



Upholder News

The Marketing & Communications Committee
Newsletter Issue 14, Winter 2025

On behalf of the Immediate Past Master Rob Ward and the Marketing & Communications Committee, welcome to our Winter edition of the Newsletter.

A Vigilant Future!

It was with great sadness that in July 2025 we had to say farewell to HMS Triumph at her Decommissioning Divisions at HMNB Devonport. A long and successful affiliation was ended but while this was happening efforts were already underway to establish a new Royal Navy relationship with the Worshipful Company of Upholders preferably with another submarine. We were very fortunate in that Lt Cdr Freddy May who had been the Executive Officer for HMS Triumph assisted with this request and HMS Vigilant, a Vanguard Class nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine was nominated. By pure coincidence Lt Cdr May had transferred as Executive Officer to HMS Vigilant which greatly assisted forming this new affiliation. Although we would be continuing our submarine association there was a fundamental difference between HMS Triumph which was a "hunter" submarine and HMS Vigilant which is a "bomber" i.e. it carries the Trident ballistic missile, the United Kingdom's nuclear deterrent – which is the subject of friendly rivalry between the respective crews. HMS Vigilant was commissioned in October 1995 and is expected to be in service for some time yet.



With the realisation that a new relationship was coming to fruition, the Company was invited to attend on the 12th of October 2025 HMNB Clyde at Faslane, Scotland on for HMS Vigilant's Affiliates Day. It was also agreed that the occasion could be

used to sign an Affiliates MOU to formalise the new partnership. As a result, Master Roger Wates, Past Master Anthony Demby, Clerk Rosemary Selfe and Court Assistant John Freemantle accepted the challenge of travelling to Scotland, all meeting up the day before at a hotel in Helensburgh, an attractive town on the River Clyde a few miles from HMNB Clyde. We had arranged to meet and dine at a local restaurant with Lt Cdr Freddy May and Lt George Holland, both had been instrumental in arranging our visit and affiliation with HMS Vigilant and a good time was had by all and was a pleasant precursor for the next day's visit.

After a ten-minute drive, we arrived at HMNB Clyde and like the day before it was wet and miserable, but it would not detract from what would be a brilliant day. After clearing security, our first port of call would be to the SMERAS building (Submarine Escape, Rescue, Abandonment and Survival) establishment. Opened in 2021, this is a state-of-the-art training facility that allows personnel to practice in a controlled environment with realistic conditions that would be met in real scenarios. It was interesting to note that all the staff were mature and experienced submariners training something they hoped would never have to be used. Plus, they were an immediate response resource for any stricken submarine across the world and where they could help. There was a mutual respect shown for all submariners across the world irrespective of their nationality.

After a general briefing we were taken to the single and two person escape hatches which all submariners must undergo training on with regular refresher courses. In each case a member of staff, suitably attired, put the escape hatches through their paces. It is interesting to note they no longer must pass up through 30 metres depth of water as was the case when training took place at HMS Dolphin in Gosport Hampshire. Fortunately, this method of escape has never had to be used in real life situations.

From the escape hatches we moved to pool area where the two instructors who had moved through escape hatches were now standing on the side of what mimics a submarine hull at one end of a deep pool. Already in the pool were two divers and a large life raft. With the push of a button, we were sent into a nighttime scenario with rain, thunder, lightning and force four seas watching the escape hatch instructors jump into the water and then for one to board the large life raft and the other the individual raft that is part of his kit. All very impressive stuff and the ferocity of the waves witnessed was a mere fraction of what could be simulated, I just wish I had a waterproof! A fascinating experience.

In what was a very full itinerary, we were transported to the FOST building (Fleet Operational Standards and Training) where crews train to be ready for operational deployment. This was a simulator resource matching all the

equipment and resources on a bomber submarine. In the company of the Commanding Officer Douglas Laird and for the purposes of our visit, we were able to witness an impressive display of destroying “Russian” ships on the high seas but in reality, this is contrary to the primary operational objective of a “bomber” submarine which is not to be detected at any all cost either by hostile or friendly parties.

After lunch in the Officers Mess, we finally got to go on board HMS Vigilant. The Affiliates Day was possible as HMS Vigilant was out of the water enclosed in an exceptionally large hanger. We approached HMS Vigilant and you could not be impressed at her vast size emphasised by the fact a lift had to be used to stand alongside at deck level. We crossed over on a small foot bridge (not great when you have a fear of heights!) and walked on the deck to the stern escape hatch to enter the cramped conditions of a modern serving submarine and escorted to the senior officer’s mess which was a very cosy set-up. NB: The two escape hatches (located at the bow and stern) are removed during maintenance so they can be serviced and allow alternative access to the submarine. Operationally, the only access to a submarine is via the conning tower.

CO Laird provided a briefing on HMS Triumph’s role and capabilities reaffirming the primary operational requirement was not to be detected and necessitated essential forward planning to evade potential contact. There were obvious questions raised about the Trident missiles in the hope of captivating response, but the CO used diplomacy and humour to politely decline an answer. However, we were left in no doubt of their formidable destructive capability and being the ultimate weapon of last resort. He did confirm a letter signed by the Prime Minister did exist on board in a safe, secured in the main control area to be opened when directed and to comply with its instructions.



The Affiliate Group was then split into two groups to move around the submarine but initially the Upholders remained to witness the CO and the Master exchange positive words on the new affiliation before signing the Affiliates MOU.

The Master then allowed me the privilege of officially handing over to the CO, the custody and control of the Companies silver model of World War II Submarine HMS Upholder in recognition of our affiliation. This was originally made and presented to the second HMS Upholder until she was decommissioned in April 1994 and was later retained by HMS Triumph until she decommissioned in July 2025.



After this short ceremony we proceeded with a tour of the submarine. Naturally, for security reasons, photographs were not allowed, but her enormous size of HMS Vigilant on the outside was soon lost on the very cozy /cramped environment on the inside. It very much felt that it was primarily designed to fulfil the operational demands of a “bomber” with crew facilities having to fit in where they can, space being a premium resource. We saw the living area for 11 general crew where personal space / privacy is not a consideration. Headroom between the bunks was no more than 45 – 50 cm with floor space of no more than 2m x 3m and a crew members locker no bigger a filing cabinet drawer. The crew must live in this area accommodating a six-hour shift pattern between them including mealtimes however, they do have the luxury of an area in submarine that holds gym equipment to encourage exercise. Communication with loved ones is very limited and everything is vetted before being seen by the individual crew member to ensure that its content will not impact on the crew morale.

The galley / dining area is also very limited in size but must cater for between 130 and 150 crew on a six-hour shift rota. Again, space limits the storage capacity so there is a fixed regular menu thus the freezers are stocked / stored in a fashion to accommodate this routine.

In the main control room area, we could see everything as seen earlier in the FOST building but in a more confined environment together with the infamous PM document safe and the firing area for the Trident missiles. You could appreciate how important the procedural discipline seen with the earlier FOST exercise would be necessary in such a small operational area in a pressure situation.

The only time the vast size of HMS Vigilant was apparent on the inside was in the central area where there are 16 silos that can potentially hold the same number of Trident missiles. A Trident missile is 13.4m tall with a 2.1 metre diameter and can carry multiple warheads with a range that can reach thousands of miles. The actual number of Trident missiles carries on an operational is naturally classified, but they are afforded more space than other

area on board HMS Vigilant! Hopefully they will remain only as a nuclear deterrent and never used in anger.

When talking to engineers responsible for overseeing / maintaining the submarine nuclear reactor and other power supplies, the crew's stoic attitude was remarkable in respect of operating submerged for long periods of time. One crew member said that he very rarely moved around an operational submarine even commenting that on one occasion he only met a fellow crew member only when they had returned to base! One must remember the submarine will only resurface on returning to HMNB Clyde, hopefully undetected since leaving the base.

The tour was a fascinating experience but have never walked through so many narrow passages and climbed so many steps / ladders in such a short time. There is an acquired knack to moving easily around a submarine, but it certainly does not help being 1.93 metres tall in such a confined area as my sore forehead was testament to at the end of the day. We all returned to the Officers Mess for a short debrief with the CO for what was an incredible experience. I always had respect for submariners but that has increased ten-fold seeing the conditions in which they operate, and I can fully understand why also submariners are volunteers, it is a very challenging environment without considering the magnitude of their task.

I think that Master Roger, Anthony, Rosemary and myself all left HMNB Clyde totally but pleasantly overwhelmed by what we had seen and been told throughout the visit and with the fantastic hospitality displayed towards us from all the crew that we met. To top the day off, that evening we met with CO Laird, Lt Cdr May and other junior officers for dinner at a Helensburgh restaurant which gave us a chance to express our gratitude in a more relaxed environment and provide them a better understanding of what it means to be an Upholder Liveryman in the City. I know there will be long periods when HMS Triumph will operationally be out of sight, but she will not out of our minds and I believe this is the start of a strong bond between the Livery Company and HMS Vigilant

I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to Commander Douglas Laird RN, Lt Cdr Freddy May RN, Lt George Holland RN and Lt Christopher King RN for all their efforts leading up to the Affiliates Day and all their support and hospitality at the actual event. You may recall that Lt Cdr May attended our Mansion House Banquet in October 2025 and signed the Armed forces Covenant on behalf of the military services. I hope this was the first of many occasions that we will see representatives of HMS Vigilant attend as our guests at future Livery functions.

Court Assistant John Freemantle

The Festival of Upholstery

10 & 11 October 2025



Warden to the Trade, Kirsty Lockwood, in conversation with Past Master Rob Ward on the success of her Festival of Upholstery and her vision for the future.

Q. What was the genesis of the Festival?

A. Having attended the Sheep Drive over Southwark Bridge that is organised by the Woolmen I became acutely aware that there was nothing “trade oriented” for Upholsterers. It seemed to me that there was an opportunity for professionals to share best practices, learn from each other and discuss issues that affect the industry. It would also give a platform to promote the Upholders of course.

My hope was that by bringing together practitioners from across the country, we could not only celebrate the heritage of the trade but also inspire the next generation to pursue excellence in upholstery. The Festival, therefore, was born out of a desire to foster community, innovation, and pride within our profession.

Q. Were there any surprises in the demographic of the attendees? Were they enthusiastic amateurs or mostly professional upholsterers?

A. The audience was almost exclusively professional upholsterers but what did surprise me was the reach that the Festival had. There were attendees from all over the UK – some flying in from the north of Scotland, but also from Norway and the United States.

Q. What was the biggest challenge you encountered?

A. Convincing people to get on board with the idea posed the greatest difficulty. Starting any new project inevitably brings some scepticism about its potential for success, and without proven results, people are understandably hesitant to participate.

Q. What do you see as the most rewarding part?

A. The formation of an outstanding Committee really stood out for me—it came together more smoothly than I expected, and everyone shared a clear sense of

purpose. Each member put in a tremendous effort to make the event happen. Plus, we had interesting speakers and excellent course leaders.

In addition, we had double the number of attendees that we had expected and every workshop was oversubscribed so the degree of engagement was really encouraging.

Q. What of the future? Will there be another Festival and if so, what do you anticipate this to look like?

A. The second Festival of Upholstery will be held on 2–3 October 2026 at the National Conference Centre, Birmingham—a larger venue to welcome more practitioners. New skills courses will precede the festival, and a gala dinner will honour industry award winners nationwide. We have begun building a sustainable network, and maintaining this momentum is our next challenge, with the Upholders playing a key role.



The Master, Senior Warden and Freeman Nina Walker hosted the Upholders' stand.



Members of the Upholders' Company at the Festival.

Getting a PAL to Help You Out!

Katie wins top prize in Festival Draw

In an initiative between The Upholders and Townsend Systems, two Bench-PALs were donated into the Festival of Upholstery Free Prize Draw.

Katie Matthews is now the proud owner of her fully adjustable Bench which was delivered on Wednesday 12th November. She said having this new bench (which is on lockable wheels and is height adjustable using a handset) is a game changer. She hopes to eliminate aches and pains by always working at the best height.

She is also excited to be able to wheel the bench directly up to her van which will eliminate a lot of heavy lifting.

Katie has an AMUSF Level 3 Diploma from the British School of Upholstered Furniture when it was run by Gareth Rees and Greg Cupitt-Jones and is a recent recipient of the AMUSF Bob Fowlds mentoring Award for new businesses.

Since qualifying she has gained valuable experience working in an upholstery company in Farnham and now runs her own company, Katie Matthews Upholstery.



The picture shows from left to Right: Roger Wates, Master of the Upholders Company, Katie Matthews, James Townsend and Barry Townsend.

The City Unlocked

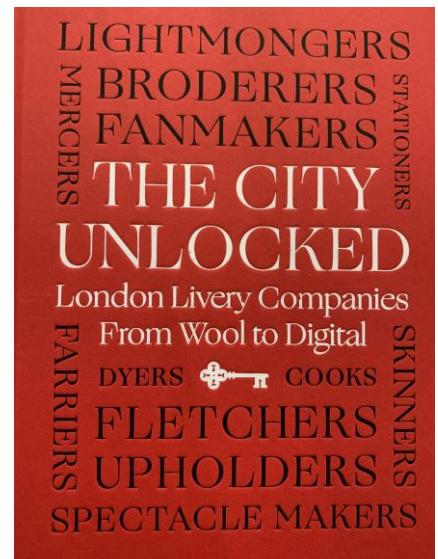
A Celebration of Livery Companies from Wool to Digital

“The City Unlocked” a book published earlier this year, was compiled by a Past Master of the Stationers, Helen Esmonde, with narrative from historian, Margaret Willes, this beautiful, richly illustrated book is a must read for those interested in London’s fascinating past, and demonstrates how the Companies have been integral to the evolution of the capital, and continue to work for the London of the future. The following piece on the Chamberlain’s Chair is an extract:-

The Worshipful Company of Upholders

Company recognised 1360, Grant of Arms 1465, Charter 1626

The craftsmen involved in upholstery were known by names that varied from Upheldere to Upholdesterr, but mainly as Upholders and it is under this name that the Company came into existence ‘On the Saturday after the Feast of St. Matthias in the 35th year of the reign of Edward III [1 March 1360, old style]’. The election of Wardens took place the previous month, ‘to survey and govern the men of the mistery’ as recorded in the City archives together with the grants in 1474 of the right to search for and seize all wares in the City pertaining to the craft that were insufficiently or not truly made. The Company received the grant of its coat of arms in 1465 in the reign of Edward IV, and its royal charter was granted by Charles I on 14 June 1626.



The chair that stands in the Chamberlain’s Court in the Guildhall is a perfect example of the traditional upholstery craft that is still carried out today. The Guildhall was severely damaged by a direct hit on the night of 29 December 1940, and the reconstruction was undertaken after the war to proposals put forward by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott. So it is known that the current chair was made after the war, but we do not know where it came from or who commissioned it. The earliest photo of the chair in use was when Ean Kendal Stewart-Smith held the office of Chamberlain

of the City of London for two years from 1962.

In 2008 the Chamberlain's Chair was completely re-upholstered by Royal Warrant Holder Albert E Chapman Ltd based in north London. The upholstery on the seat had completely collapsed and the leather had perished. The new seat was hand-sprung using coil springs, with a hair over-stuffing that was finished with a hand-stitched edge to the front and sides. The chair was covered in a pale blue hide with a leather band to the perimeter and decorative nails spaced to reveal the banding between them.

Upholders were involved not only in the manufacture of upholstery and soft furnishings but also in the direction of funerals. Historically funerals could be split into two categories: parish funerals provided by the community for their own; and heraldic funerals organised for the nobility, which were grand affairs furnished with intricate palls and heraldic symbols. From the late seventeenth century wealthy merchants, especially those based in London, would aspire to a heraldic funeral as a reflection of their status. There were funeral furnishers, such as carpenters and furniture makers, who would provide items, and funeral directors who would organise the ceremony. This practice evolved, so that in time funeral directing became an established profession where coffins and such other items were built by the undertaker or bought in from a funeral furnishings manufacturer. The funeral director would then upholster (line) the inside of the coffin in a choice of fabric selected by the family.

Today the Upholders' Company continues to support its trades of upholstery, soft furnishings and funeral directors through pensions, prizes for excellence and bursaries. Through the Company's links with the Association of Master Upholsterers and Soft Furnishers and the Guild of Traditional Upholsterers it offers bursaries for students with limited financial means to enable them to train in the appropriate crafts, modern and traditional. Travel and subsistence bursaries are offered to anyone wishing to extend their knowledge and training, including in the conservation of furniture textiles. The Company also gives pensions for anyone with connections to the trades who may have fallen on hard times.

Past Master Wendy Shorter-Blake

The Usher Travel Bursary 2025

Congratulations to Helen Fry, a textile designer with a passion for hand weaving, awarded highly commended in the 2025 Usher Travel Bursary and sends us this report:-

I applied for the Ray Usher travel bursary from the Worshipful Company of Upholders to explore hemp as a fibre to inspire and use in my Weaving and Passementerie specialist designs, with the opportunity to demonstrate my weaving at the Festival of Upholstery.



With the award I have been able to attend both the Hemp Retreat at Wakelyns Farm, Suffolk 22-24th August 2025 and the Festival of Upholstery, Sandhurst, 9-10th October 2025.

The August Hemp Retreat at Wakelyns was a fantastic event to be a part of. At the retreat I had the unique opportunity to connect with the raw material and UK growers. I met UK growers of Hemp, Flax and Nettle, harvested the Hemp being grown at Wakelyns, deepened my knowledge of sustainable fibres, how they are processed, and learnt about the history of traditional Hemp weaving in Suffolk.

The weekend was hands on, immersive and rewarding. In particular I enjoyed and learned so much from the harvesting and being in the fields hand processing the plants. This was followed by learning the processes of turning the fibre into yarn by retting, heckling and scrutching the plant to then seeing how to spin the fibre.

I am currently sourcing commercially spun hemp yarns to use in my weaving. I want to experiment and promote hemp for its innate soft and lustrous qualities. The Bursary has enabled me to fully appreciate contemporary textiles and interiors and be inspired by them.

Being able to attend the Festival of Upholstery at Sandhurst this October proved invaluable as the second part of my journey because it allowed me



to showcase my hand weaver skills and promote Passementerie weaving.

The Heritage Crafts Association currently classes Passementerie weaving as an Endangered Craft with few UK practitioners. At the Festival of Upholstery I was able to promote this Heritage Craft to the upholstery sector and connect with individuals, upholstery companies and suppliers.

Helen Fry

22.10.2025

The Upholders' Magical Taxi!



“We thank you for your generous support of this year’s tour. On behalf of all the children, their helpers and drivers, we thank you for giving them a happy and most memorable weekend.”
The Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers.

I was delighted to represent the Worshipful Company of Upholders at the start of the Children's Magic Taxi tour to Disneyland Paris. Some 130 plus taxis and support vehicles took part taking some 300 plus children, family members, medical staff and support staff to cover all possibilities, to a fun filled weekend.

The day started at 5.30am for the big breakfast where some 500 attendees including organisers, sponsors and of course the children and families were treated to fun fuelled entertainment and plenty to eat.

By 7am our taxi driver Andy and his passengers, Mum Sarah and daughter Isabella were given a rousing send off by a military band and cheered off by all those who had the privilege to attend this wonderful event escorted by city of London police and the French Gendarmerie motor cyclists.

The Worshipful Company of Upholders are proud to sponsor this heart-warming event.

Past Master Malcolm Hopkins

The Red Cross Market, Guildhall

8th & 9th December 2025

The Red Cross Christmas Market was held at the Guildhall on the evening of the 8th December and all day on the 9th December. The Upholders ran a Bottle Tombola with over 180 bottles of wines, spirits and liquors kindly donated. The stall was organised and arranged by Past Masters Michael Gilham and Malcolm Hopkins along with a team helping to sell tickets and distribute prizes throughout the event.

It was extremely popular, as always, selling out of prizes before the end of the second day. A total of £2,800.00 was raised and our grateful thanks to all the volunteers who came in to run the tombola, and the very generous donations made by supporters. It was a hugely successful event and the Red Cross were grateful to receive this amount from the Upholders.



Cynthia Acors, Carline Deal and PM Jackie Williams at The Red Cross Market

Cynthia Acors

400th Anniversary of the Granting of our Royal Charter

Past master Christopher Hayman said to me last year that 2026 is going to be the most exciting year he can remember in all of his time as an Upholder. How right he was, we are celebrating the granting of our Royal Charter by Charles I in 1626.

This charter was granted very early in the reign of the King and gave us absolute powers over our trade in a seven mile radius from the City of London. We were one of the very few companies to receive a charter so early in his reign, the reason being the King, for all his faults, was quite artistic and enjoyed all the good things in life and this meant furnishings and the upholstery, and through our good work, our Company was rewarded with a royal charter.

In celebration of the granting of our charter the Company is producing The Circle of Life which is in the capable hands of Past Master, Julian Squire. It is a project which encompasses many different elements and brings together groups of people from all over the country, it is without doubt an amazing project which Julian has worked upon tirelessly over the past fifteen months. Magnum Opus, our Charles I charter, has unfortunately been lost and after three years of searching, the Court gave permission to produce a replica which is now underway and will be ready for unveiling at our 400th Anniversary Luncheon at Guildhall on 9 July 2026.

I do hope that the charter will be able to go on tour with The Circle of Life as they would certainly complement each other.

As archived records have to be searched to find relatives of people who believe that their ancestors were members of the Upholders' Company, it is always very interesting being an archivist. Sometimes these searches produce a good outcome. I know that The Circle of Life project has inspired our members to learn more of the history of the Company which they find very worthwhile. It would be very interesting to look into the future to the next 100 years to the 500th anniversary to see how Upholders will be celebrating. At least they will have Charles I's royal charter!

David Ayres
Honorary Archivist. FNAEA .FNEA COM .FRSA .

Uphold the good

Welcome to our New Liverymen

Patricia Alban

Having studied linguistics at university and then working in the media for several years, I made an exciting career change in 2002 into the world of upholstery! After 3 years of intense City & Guilds training, I became the grateful recipient of the AMUSF President's Award and Upholders' 1st prize in Traditional Upholstery, which gave me the confidence to apprentice with Bruce Upholstery in London. The following year, I established my own re-upholstery business.

I subsequently launched The Bespoke Footstool Company in 2016, where I still work as designer-maker delivering commissions to the high-end interiors market.

In 2020, my life turned upside down, when my son Sammy, aged just 13, died due to neglect by state agencies to support his disability needs. This led me to become a campaigner for social care including speaking on Woman's Hour, Radio 4 PM and BBC national news.

On December 5th 2024, I launched the charity, Sammy's Foundation, which provides career opportunities in heritage crafts for neuro-disabled young people. I gained liveryman status in September 2025 and aim to support our wonderful profession through the training work I do with this group.

Thank you to Manjeet Upple and Malcolm Hopkins for sponsoring me to become a member of the Worshipful Company of Upholders. I am honoured to join!



Hanging by a Thread!

Volunteers emerged surprisingly easily to take part in the Master's Charity abseil on Thursday 10 July. Only 300 feet down the exterior of the Lloyds of London Insurance building we told ourselves! Whether it was an interest in Richard Rogers' genuinely iconic building (aka the Inside Out Building) or a

dare devil approach to fund raising I didn't know but a team of eleven was soon assembled.

My thinking was that a team would rise more money than an individual and involve eleven different communities of friends, family and work colleges and that I would fundraise within our generous Livery. I chose to raise money for our own Bob Fowlds Bursary Fund. We use this fund to offer a subsidy to the course fees for the Upholstery training diploma run by the Association of Master Upholsterers and Soft Furnishers. Every year we award up to ten £1500 payments to applicants who can demonstrate genuine financial need who would otherwise struggle to continue their studies.

We also selected the charity Fine Cell Work who we have supported for many years. They teach embroidery skills to prisoners in over 30 prisons. This assists with their mental health, generates a sense of self-worth and reduces rates of reoffending following their release from prison.

The team which comprised Kirsty and Hawthorn Lockwood, Carline Deal, David Woodward, Natalie McCurry, Manjeet Upple, Richard Nevard, Marian Sinclair also included the Mayor of Reigate & Banstead's wife and a member of staff from Fine Cell Work.

Whilst positioned on the building's roof everyone was apprehensive but some were actually shaking with fear as they approached the edge of the roof! However, all overcame their fear and enjoyed the descent (at least when it was all over and we relaxed in the nearby Counting House – the former home of the Bank of England).

Collectively we raised around £20,000 including Gift Aid which is a terrific result.



Sarah Winyard and Carline Deal give the thumbs up!



Our intrepid Master risking life and limb!

Many congratulations to everyone who stepped up and over the edge to raise money for these two excellent causes and to those who gave so generously.

Roger Wates

**Master Upholder
2025-2026.**

The History Society

A Visit to Emery Walker's House

On Wednesday 17 September, a small group assembled on the banks of the River Thames at Hammersmith to visit Sir Emery Walker's House - renowned engraver, photographer and printer, and close friend to William Morris who lived a few hundred yards down the road at Kelmscott House. Walker was Morris's collaborator on the Kelmscott Press and one of the founders of the Doves Press. For the press, Emery oversaw the design of the beautiful Doves Type, based on a 15th century Venetian model, examples of which can be seen at the house.

7 Hammersmith Terrace was built in the mid-1760s and survives as decorated and

furnished for Walker, using wallpapers, textiles and furniture made by Morris's firm and other leading members of the Arts and Craft movement and can claim to be the most authentic Arts and Crafts home in Britain.

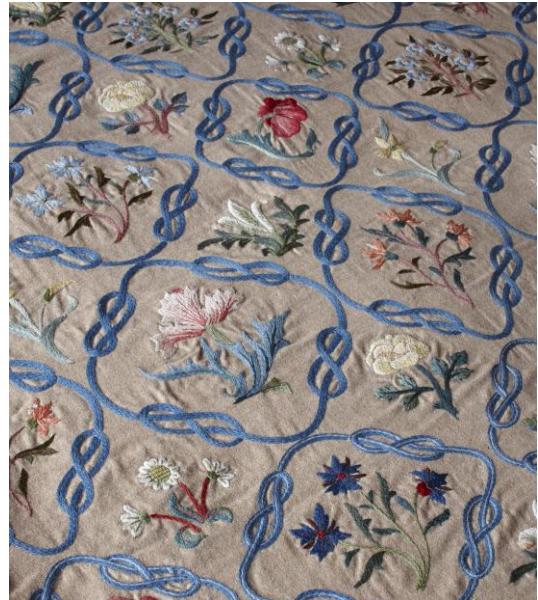
The house itself has three floors with a basement and attic and is just one room wide on its principal floors, all taking advantage of the riverside frontage at the



rear. The garden preserves its Victorian layout with its terracotta tiled paths backs directly onto the river and has a vine, wisteria, jasmine, lavender, and an abundance of roses together with a small conservatory a mid-19th century addition to the house.

Every room, from the tiny entrance hall, the dining room, the drawing room and the bedroom are a shrine to William Morris, decorated with original hand-blocked Morris wallpaper, curtain and upholstery fabrics and displays of photographs of the great man, some by Emery, arranged throughout. Much of the furniture was designed and belonged to Philip Webb, a leading architect of the time, who designed the Red House at Bexleyheath, Morris's first home after his marriage in 1859, and a friend of Emery's.

One of the great treasures of the house is the exquisite crewel-work woollen bedcover hand embroidered by William Morris's daughter, May Morris, for Emery's wife, Mary, at the end of her life when she was bedridden. This beautiful bedcover demonstrates May's masterful skill in both design and embroidery and was eventually used as a pall on Mrs Walker's coffin in 1920, on Emery's in 1933 and on their daughter Dorothy's in 1963.



This was truly a fascinating visit overflowing with the archive of three great influencers of the Arts & Crafts movement in Hammersmith – Emery Walker, William Morris and Philip Webb.

Rosemary Selfe, Clerk

Upholder Cufflinks & Lapel Pin



If you would like to purchase one of our beautiful lapel pins or a pair of cufflinks, both handmade in hallmarked sterling silver, inlaid with our sparrow in the highest quality fired vitreous enamel please contact the Clerk. The pins retail at £80 and the pair of cufflinks £120.



**The Worshipful Company of Upholders
Events Calendar 2026**

Tuesday 20 January

January Court Dinner
Girdlers' Hall

Monday 9 February

Flock & Feather Event & Auction
Furnituremakers' Hall

Wednesday 25 February

Annual Church Service & Dinner
St Michael's Cornhill &
Armourers' Hall

Friday 17 April

Installation of the new Master
Vintners' Hall

Thursday 9 July 2026

The Master, Wardens and Court of Assistants ask you to save the date of Thursday 9 July 2026 for Luncheon, Exhibition and Unveiling of the Circle of Life at Guildhall, to celebrate the 400th Anniversary of the Granting of our Royal Charter by King Charles I.

Follow progress being made on the Circle of Life Project by visiting one of the Cathedrals taking part (booking essential via The Clerk) or take a look on our Circle of Life page on the Upholders' website:

<https://upholders.co.uk/circle-of-life/>

With grateful thanks to all who contributed to this issue.

Photo credits this issue:-

HMS Vigilant, Wendy Shorter-Blake, WCO Hackney Carriage Drivers, Michael Gilham, Rosemary Selfe, Niki Gorik.

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