTUS had the pleasure of meeting two of our bursary students from City of London School for Girls: Sharwa Molla (from the Class of 2021) and Tolu Agbedu (from the Class of 2023). They had a lot of catching up to do!



SHARWA HAD JUST completed a year's internship at Frewer Engineering in Surrey. She enjoyed working in a small company environment, designing enormous test rigs for all kinds of large engines. She is looking forward to returning to Imperial College in

October for her final year reading Aerospace Engineering.

Tolu had completed her second year in Global Sustainable Development and Economics and was excited to embark on an eight-week summer

internship with Marsh Insurance, in the City. She returns to Warwick University in the Autumn to finish her degree.

They were both interested to hear all the latest Needlemakers' news and the activities we have enjoyed during the year. After lunch in Gordon Ramsay's Bread Street Kitchen in One New Change, we went for a walk on the roof to appreciate views of the City.

As their graduations will coincide next summer, I look forward to bringing them to a Needlemakers' event to celebrate.

MEANWHILE...



Sharwa and Tolu up on the roof...



Ela (centre) and two friends

... **OUR LATEST** bursary student, Ela Turk (from the Class of 2025), pictured above between two friends at this year's Leavers' Ceremony at the School, achieved three As in Biology, Chemistry and Maths (narrowly missing out on an A* in two of them) and is very happy to take up the offer from UCL to study Bio-medical Science in October.

Our congratulations and very best wishes go with her, and she hopes to join us at Christmastime to let us know how she is getting on.

I shall be attending the CLSG Prize Day, together with then Past Master Dr Sue Sumners, on 6th October 2025.

WELCOME BACK!

Liveryman Audrey Shattles has been unable to attend Company events for some years. Hon. Almoner GILL LOFTUS invited her and her husband to lunch, which was an offer she (and the other attendees) couldn't refuse.

THE TWO DOCTORS, Audrey and Warren, selected one of their favourite restaurants, Café du Marché in Charterhouse Square, and they were joined by two other doctors.

Sue Sumners, the then Master, was delighted to accept Gill's invitation, and Liveryman Lyn Stone, a lifelong friend, was equally ready to take part. Lyn and Warren are both originally from Australia, but their respective medical careers centred on the UK.

Audrey was diagnosed with sarcoma in 2019, and her continuing treatments

have prevented her and Warren from attending any Needlemakers' events for several years. They enjoy keeping up with the Company news, however, and being medical (Audrey was a physiotherapist and Warren a rheumatologist), are very interested in the recent exciting innovations in needle technology which are currently being supported by our Company.

It was great to see them both after such a long time. Lunch was extremely convivial and ended with promises to meet again as and when Audrey's treatments allow.



*Hon. Almoner Gill Loftus, Warren Shattles, Master Sue Sumners,
Liverymen Audrey Shattles and Lyn Stone*

WELCOME TO OUR NEW FRIENDS

We welcome new Liverymen and Freemen, highlighting some of the new faces and bidding them all a hearty welcome.



Naomi Farhi

Freeman; proposed by Gwen Rhys

NAOMI FARHI studied at the City of London School for Girls, giving her a lifelong connection with the City - and her father is a City of London Guide! She read Classics at King's College Cambridge, and completed an MSc in Business Psychology at the University of Strathclyde.

Starting out in corporate advertising within the creative industries, she later moved into the political sector, and then into charity fundraising. She is currently a Corporate Fundraiser for the Army Benevolent Fund, developing partnerships to support soldiers and their families, including the last surviving Second World War veterans.

Outside work, Naomi runs a supper club business and loves theatre - she is on a mission to visit all 42 West End theatres and has already done 34.

A keen music lover, she performs guitar and vocals for community productions and events, and is also an eager opera aficionado. She looks forward to supporting the work of the Needlemakers and to sharing a few meals, songs, and stories along the way.



Emily Mills

Freeman; proposed by Martyn Chase

EMILY MILLS is a General Surgery Registrar and CEO of Cascade Medtech Ltd. She was the winner of the inaugural Advanced Needle Technology Award, alongside her co-founder Josh Burke, for innovating a medical device within post-operative care. She graduated from Brighton and Sussex Medical School for her Primary Medical Qualification BMBS, received her BSc in Anatomy from the University of Bristol, and was a clinical supervisor at Caius College Cambridge during her Academic Doctor Foundation Programme. Emily grew up in Thundersley in Essex. She is a proud advocate of Women in STEM and aims to encourage those from non-traditional and widening participation backgrounds to pursue their career and life aspirations. She is also the current Vice President of the Association of Surgeons in Training (ASiT), a surgical training charity which advocates for all surgical trainees in the UK and Ireland on training issues and strives for excellence in surgical training. In her spare time, she has a strong interest in fitness and exercise, which keeps her (mostly) sane.



Adrian Tasker

Freeman: proposed by Carl Statham

ADRIAN TASKER was born and raised in North Cambridgeshire where he still lives on the family farm. Married to Nicola for 25 years, they have two daughters: Katie, currently working in the square mile and Lottie, at university in Durham. He has worked in IT for all of his career, now focusing on cyber security.

He is an active member of the local parish and takes part in all manner of fundraising activities as well as maintenance of the church yard. He has recently installed Wi-Fi – not always easy in a Grade 1 listed building. As a governor at a local SEN school specialising in autism, he finds it rewarding to see how the school can help these children develop outside of a traditional curriculum. Adrian is a keen follower of cricket, once as a player but now more as a spectator at county and international games. Rugby is dear to his heart, and he holds a season ticket at Northampton Saints. He used to play national league rugby for Peterborough & Oundle RUFC, but the knees and shoulders can no longer stand up to it. He enjoys field sports and game shooting, albeit with limited success. Living on a rural farm affords him time to walk the dogs and follow national hunt racing. He has become fascinated in history and is social secretary for the 'Duxford Big Wing' history group. He looks forward to meeting many fellow members at a function soon.



Matt Young

Liveryman; proposed by Philip Law

MATT YOUNG became a Freeman in 2022 and was clothed this July. He was born and raised in Newport on the Isle of Wight. A proud Caulkhead, he frequently visits 'the island' seeing family and friends and experiencing the Isle of Wight Festival. He took part in an Ultra Challenge, in which he walked round the entire island (106km) in 24 hours, raising money for the Mountbatten Hospice. He currently lives in Broxbourne with wife Claire and their brand new baby Lucas. Matt took undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in Applied Exercise Physiology at the University of Brighton. Matt has worked in the NHS for 14 years, starting as a Clinical Trials Co-ordinator for surgical breast cancer research studies. He found his way into operational management and during ID was part of the management team rolling out the vaccination programme at Guy's & St Thomas' hospital. Currently Matt is the General Manager for Electrophysiology, Interventional & Network Cardiology at St Bartholomew's hospital. Matt is an avid golfer and is a member of Crews Hill golf club. He enjoys travelling in both the UK and abroad to play at different courses. He is a keen follower of football, and naturally, being from the Isle of Wight, supports Sunderland. He has recently begun following F1, and he also enjoys board games, listening to music and attending gigs.

SEEKING NEW MEMBERS

Some of the new Needlemakers highlighted in previous pages are personal friends of current members, some long-term, some only recent joiners ourselves.

IT BEHOVES US ALL to encourage new members. We pride ourselves on being an open Company and, perhaps above all, a friendly one, something which we can certainly demonstrate. These new members represent the lifeblood of the Company. Not only have we been able to encourage members with interests in traditional crafting skills, it has also been a pleasure to see how our efforts with the Advanced Needle Technology programme have encouraged new members from that background to help to widen our support for biotech and innovation. Either way, an interest in our rich history is welcome.

Contact clerk@needlemakers.org.uk if you have any questions about the membership process or if you would like any help in facilitating an application.



*Congratulations to our newest Liverymen:
Iain Fidler (L). with Emma, and Lt. Col. Nathan Horsman, with Vera*

UPCOMING EVENTS

15 October: FCDO Visit

30 October: Poppy Appeal

8 November: Lady Mayor's Show

8 November: Britten's War Requiem at Southwark Cathedral

10 November: Almoner's Lunch

28 November: Bell Ringing at St James Garlickhythe

18 December: Carol Service at St James Garlickhythe + Supper

21 January: Lunch at Grocers' Hall

30 January: Recital at St Pancras Clocktower

3 March: Banquet at Mansion House

13 March: Woodwind Competition at GSMD + Supper



**The most recent Company accounts are now available
on the website, along with other news**

Contact Clerk@needlemakers.org.uk