



Needlemakers
Newsletter
Summer 2024



The
Needlemakers
Company.

FOREWARD

Welcome to our latest news roundup. We would normally start with the Master's message but on this occasion, the untimely and unexpected death of Dame Elizabeth Fradd has had such an impact on all of us that her obituary will come first; the rest of the news follows.

A Memorial Service, to be led by our Chaplain, Bishop Christopher, will be held at St James Garlickhythe on Friday 6 September at 12.00 noon, to be followed by refreshments. For those unable to be there in person, the service will be live-streamed and will be available later on YouTube.

Past Master Dame Elizabeth Fradd DBE



**Dame Elizabeth, Master, at the Mansion House
Banquet, 14 February 2017**

Past Master Dame Elizabeth Fradd DBE

If you read even one of the many obituaries about Liz, you will know what a great debt was owed to her by so many people from different walks of life.

Appointed a Deputy and later Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire, she also served as High Sheriff of Nottingham. She was a council member of Southwell Cathedral and had a special professorship at the University of Nottingham. In 1999, after a stellar nursing career, Liz was appointed Assistant Chief Nurse at the Department of Health. She helped set up the Commission for Health Improvement, chaired the Health Visitor Task Force and advised the Prime Minister's Commission on the Future of Nursing and Midwifery. She was made a Fellow of the Royal College of Nursing in 2004 and appointed Dame Commander of the British Empire for services to nursing in 2009.

Born on Florence Nightingale's birthday, May 12th, in 1949 Elizabeth Harriet Birtwhistle was not academic and disliked school but she had many friends and had a great sense of fun – something she never lost. She was born in Surrey, her mother was a teacher and her father was a Methodist Minister from whom she inherited her strong moral compass. From an early age, she would challenge authority if she thought something was wrong or unfair. Liz even talked about getting kicked out of Sunday School at the age of three because she was influencing other children and challenging the leadership. She did not agree with the maxim; "Sit down, be quiet, do as you're told!"

Liz said: "I used to line up all my dolls in shoeboxes in a walk-in cupboard at home or bandage up my siblings when they cut their finger." She decided to become a nurse because she didn't know what else to do and felt she was being groomed to become a Methodist minister's wife.

Simon Fradd recalls: *Liz left school with no A-levels, just certificates in needlework and domestic science. She must have had some quality that shone through because the Matron of Westminster Hospital accepted her for the extended course in paediatric nursing. Liz passed top in her year and won the James Barnes Medal.*

A chance meeting with Glenda Jackson in a London Art Gallery led Liz to take up the post of nanny to Jackson's son for a year in Spain, where the actress was working. They became lifelong friends. Following this she was appointed the youngest ward sister ever at Westminster Children's Hospital (WCH) where she took charge of the neonatal ward.

We met at WCH in 1975, writes Simon, when I was a not-so-humble medical student. We married on May 1st 1976, having already honeymooned in South Africa. Typically, in order to be able to move about and facilitate my medical apprenticeship, Liz voluntarily gave up her burgeoning paediatric nursing career and trained as a health visitor. The highlight of her health visiting career was unknowingly being fed cannabis cakes on a professional visit at Worlds End in London!

Whilst Liz and Simon were both working happily in Burton-on-Trent (not because of the buns), Liz took up the post of Deputy Chief Nurse in the internationally renowned Professorial Paediatric Unit. *Whilst on a site visit, she commented on one ward, which was being upgraded, that she would not have done it that way! Going back a few weeks later, she was surprised to find no further work had been done: they were awaiting her instructions!*

In 1993, following the conviction of Beverley Allitt, the nurse given thirteen life sentences for murdering four infants, attempting to murder three others and causing grievous bodily harm to a further six, Liz was asked to take over management of the small unit in Grantham, where

Beverley Allitt had worked, to restore public confidence in the staff, lift morale and provide support. This led her to work more widely in a troubleshooting role in the health service and she remained in great demand wherever problems arose.

Simon continues: During her time at the Nottingham hospitals Liz introduced many novel ideas, including a patients' charter which is still in use today; another was allowing small pets on the children's ward. Inevitably one escaped and was found in the hospital kitchens. This was not so much a problem internally as she was the boss but she was worried about the publicity. She called a press conference and explained truthfully what had happened and pointed out that any publicity would mean the pets would have to go. There was complete media silence.

One of her favourite quotes was from Alice in Wonderland: "Don't just do something, stand there! In hospitals today, everybody's always rushing around ... they never or rarely spend any time on reflection."

'Liz was a force for good and I hope she knew what a difference her support meant to us..... full of energy and enthusiasm, never losing her belief and drive for a better future.' So says Alison Morton, CEO of the Institute of Health Visitors.

In the BBC's Last Word on 12th June, a nursing colleague said "Elizabeth Fradd was a hero in her own profession: she started out as a paediatric nurse in 1960s and changed the way sick children were cared for in this country, believing that families should be more involved in their care and in the decision making." As Liz herself said, "If you explain to children what is being done and they know and are trustful of you then their recovery is much quicker."

Liz was delighted to receive official recognition in 2009 but liked to be

addressed by everyone simply as Liz and certainly in the Needlemakers she was renowned for her down-to-earth attitudes, her warmth, and her irrepressible sense of humour.

Liz persuaded Past Master Pamela Goldberg to apply for the role when the Institute of Health Visiting was looking for a new Chair of Trustees. *I spent seven interesting and rewarding years in the post, says Pamela, and was delighted to be the person to present her with her Honorary Fellowship of the organisation that she helped get off the ground. She was such a positive influence and inspiration both inside and outside her profession. I will miss her as a very wise counsel as well as a friend who was also huge fun! We in the Needlemakers are equally indebted to her because of her passion for what we do, attention to detail and knowledge of governance that she brought to the Court.*

The Worshipful Company of Needlemakers has indeed benefitted enormously from her extraordinary leadership, enthusiasm and dedication as a Liveryman, Past Master and friend. We should all perhaps be thankful to Past Master Alan King-Hamilton for his foresight in persuading her to become a Liveryman.

Simon Fradd writes: *It was entirely my fault, that our marriage broke down in 1998. Having no children, we had no point of contact until Alan King-Hamilton suggested Liz became a Needlemaker in her own right. At the first lunch we both attended the Clerk, fearing the worst, seated us at extreme opposite ends of the hall. However, Liz as kind and forgiving as ever, allowed us to form the most wonderful friendship, which did nothing but strengthen over the years.*

Her extraordinary ability to connect and keep in touch with people is legendary. At the recent July Court Meeting, the Master paid tribute to the tremendous contribution that Liz made to the Company and the Court stood in silence to honour her memory.

Master Elect, Sue Sumners, recalls: *Fellowship is a cornerstone of our Company. I experienced this from Liz as soon as I became a Liveryman. The warmth of contact and the support she gave as I journeyed within the Company was always present. There was, however, that additional connection - our mutual love of Nottinghamshire, and in particular Southwell Minster, where I had played my tenor recorder as a child. Thank you, Liz.*

Senior Warden Elect, Nick Macrae, met Liz in 2014 when she was Junior Warden: *Her poise and eloquence at Function Committee meetings immediately struck me and left me feeling somewhat in awe! As she prepared for her Master's year, Nick helped Liz with arrangements for her Master's trip to Nottingham. By chance a childhood friend had been installed as Bishop of Southwell & Nottingham the previous year. I was only too happy to help Liz with arrangements for a lunch in the State Chamber at Southwell, and guided tours of the Minster. This was just one part of a superb programme that Liz devised for those liverymen joining the trip, which drew upon her interests and her longstanding affiliation with the University of Nottingham and with the wider community. Liz's attentive concern at times of need was at the very essence of her character and is testament to her selflessness and compassion. Moreover, her support was always discreetly given and with an unspoken understanding that it was unconditional and nothing was expected in return.*

Like so many other, Chris and Eve Frankland testify to her insight and her thoughtfulness: *Liz was always good company, whether at a formal event or away on one of the Livery holidays... She always seemed to find time to talk to everyone who wanted to speak to her, recalling what was going on in their lives and offering very sage advice when her opinion was sought. They too recall that memorable Master's weekend in Nottingham, her generous hospitality and the pleasure she derived in showing us her beautiful garden.*

Philip Grant, who was Clerk when Liz became Master, remembers that Liz was passionate about the initiative she brought before the Court to give bursaries to the Royal College of Nursing. She insisted that bursaries given to the RCN should match those already given to the Royal College of Surgeons. Philip was quoted in The Times in a follow up to her obituary there: ‘... Her quiet authority and modesty impressed all who met her or were privileged to work with her.’

When asked what drove her to take on the demanding and time-consuming office in the County, she said without hesitation that it was a time of her life when she wanted to give back. Once again, her selfless commitment to helping others.

Simon reflects: As all Liz’s friends and even acquaintances know, she was the first to offer support and kindness to anyone with any sort of personal difficulty. She kept in regular contact with the most enormous number of people; all this while holding down high-flying jobs, studying for an MSc, publishing and lecturing extensively worldwide, and advising Ministers and Governments not just on healthcare but also on how to improve the ethics of banking.

How appropriate she should be called above on the International Day of the Nurse.

A Memorial Service, led by our Chaplain Bishop Christopher, will be held on Friday September 6 at 12.00 noon at St. James Garlickhythe, after which refreshments will be served.

Gill Loftus – Honorary Almoner

MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER



No one can give you a true idea of the task ahead and no one can predict the events you are going to be invited to and enjoy. Whilst the highlights remain dinner at Mansion House with the King and Queen last year, more recently I have joined the Lord Mayor and other Masters on a visit to Treloar School.

The Needlemakers regularly make charitable grants to this school and most recently have contributed to the purchase of a sensory trolley which is designed for students with highly complex physical, learning, and medical needs to help with developing communication skills. I have also attended the annual prize day at Christ's Hospital School where the Needlemakers Prize is awarded to a student studying textiles, visited the Royal School of Needlework at Hampton Court Palace to view work created by degree students, and attended events with our affiliated regiment, 3PWRR, at Woolwich and Dover Castle – that is a lot of driving!

Our livery company is held in high regard not only in the City but much further afield and we are always welcomed and respected, very reassuring for the future.

My theme this year on the charitable front is to ask all to be generous to a generous livery company .

The company is organised into committees and this year again we are blessed with talents to look after all aspects of the wellbeing of the company and this has made my life very straight forward, and I am also thankful for very supportive Senior and Junior Wardens to help, and an exceptional learned Clerk. I would also like to thank Bishop Christopher for his help and guidance and Simon Fradd in dealing with the sudden and tragic death of Past Master Dame Elizabeth: a quite exceptional person and friend.

The Awards Dinner took place at the Apothecaries Hall on Wednesday 3rd July 2024 which was a very successful and enjoyable evening. I am delighted to show you photos of the PWRR winners, the new Freeman and the new Liverymen who attended.



I wish all liverymen a very pleasant and enjoyable summer and look forward to seeing you all at one of the events in September and the Installation Dinner at Painters' Hall on Thursday 3 October.

Michael, Master

NEWS AND EVENTS



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The Master's Trip to Essex

On Sunday 12th May an enthusiastic group of Needlemakers and partners arrived at the Pontlands Park hotel near Chelmsford at the beginning of our Master's visit to his home county of Essex.

The itinerary was very well planned, taking advantage of the many personal relationships that Michael has developed in the area over the years, and the highlights were as follows:

Tour of Danbury Ridge Winery.



On the Monday we had a private tour of Danbury Ridge Winery. I believe we were the first group visit to be invited there. The set-up is as high-tech as wine production can get, and the Bunker family is taking its time to get things right. Currently there are only a pinot noir and chardonnay available, with a fizz due this autumn, but to say 'only' does these wines a disservice as they are absolutely excellent. A generous tasting plus a filling buffet lunch made us glad that there were no other activities planned for the day!

The next morning saw us at the Warner and Sons Silk and Textile Museum in Braintree, based in a Victorian school house, with a fascinating history and a very interesting collection of paper patterns.

The afternoon was - well, the appropriate word is 'wet'; and of course we were on a boat trip - a wherry on the Blackwater River. A hardy few channelled their inner 'Onedin Line' by staying on deck while the more timorous retired below to ensure that the cream teas stayed dry. Of course, the rain eased off as soon as we returned to the dock. Memo to future Masters planning boat trips - it will rain.



On the Wednesday we enjoyed a thorough guided tour of the Wilkins and Sons jam factory in Tiptree - a product familiar to us all, and indeed their product range extends well beyond just jam. So many glass jars! We were lucky enough also to have a tour of the farm area so that we could sample the freshest of strawberries, followed by a cream tea (naturally).

In the afternoon we went to a family-run Rolls Royce and Bentley garage (P&A Wood) which turned out to be rather more than that. Yes, the garage was spotlessly clean (indeed more so than the jam factory!), but they also store historic Rolls and Bentleys on behalf of valued clients so that it's also essentially a museum of these classic marques - a remarkable collection of heritage cars since 1904 with values into the millions.



The following morning we put our History Hats on for a visit to Layer Marney Tower, privately held by the Charington family and also a favourite destination for school trips (we were outnumbered...). This is an early Tudor country house, minus most of the house. It was begun by one of Henry VIII's Chancellors who died not long after starting the project and the family line soon stopped. The Tower remains a time capsule of a style of building and one-upmanship that basically died with its founder. After a quick lunch we were taken to the Museum of Power, which houses some wonderful old working steam engines that definitely pre-date the green revolution.



P+A Wood Rolls Royce garage

On our final morning, some found that their heads were already full of information but others embarked on the final visit, to Stow Maries First World War Aerodrome. This was one of three defensive aerodromes built to confront the German airship raids on eastern and southern England. It certainly wasn't intended to survive more than a few years, so it's a credit to the volunteers who are working very hard to restore it to give a sense of its purpose.

Our dinners throughout the stay were held in the hotel, and we were entertained to some thought-provoking and occasionally powerful speakers by some of Michael's friends, including the Bishop of Chelmsford and the recently-retired Chief Coroner for Essex.

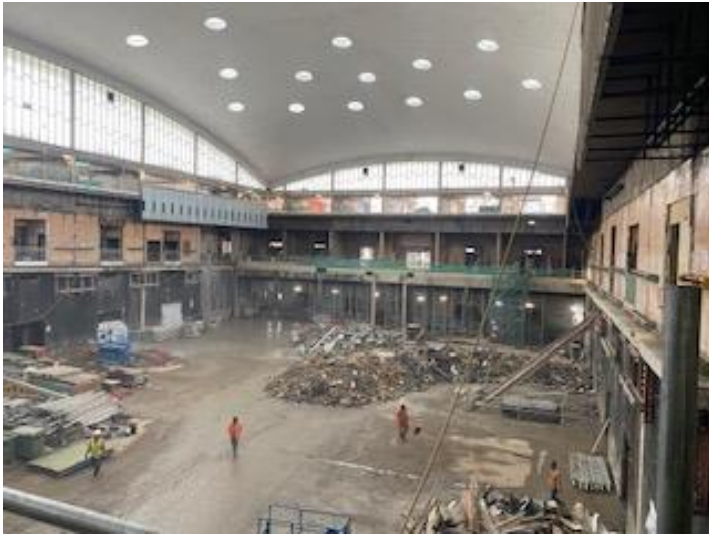
I cannot conclude this report without referring to the dreadful news that Michael had to impart during our first evening together, namely that Past Master Liz Fradd had died that morning. This was of course a huge shock to all of us. The ensuing meal was one of quiet reflection on all that Liz had done for the Company, and those of us who were fortunate enough to be included in her own Master's visits - to Nottingham and Bath - remembered those times with our friends. She had been on so many other Needlemakers visits, and we recalled the fun we had, including her insistence (in Belfast) that she had no sense of direction, which turned out to be true in one sense; but in every other sense, if anyone had a 'sense of direction', it was Liz.

Thank you, Master, for a wonderful and enlightening trip.

Philip Law
Past Master



Museum of London Site Visit April 2024



A small group of Needlemakers from the Court and Charity Committee were invited to visit the new location for the Museum of London at Smithfield.

The location is currently a building site, but when the museum opens it will welcome over two million people every year and engage with 160,000 school children from every London Borough.

Needlemakers should be aware that our Charity Fund has paid for the restoration of three suffragette banners and a recent donation will pay for a further two. These banners will go on display in the new Votes for Women exhibition when the museum reopens in 2026.

Assistant Pippa Rousselet

Hawksmoor Walk and Lunch



On a rather chilly Sunday afternoon a group of Liverymen, ably lead by Imogen Rumbold (long term friend of the Livery and a blue badge guide), around some of the City's most notable Hawksmoor Churches.

Hawksmoor was a leading figure of the English Baroque style of architecture in the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries. He worked alongside the principal architects of the time, Christopher Wren and John Vanburgh, and contributed to the design of some of the most notable buildings of the period, including St Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, Greenwich Hospital and four City of London Churches [*including the tower of our own Livery church, St James Garlickhythe – Ed*].

We visited Christ Church in Spitalfields (pictured) and St Mary's Woolnoth. At St Mary's we learnt that the crypt was remodelled to make way for Bank Underground Station. This came as a relief to the Vicar and congregation at the time as the crypt's occupants were causing services to become somewhat malodorous!

In keeping with the theme, the group were happy to warm up over Sunday Roast at the Hawksmoor restaurant near the Guildhall.

Assistant Pippa Rousselet

Cricket at Lord's



In early May a select group of Needlemakers and their partners joined Liveryman Kimball Bailey and me at Lord's for the first day of the County match between Middlesex and Sussex. Maybe our numbers were reduced by the expectation that the sun would continue to hide away, but in fact the weather was generally so hot that we sought the shade of the Warner Stand for most of the time. Our reduced numbers also meant that Kimball and I were able to introduce everyone into the Pavilion for a while at least.

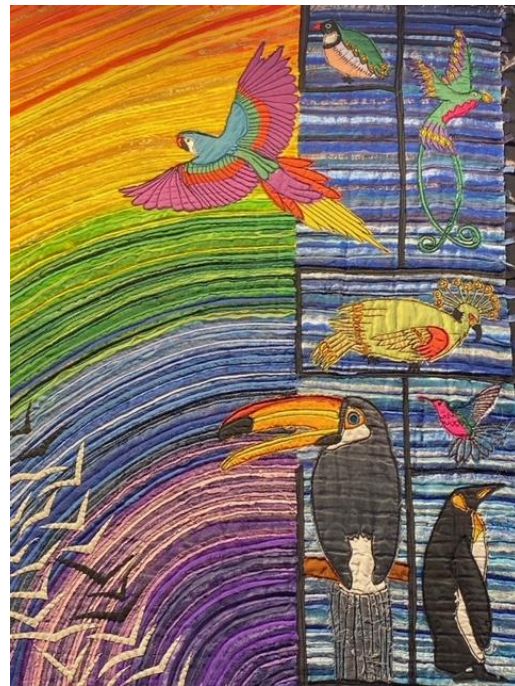
After a sparkling start to play, with some aggressive batting by Sussex and a remarkable catch by Ryan Higgins of Middlesex, the batting became rather mundane through the introduction of Sussex's ex-Test player Pujara. Our 'drinks intervals' became of necessity increasingly frequent, and a thoroughly enjoyable time of doing very little except chatting and grazing was had by all.

Philip Law
Past Master

Threads Through Creation

The Needlemakers visited this vibrant exhibition at Southwark Cathedral. The twelve beautiful, large-scale designs took three years to stitch and are beautifully conceived and executed. Those who were unable to come with us, can see Jacqui Parkinson's tapestries in Southwark Cathedral until 25 August, admission is free.

Assistant Pippa Rousselet



The Almoner's Lunch at Ironmongers Hall – Monday 20 May '24



Liverymen who, for various reasons, find it increasingly difficult to get to evening functions, or who were unable to take part in the Master's Trip to Essex, appreciated an invitation from the Almoner to attend a Social Lunch at Ironmongers Hall in May.

Nineteen people were in attendance and the Master was pleased to catch up with some old friends. Access to Ironmongers is very easy, with ramps and a lift available, and the staff looked after everyone very well. After a reception with sparkling wine or soft drinks, a three-course meal with a generous serving of wine was enjoyed by all and the conversation never flagged.

Between now and December, Needlemakers will enjoy three evening events, so by popular request the Almoner will organise another invitational lunch some time in the Autumn.

Among those present: Graham and Shirley Born, Pauline Boon, Ana Barber, Carolyn Ezekiel, Colin and Susan Finch, Chris and Eve Frankland, Brian Hatfield, Jim and Brenda Laing and their son Richard, Sarah Roberts, Colin and Tiz Tiffin.

Assistant Gill Loftus, Almoner

USEFUL INFORMATION



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Website news items

Current news items are to be found in the Members' Area of the website.

Recent additions include:

- The July 2024 Livery Briefing from the City of London with information on forthcoming events in Livery and City Briefings in the News and Updates Section.
- The March and July Bulletins from the Lord Mayor are also added.

Company Email addresses

The Company Contact Details section in the Company section of the website Members' Area contains the Email addresses for those with positions in the Company.

Future Events

Future events can be seen on the Events page of the website which gives an outline of each event and booking details.

Next Edition

The next newsletter will be published in the Autumn.