

Austin Friar

2023



The Furniture Makers' Company
the furnishing industry's charity

**OUR ROLE IS
TO SUSTAIN A
THRIVING BRITISH
FURNISHING
INDUSTRY WITH
A TALENTED
WORKFORCE
DELIVERING HIGH-
QUALITY PRODUCTS,
WHICH SUPPORTS
THOSE IN NEED
FROM WITHIN ITS
RANKS AND THOSE
WHO HAVE SERVED
IT IN THE PAST**



The Furniture Makers' Company
the furnishing industry's charity

The Furniture Makers' Company is the City of London livery company and charity for the furnishing industry. We are a modern livery company whose membership comprises individuals and businesses that make up the diverse, vibrant and creative UK furnishing industry.

As an organisation, we are a force for good, and our members are the fuel that fire the engine and help us foster the trade by nurturing skills and expertise, inspiring excellence and supporting the welfare of furnishing industry people.

Welcome to our yearbook, which reflects on our numerous achievements from the past livery year. After two years of unpredictability brought about by the pandemic, we were pleased to return to normality in 2022-2023. Our programme of educational activity recommenced; we continued to recognise excellence in British design and manufacturing through our Guild Marks; and we bolstered our occupational welfare support provision at a time when the rising cost of living is affecting everyone.

2023 marks two very significant milestones for our organisation – the 120th anniversary of our charity and 60 years since we received livery status. While these anniversaries serve as a great opportunity for celebrating what we've achieved to date, our attention lies on the years ahead and the continued positive impact we want to have on the UK furnishing industry.

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The Furniture Makers' Company is the City of London livery company and charity for the furnishing industry

We are here for you and your industry





The Master

Tony Attard OBE DL, Master of The Furniture Makers' Company

Stanley Wharton was the first Master of the Furniture Makers in 1951 and he was Master until 1954. I was proudly installed as the 60th Master in May 2022.

I came into our industry by accident. As a young man, I wanted to combine business with art and design and initially set out to be a fashion designer. My career path diverged, though, while I was at university studying Design Management. Sadly, I saw first-hand the infamous fire in the Woolworths store in Piccadilly Gardens, Manchester, which resulted in the deaths of 10 people. I knew then that the deaths could have been avoided if the fabrics used on the furniture had been flame-retardant. Since then, Panaz, the company I founded, has produced enough flame-retardant fabric to wrap around the world many times, not only providing jobs for many people but saving lives from fires like the one in Manchester.

The paths we have all taken into this wonderful industry differ. However, there should be more guidance for young people to realise their own career path and not rely on luck as I did. I believe that The Furniture Makers' Company should play a pivotal role in influencing and stewarding the next generation of young people. I know that my colleagues share the same views and encourage young people as much as possible, but that altruistic spirit needs structure to implement the help required. This is why the new education strategy that the Company has been developing in the past year is of such significance for the future. The investment being made will make a substantial difference to the number of young people who will be supported to learn about the career opportunities available to them.

At the beginning of my tenure, I produced a 100-day plan for what I hoped to achieve. Although it may have taken slightly longer to get things done, I am pleased with what has been accomplished. I hope that I have achieved things in a professional spirit but with humour as well, because friendship and community is such a fundamental part of the livery.

I have countless memories from my year, far too many to list, but I would like to highlight significant aspects. Our new military affiliation with XXV (Fighter) Squadron at RAF Valley will be a long and fruitful relationship, I am sure. The clerk and I had a most memorable trip to North Wales and received an exceptional welcome. Sitting in a fast jet was worth the journey on its own.

I am also pleased with the new cohort of members who have joined us this year, many of whom I am sure will go on to be Master in the years to come. Membership is essential for an energetic and resourceful livery and it's great that the new members recognise the important role that the livery plays in encouraging a thriving industry.

Our regions go from strength to strength and the importance of their job in engaging with our industry on a national scale cannot be underestimated. It is the only way that we will successfully implement our new strategic plan and make the most impact. Impact is certainly needed to ensure our industry remains sustainable in the years to come. The Routes to Greater Sustainability Industry Day, organised by our new Climate Change and Sustainability Committee, was a great success and indicated the level of commitment being undertaken by the industry to ensure a sustainable future.

Finally, our people are our most important asset. I am indebted to my wardens, fellow Court members and our committee members, all of whom have given their time and energies to the Company. I am particularly indebted to the Company's office team who have proved an invaluable source of support. Their dedication ensures that The Furniture Makers' Company continues to flourish, root and branch.

Thank you for allowing me to be your Master this year, and I wish Amanda great successes in her forthcoming year.



The Master-Elect

Amanda Waring, Master-Elect of The Furniture Makers' Company

My family has been in the furniture trade since the early 19th century when my mother's grandfather established a company called Gimson and Slater. I am told I was often in our Nottingham wood mill after school, and later, I followed my mother's footsteps into design. Once qualified, I worked for large and small upholstery and contract furniture companies in full-time employment and in a freelance capacity.

I am passionate about British design and manufacturing and during my year as Master I will be supporting and promoting the Furniture Makers' Marks of excellence in Design, Bespoke and Manufacturing, while encouraging new and emerging talent into our industry through the livery's exciting educational and training plan.

We are all aware membership and regional support are the lifeblood of our organisation, and I will ensure that we nurture and support all our existing members, encouraging more inclusivity in our social and fundraising events. The regional committees are taking shape and developing, and as we build on this, I will encourage all areas of our industry to be more involved and aware of what the Furniture Makers can offer both individuals and companies in our regions.

Difficult and challenging times continue within our industry, and I will do all in my power to promote our charity's welfare support, including highlighting our crisis text service. Fundraising is key to ensuring we can provide this support, so I encourage you all to join us at one or more of our events where possible.

History and traditions are an important part of the Furniture Makers and in 2023 we will be celebrating 60 years as a livery company and marking it with a special campaign, 60 for 60. While looking back over our achievements these last 60 years, we will also look forward and will be selecting 60 young people to showcase as emerging talent within our furniture and furnishing industry.

I became a liveryman in 1990 when my father was installed as Master and it is a great privilege to follow in the footsteps of all the Past Masters, some of whom I knew while I was growing up and others who I have come to know over my last 17 years serving on the Court. Our modern livery company has a beautiful hall in Austin Friars where we come together to celebrate our diverse, vibrant and creative industry. I ask you all to join in as many events as you can, both in the hall and regionally, and make the most of all the opportunities the Furniture Makers offers.

Amanda Waring

No one knows when crisis is going to strike and you're going to need help. For 120 years, our charity has been looking out for the welfare of the people who make up the workforce of the UK furnishing industry.

Through our benevolent fund, we're able to offer quick financial support to anyone who works or has ever worked in the trade in the form of one-off or short-term grants. You could be a designer, maker, retailer, sales rep, delivery driver, office support – it doesn't matter. Whatever your role, whatever your story, we're here to help you through your crisis without judgement.

With the uncertainty of the pandemic thankfully behind us, 2022 saw the emergence of a fresh challenge in the cost of living crisis. With inflation and energy prices putting many families under immense financial pressure, we want to send a very clear, simple message to anyone who is feeling the pinch – we are here for you.



Welfare

ABOVE Michael was supported when he retrained as a furniture apprentice

Why Welfare Matters

Corporate liveryman Emma Welch is group HR director at Ocee International

At Ocee, promoting and supporting employee wellbeing is at the heart of our 'Passion for People' value which champions better working lives and is central to our success in attracting, developing and maintaining a highly motivated and diverse workforce. We have various initiatives in place to support the welfare of our employees, ranging from providing fresh fruit and beverages, a cycle to work scheme, organising social activities, workplace flexibility and breakout areas, training mental health first aiders, conducting employee engagement surveys, recognition through our monthly star awards and continually supporting people with their development. One of the key HR priorities since I joined the business has been to continually broaden our wellbeing programme to focus on mental, physical and financial wellbeing.

I first became aware of The Furniture Makers' Company in 2019 when Ocee signed up to support the charity's Step 2 It campaign, which encouraged the industry to organise sports-based fundraisers in aid of the charity. We collectively completed a virtual 1,147km walk which spanned the distance between our three sites – Race Furniture in Gloucestershire, Ocee Design in Northampton and Four Design in Denmark. The event aligned with both the physical and financial pillars of our wellbeing strategy.



Emma Welch, group HR director at Ocee International



WE ARE EXCITED TO CONTINUE OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH THE FURNITURE MAKERS' COMPANY – I PERSONALLY AIM TO ENSURE OUR FOCUS ON WELLBEING HAS AN IMPACT ON TRUST, HAPPINESS, ENGAGEMENT AND INCREASED MORALE IN THE WORKPLACE

It was then in 2020, when the pandemic started affecting people's working patterns, that I saw just how invaluable the charity's financial grants were. The Furniture Makers supported many of our employees during that time. Since then, I have been supporting the charity to communicate the welfare grants by volunteering as a welfare ambassador for the Company's East of England region. I am focussed on identifying and generating local welfare grant applications within the region and raising awareness.

I also attended the charity's Welfare Matters conference in September 2022 – a special event for HR professionals in the industry to come together to learn more about the grants and the launch of the new crisis text service. Off the back of this event, I believe that the HR community can meet on a frequent basis to enhance the work that the charity does to support the welfare of people.

I am very passionate about the work that the charity does, partly because I have seen the difference that it makes. In 2022, everyone at Ocee had to come to terms with the devastating news that our much-loved colleague, Tim Bloyce, had been diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease (MND). We wanted to do as much as we could to support Tim and his family and worked closely with The Furniture Makers' Company to get significant financial support to purchase a much-needed, life-changing, specially adapted wheelchair for him. However, we also wanted to show

Tim how much we all thought of him, and we decided to do so by highlighting one of Tim's great passions, football. For a decade prior to our involvement, The Furniture Makers' Company had organised an annual five-a-side football tournament which we were delighted to sponsor and rename the 'Tim Bloyce Cup' in his honour. It was a fantastic day, and having Tim at the event made it very special.

We are excited to continue our partnership with The Furniture Makers' Company to help drive the increase in the level of amazing support provided, increasing the number of grant applications per year, using the regional ambassadors to promote the good work and to create specific welfare initiatives giving financial guidance and support for people within the industry. I personally aim to ensure our focus on wellbeing has an impact on trust, happiness, engagement and increased morale in the workplace. ●

oceedesign.com



Ocee Design at the Tim Bloyce Cup five-a-side football tournament

Supporting people through difficult times

Welfare

As the charity for the furnishing industry, we have been supporting the welfare of people working in the trade since 1903. Every day people have to cope with financial hardship due to the impact of bereavement, relationship or family breakdown, illness, reduced work hours, an unexpected loss of income or redundancy, but they don't have to deal with this alone. We help furnishing industry people who are dealing with financial hardship by providing grants and practical, useful advice. Here are a few examples of the individuals and families we are proud to have supported



Therese's story

Case study

Therese came to the UK from Australia in 2008 and trained as an upholsterer in London. Since then, she has worked as a sole trader, and over the past three years, she has worked as part of Sit Collective, a female-led upholstery studio based in London.

On a daily basis, she collaborates with fellow designers and upholsterers to create items such as soft furnishings and bespoke, commissioned pieces.

Despite being a resident of the UK, who works and pays taxes, Therese was unable to claim state welfare benefits when some unforeseen life events impacted her income.

Fortunately, Therese found out about our welfare grants and applied for one. A grant was awarded within a few days to help Therese for a few months.

Therese said: "Asking for help can be embarrassing and difficult but the lovely people at The Furniture Makers' Company made it easy. After a sudden and unexpected life event and living far from family support, the grant they provided gave me the breathing room I needed to get through a few difficult months and back on track. I am hugely appreciative of their approachable help and support."

ABOVE Therese

Olivia's story

Case study

When Olivia's partner sadly suffered a stroke, the couple's normal life quickly came crashing down around them.

Olivia, who works for a large furniture retailer, continued to work after her partner's stroke, but also took on the role of being his carer.

The difficult situation was compounded further as Olivia's partner could not access sickness benefits because he was self-employed. With no sickness insurance to cover the shortfall, the couple were missing a large part of their usual household income, and it wasn't long before they were struggling to manage.

Feeling the pressure mounting, Olivia shared their desperate situation with her employer, and they – aware of the financial grants we offer people in the trade – referred her to us.

On listening to Olivia's situation, we awarded a crisis support grant funded by the Perring Legacy, which consisted of an initial payment followed by six weekly payments to help the couple through this period of uncertainty, allowing Olivia's partner to focus on recuperating.

Olivia said: "When we saw no other way forward, The Furniture Makers' Company was there to help us and take away the worry about my partner having to return to work before he was fully recovered. I can't express our thanks enough."

Jo Goga, welfare officer, said: "Olivia's situation is an example of how life can quickly be disrupted when something unforeseen happens. On hearing her situation, Olivia's employer recommended she contact us, knowing that we would be able to hopefully help her through it. We encourage more businesses to be like Olivia's employer and not to hesitate in advising their employees to seek advice from us. We wish Olivia's partner a full recovery and return to normal working hours very soon."

Barbara's story

Case study

For people living hand-to-mouth, an unexpected exceptional expense can completely derail their finances, which is what Barbara experienced when her boiler broke down.

Now retired, Barbara had worked as a sewing machinist and upholsterer for 45 years while raising two children single-handedly. Despite having paid off her mortgage, she struggled to get by solely on her state pension. While working, she had never had any spare income to put into a workplace pension and the advice she received at the time was that she shouldn't bother.

When Barbara's boiler broke down for the final time, she was left wondering how she'd afford to get a new one installed. After a visit to the local Citizens Advice, Barbara was signposted to Metropolitan Valley Housing, and their housing support worker referred her to us for a grant.

A grant was agreed within three days to cover the cost of a local company to remove the old boiler, fit a new boiler and replace some of the old radiators. Barbara was grateful for the grant, which means she can now enjoy hot water and reliable heating in her home for many years to come.

Barbara said: "Over the years, I have worked at some marvellous upholstery companies and have enjoyed being in the trade. I am absolutely thrilled that The Furniture Makers' Company has been able to help me in this way. They may say that it is a 'thank you' for the years served, but I am the one who is extremely grateful for their kind, charitable support."

Steve's story

Case study

Steve – a 30-year veteran of the furnishing industry – has battled with serious health problems for many years now.

We first became aware of his situation in 2018 when he was made redundant from his job at a furniture retailer. It wasn't long after this that Steve was admitted to hospital to receive treatment.

Unable to work, Steve approached us for financial assistance to get him through the difficult situation, which we were happy to do.

Sadly, Steve's health continued to decline, and his mobility severely deteriorated to the point where he would be unable to work indefinitely and would have to rely on welfare benefits.

Steve applied for Personal Independence Payments and sheltered accommodation from his local authority, but after five months, he was still waiting for his application to be processed by the Department for Work and Pensions.

Steve turned again to The Furniture Makers' Company to see if we'd be able to support him. We swiftly processed his application and offered a one-off grant to assist him while he awaited the outcome. Steve is now happily living in affordable, accessible sheltered accommodation. He is very thankful for the help we provided him.

Steve said: "When I lost my job in furniture retail through ill health a few years ago, the charity helped me with a grant when I most needed it. The care and compassion has continued and the charity once again has helped me through another difficult situation. After spending 30 plus years in the trade, it is good to know that there is someone who has your back in times of need. Thank you." ●



Crisis Text Service

Offering comfort in a crisis

In 2022, on World Mental Health Day, we announced a new ongoing partnership with Shout with the aim of supporting anyone working in the UK furnishing industry who is struggling to cope.

Powered by charity Mental Health Innovations, Shout is the UK's first and only free, confidential, 24/7 text messaging support service that can help with issues such as anxiety, bullying, depression, loneliness or isolation, money worries, relationship problems, self-harm, stress and suicide.

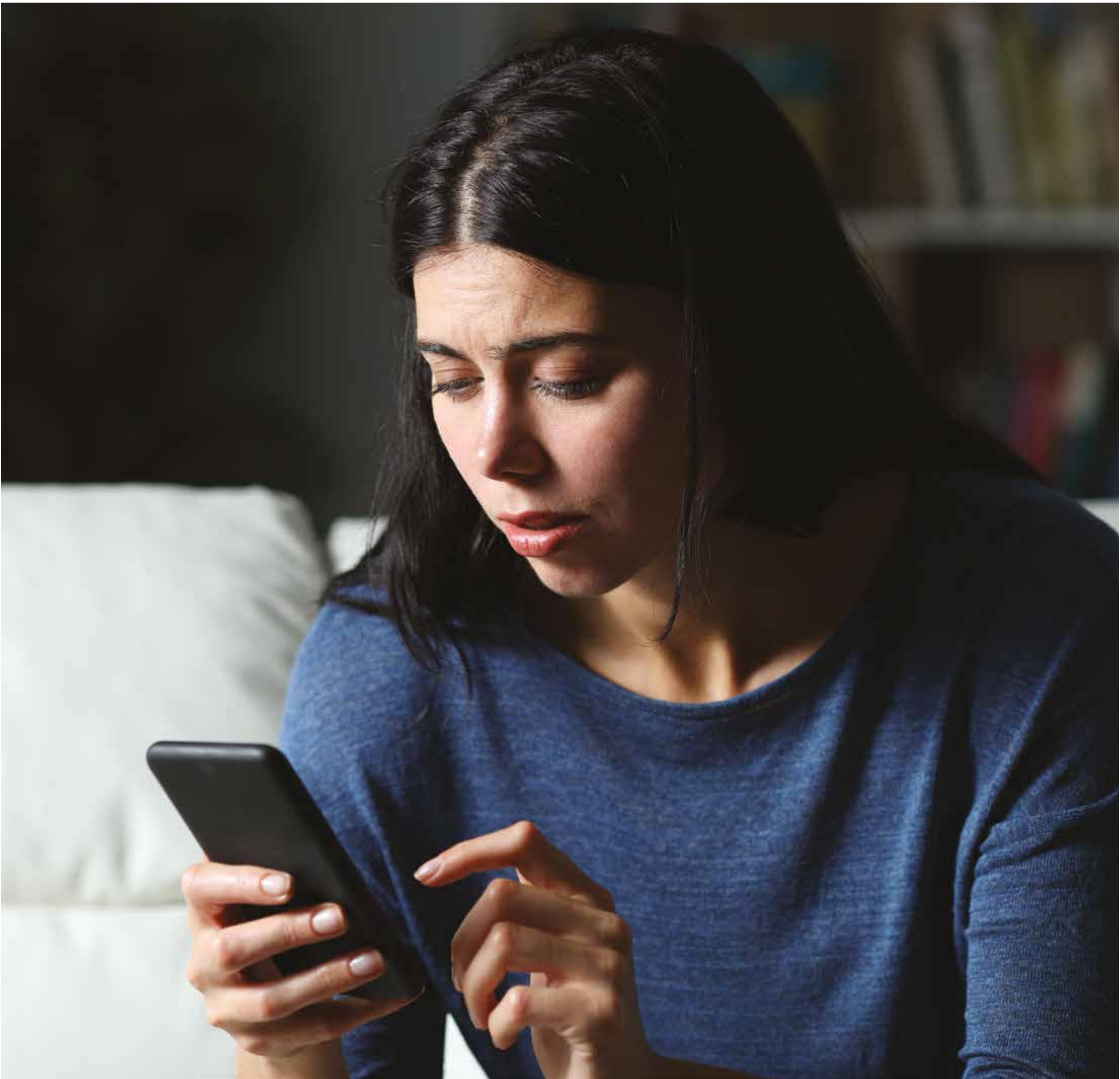
Anyone in distress who wishes to start a conversation with a trained volunteer simply needs to text the word 'COMFORT' to 85258.

Jonny Westbrooke, CEO of The Furniture Makers' Company, said: "We're proud to partner with Mental Health Innovations to offer free and confidential support round the clock to anyone who needs to talk. We hope our new text support service will provide comfort to those working in our trade who need someone to talk to."

Victoria Hornby OBE, CEO of Mental Health Innovations, said: "We are pleased to be working with The Furniture Makers' Company to raise crucial awareness of mental health and let anyone working in the UK furnishing industry know that free, confidential help is available to them 24/7 through Shout. Our partnership will help more people who are struggling to cope get the support they need, when they need it."

Any company wishing to promote the service to staff is encouraged to enquire about a free pack of promotional materials. ● furnituremakers.org.uk/crisis-text-service
Text 'COMFORT' to 85258

POWERED
BY CHARITY
MENTAL HEALTH
INNOVATIONS, SHOUT
IS THE UK'S FIRST
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CONFIDENTIAL, 24/7
TEXT MESSAGING
SUPPORT SERVICE
THAT CAN HELP WITH
ISSUES SUCH AS
ANXIETY, BULLYING,
DEPRESSION,
LONELINESS
OR ISOLATION,
MONEY WORRIES,
RELATIONSHIP
PROBLEMS, SELF-
HARM, STRESS
AND SUICIDE



One of the principal functions of guilds and livery companies in medieval times was to regulate competition in the City of London and ensure high standards in professions were maintained.

Today, we pay homage to this fine tradition of upholding excellence through our three Guild Marks – the Bespoke Guild Mark, Design Guild Mark and Manufacturing Guild Mark.

Presided over by independent experts and arbiters, our Guild Marks honour and decorate the very best designers and manufacturers in the UK, giving them invaluable marketing tools to promote themselves in Great Britain and to the rest of the world. British design and manufacturing are second to none, and we are committed to helping our industry publicise it on the world stage.

The following pages recognise the individuals and companies that have won or maintained these coveted awards in the past livery year.



Excellence

ABOVE Hotaru by Edward Barber and Jay Osgerby for Ozeki Lantern Company

Why Excellence Matters

Magnus Long, a Design Guild Mark holder who now sits on the committee, writes about excellence in design and why it matters

Growing up, I was heavily influenced by my father's drawing ability and technical expertise. He worked as an engineer, then as a graphic illustrator and has always been a keen sailor. He could, and still can, look at a boat from the outside and draw the internal hull construction as if he were wearing X-ray glasses. It's a very impressive skill, and from a young age, aside from his coaching, I had unfettered access to his metal and woodworking tools which I would use to build inventions in all scales. It was play.

My mother, a city worker, then mother, then teacher of law, was always open-minded to different viewpoints and perspectives and taught me not to assume anything without first having explored other possibilities. I now see that as a hugely creative influence, and in my design work, I have to explore many avenues of thought before committing to any idea or concept. Perhaps the combination of this open mindset and love for all things technical brought me to design; constantly zooming out and then in, bringing together components and ideas from different places to create a new composition. I was always drawn to design but didn't recognise it as the privilege that it was to have such space, time, and tools, as well as the philosophical dinner-table debates.

When I decided to set up my own furniture and lighting design studio in 2012, it took a while to draw out the central core beliefs of my own design work: positive, understandable and relevant design that emotionally connects with people through beautiful craft and engineering. These are the values that I carry in my work today, but to summarise it further, I often find myself focusing on the 'elegant solution'. It's a notion that exists in various other disciplines, including mathematics and science. It is the beautiful and singular design response to the many complexities of a project. It's agonising, exhausting and joyful to find.

'Excellence in design' is, of course, like the notion of beauty, subjective, but for me, it is the elegant solution. It's the simple outcome from the tangled lines and connections that



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT
The Cross Leg Chair, a Design Guild Mark and inaugural Jonathan Hindle Prize winner; Bloom tables by Magnus Long; Magnus Long

THE UK IS A POWERHOUSE OF DIVERSE, PROGRESSIVE, AND OPEN THINKING, AND IT'S PROMISING TO SEE DESIGN-LED PRODUCTION GROWING ALONGSIDE MORE ESTABLISHED MANUFACTURERS

are unravelled into a refined singularity. We might never be able to replicate the perfection and elegance of $E = mc^2$ but, lofty as it might sound, it can be a design ambition. It's important to face the challenges, and each year, the Design Guild Mark rewards such excellence with a 'Mark' of recognition.

What makes the Design Guild Mark stand out is, simply, its integrity. None of the judges of the Design Guild Mark are paid, and there is no profit or profiteering. It's purely about excellence in design, decided by a panel of judges that are all respected industry experts. Candidates present their



work in person, so to win a Design Guild Mark is not just recognition for the physical outcome, but also excellence of thinking and decision-making of the designer and the brands they work with.

The UK is a powerhouse of diverse, progressive and open thinking, and it's promising to see design-led production growing alongside more established manufacturers, which are also upping their game in a sign of healthy production. Great examples of UK furniture producers opening or growing their factories in the UK are Sebastian Cox, Modus, Mark Product, Benchmark and Very Good & Proper with Isokon. Many of these producers also have dedicated design leads within them. As any designer will tell you, the potential for design excellence is amplified by proximity, openness and accessibility to the makers, producers, engineers and craftspeople.

There's lots to suggest that this is a 'movement' of more localised manufacture, and new production technologies mean that redesigning the systems isn't just an opportunity for the future; it is already happening. The navigation of these shifting sands might initially seem more complex than before, but the power of design is to manage the challenges using design to find elegant solutions. Pleasingly, there are many opportunities for excellence in design ahead. ●

magnuslong.com

Bespoke Guild Mark

Recognising outstanding British craftsmanship

The Bespoke Guild Mark recognises excellence in design, materials, craftsmanship and function for pieces of furniture made as single items or a limited run of up to 12. In 2022-2023 six exceptional pieces met the stringent criteria to be awarded the Mark. In exciting news, as of 2023, the Bespoke Guild Mark is introducing a Fitted Furniture category recognising installations of bespoke fitted furniture.

bespokeguildmark.org.uk
@bespokeguildmark

- BGM 479**
Inlaid Revolving Bookcase by Hugo Egleston
- BGM 480**
Nahas by Anna Dugard
- BGM 481**
Mille-feuille by Ian Milnes
- BGM 482**
The Infinity Rocker by Ross Sharples
- BGM 483**
Jubilee Oak Table by Mauro Dell'Orco
- BGM 484**
Living Water by Victoria Walpole





Profile Anna Dugard

The idea of being able to upload a design and printing a three-dimensional copy of it was once confined to the pages of science fiction novels. However, the advent of 3D printing technology is rapidly revolutionising how we manufacture all manner of goods. From prosthetic limbs and buildings to musical instruments and even food. 3D printing is a genuine disruptor, with only our own imagination limiting the possibilities of what can be achieved.

While there have been some early adopters of additive manufacturing – the process of creating an object by building it one layer at a time – it is still very much a technology yet to reach the peak of its potential for furniture.

One designer who has been exploring what's conceivable with the technology is Anna Dugard, whose striking Nahas console table was designed using Computer Aided Design (CAD) and printed layer by layer from 0.8mm beads of biodegradable polylactide.

The design of Nahas was inspired by the growth of natural forms – the fluted legs echo flower stems and the textured trumpets resemble long-necked flowers.

Discussing the design, Anna says: "Nahas was designed to push the boundaries of available processes and materials. My design work is heavily inspired and influenced by materials and processes. I love experimenting with different materials and trying to use them in new and creative ways. I also enjoy exploring different production processes and utilising available technology, such as 3D printing and laser cutting. Nahas utilises the rapidly developing process of additive manufacturing and its importance as a future production technique. It offers the ability to create complex organic forms with very efficient use of material."

Impressively, Anna designed and made Nahas while studying at the Robinson House Studio – the school of celebrated furniture designer Marc Fish – which she graduated from in 2020.

The table legs were printed in 10 components – two components per leg – with interlocking fittings, allowing easy assembly, and cavities for stainless steel reinforcement rods for stability. The structure was then coated with a liquid brass finish which will age over time, adding character. The finish also provides the piece with its name, Nahas, meaning brass in Arabic.

"It is possible to print the table as a single component, but as a student making my first piece, the cost was prohibitive. Using smaller printers and splitting the design into multiple components made 3D printing the project viable," says Anna.

"Designing Nahas in CAD enabled more delicate sections of the model to be stress tested. Stainless steel rods were used to reinforce the legs and lower the centre of gravity of the piece. The glass tabletop allows the piece to function with a usable surface but also enhances the design, echoing the table legs."

Anna spent around 500 hours across 15 weeks designing, prototyping and manufacturing Nahas. The most time-consuming part of the project, she says, was cutting back and polishing the brass resin finish by hand.

"The brass finish is essentially a paint packed with metal particles of copper and zinc. It is applied to the surface, allowed to cure and then cut back and polished. The paint is applied to the legs using a spray gun. Working with such an innovative product on the complex form presented challenges. To achieve a consistent finish, the table needed to be sprayed in one session. Too little paint, and there is not enough material to cut back and polish. Too much, and it will run because of the weight of the brass. The first spray of the table did not go to plan, so I decided to sand the paint back to the primer and try again – a costly decision in terms of time and material, but a necessary one. The subsequent spray was much better, allowing the brass paint to be polished to a consistent high-shine finish."

Nahas was an ambitious first project, but Anna's determination to push boundaries certainly paid off, and her achievement was recognised in 2022 as the table was awarded a Bespoke Guild Mark.

The Bespoke Guild Mark recognises excellence in design, materials, craftsmanship and function for pieces of furniture made as single items or a limited run of up to 12. It is awarded to beautifully crafted pieces of bespoke furniture and has been the apex of distinctions for UK designer-makers since its launch in 1958.

WINNING A BESPOKE GUILD MARK WAS AN INCREDIBLE HONOUR FOR ME – I WAS GRATEFUL TO BE RECOGNISED BY SUCH A PRESTIGIOUS ORGANISATION AND IT PROVIDED ME WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO GAIN INVALUABLE EXPERTISE FROM INDUSTRY LEADERS

Commenting on Anna's piece, Daniel Hopwood, Bespoke Guild Mark chairman, said: "Nahas's use of modern technology such as 3D printing in conjunction with traditional furniture craftsmanship to create a piece of great beauty is a fine example of where the Bespoke Guild Mark is headed."

"Winning a Bespoke Guild Mark was an incredible honour for me," says Anna. "I was grateful to be recognised by such a prestigious organisation and it provided me with the opportunity to gain invaluable expertise from industry leaders. The award has further motivated me to continue striving for excellence in my craft."

"The use of 3D printing for furniture pieces is still relatively unexplored, it's something I would love to continue exploring with recycled material in the future." ●

📷 @AnnaDugard



Design Guild Mark

An award for excellence in British industrial design

The Design Guild Mark was established in 2008 and is intended to raise the profile of British industrial design and to recognise excellence in this discipline.

The Design Guild Mark is unique in that the programme is not a competition with a ranking of entries and a winner. The award is given to all designs that demonstrate to the jury that they represent the highest standards of originality and innovation in industrial design.

In 2022, 23 outstanding submissions were awarded the coveted Mark – 14 in the Furniture category, four in the Interior Design Elements category and five in the Lighting Design category.

FourFold, Swell and Hotaru were named the best designs in their respective categories and awarded the Jonathan Hindle Prize for outstanding design. ●

designguildmark.org.uk

@designguildmark

Furniture

DGM 261

Your Move designed by Jon Christie for Flip the Script Furniture

DGM 262

Kaya designed by Morgan Studio for Morgan

DGM 263

Smalto Low Table designed by Edward Barber and Jay Osgerby for Knoll

DGM 264

FourFold designed by Barry Jenkins for Ocee International

DGM 265

Buddy designed by Chris Fowler for Bisley

DGM 266

Sepal designed by Mark Gabbertas for Gloster Furniture

DGM 267

Saranac designed by Mark Gabbertas for Gloster Furniture

DGM 268

Heritage designed by Dylan Freeth for Ercol

DGM 269

Eva designed by Phidias Leonida for Nurus

DGM 270

PORTS designed by Tom Lloyd and Luke Pearson for Bene

DGM 271

The Davenport Bureau designed by David Irwin for Another Country

DGM 272

Bowater Collection – Cable Shop Stool Kit designed by Jan Hendzel for Jan Hendzel Studio

DGM 273

The Somerset Four Poster designed by Garry Smith for The Cornish Bed Company

DGM 274

The Tetbury designed by Garry Smith for The Cornish Bed Company





Interior Design Elements

DGM 275
All Tomorrow's Futures
designed by Charlotte Raffo and Alexis Snell
for The Monkey Puzzle Tree

DGM 276
Quest designed by Jane Marks-Yewdall
for Camira

DGM 277
Swell designed by Jones & Partners
for The Collective Agency

DGM 278
Northward Bound Carpet Tiles
designed by the Milliken Design Team
for Milliken Industrials

Lighting Design

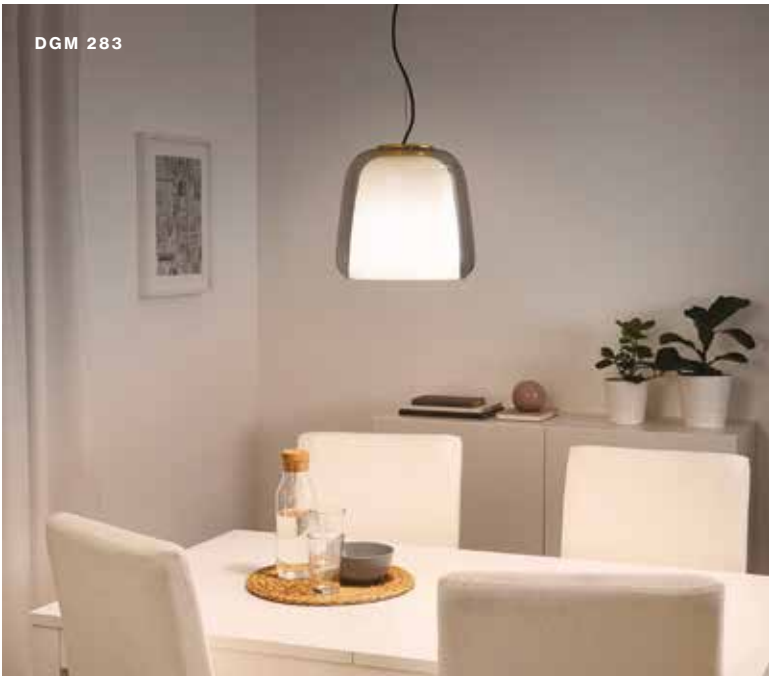
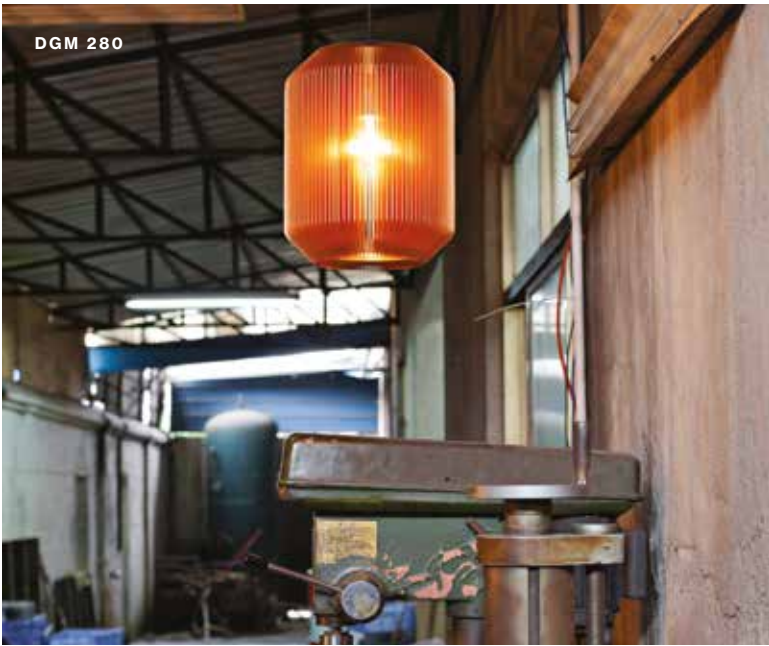
DGM 279
Hotaru designed by Edward Barber and Jay Osgerby
for Ozeki Lantern Company

DGM 280
Joseph collection designed by Michael Young
for EOQ

DGM 281
Melina designed by Yasuyuki Sakurai and Risa Sano
for Hand & Eye Studio

DGM 282
Full Stop designed by Derek Treadwell
for Innermost

DGM 283
Evedal designed by Aaron Probyn
for IKEA





Barry Jenkins with the Jonathan Hindle Prize trophy and Design Guild Mark certificate



Profile Broome Jenkins

The workplace is changing. Where once we had a rigid nine-to-five set in a traditional office building where you'd be stationed at an assigned desk, now we have flexibility in where we work and our hours, with the office set-up being more fluid. Versatile, agile and efficient workplace solutions are increasingly being sought to meet the demands of the evolving office.

One design consultancy that has made it their mission to address the changing needs of the workplace and workforce is Broome Jenkins. Set up in 2003, the West Sussex based design studio has 20 years of experience designing contract furniture for leading manufacturers around the world, including Acco, Bisley, Boss Design Group, Connection, Fellowes, Herman Miller, Hotbox Design, Kinnarps, Ocee International, Senator International and Vestre.

Led by founder Barry Jenkins, the team has a particular interest in how people use different environments and how to make different spaces function. The FourFold table solution for Four Design – an Ocee International company – is a fantastic example of the consultancy's aim to solve real technical problems and develop new products that are useful, efficient and commercial.



FourFold is a four-legged flip-top table that offers the user the ability to create multiple configurations depending on the occasion and room setting. When it's not in use, the tabletop can cleverly be flipped up, allowing it to be efficiently stowed. Furthermore, the position of the cross rail and the shape of the leg frames ensure the tabletop can be folded safely by one person. The design is further refined by an extruded rail with integrated hinges, which simplifies assembly and improves reliability.

Explaining the origination of FourFold, Barry says: "We have designed flip-up tables before using the generic 'T' leg principle which relies on a locking device to keep the tabletop horizontal when in use. We knew they were popular in educational establishments and knew there was a problem when people perch on the edge of a conventional flip-up table, as there is no support at the corners, thereby straining the mechanism.

"Discussing this problem with Ocee, we were taken by the need for a design that was simple and safe to use and compact when folded, with the added design challenge of providing a leg in each corner. We liked the challenge to solve this problem without compromising all other aspects of the table in a way that was practical, simple and viable."

While the final design is simple in appearance, Barry says that every aspect of FourFold is essential and was determined through a series of physical trials and hands-on experiments by the team. This resulted in a well-resolved design where the overall frame geometry, leg shape and extruded beam all contribute towards a product that is simple and safe to use and compact when stored.

He says: "Developing FourFold was both challenging and enjoyable. There are few opportunities in the design of contract furniture to genuinely innovate. However, the technical challenges of FourFold took priority and resulted in a very original response. It is a good example of three-dimensional problem solving, the aim being to develop a four-legged flip-up table. The response is unique and already popular in mainland Europe and Scandinavia."

In 2022, FourFold was one of 23 excellent submissions from three categories – Furniture, Interior Design Elements and Lighting Design – to be awarded our Design Guild Mark. We established the Design Guild Mark in 2008 with the intention of raising the profile of British industrial design and recognising excellence in this discipline. Each category has its own jury of renowned design experts who assess the submissions against a series of criteria.

Barry says: "Being recognised by The Furniture Makers' Company with a Design Guild Mark is an esteemed recognition of design quality by industry peers. Therefore, we are delighted that FourFold, as a more 'technical design', has received an award. We are also delighted for Ocee International and Four Design as the Mark rewards their commitment to the project."

In addition to being awarded a Design Guild Mark, FourFold was selected as the 2022 recipient of the prestigious Jonathan Hindle Prize in the Furniture category. The Jonathan Hindle Prize is awarded annually to the design the judges believe is the most outstanding piece in its category. All winners receive a stunning trophy, made from solid surface Corian®, and a £1,000 cash prize.

Commenting on receiving the award, Barry said: "I was genuinely surprised to win the Jonathan Hindle Prize and honoured to receive it. It means a lot to me as it recognises the unique response to a challenging brief, simply executed. It is a great honour." ●

broomejenkins.com
@broomejenkins



Julian Evans and Barry Jenkins
of Broome Jenkins



Manufacturing Guild Mark

Flying the flag for British manufacturing

The prestigious Manufacturing Guild Mark has been the mark of excellence distinguishing Britain's top furnishing manufacturers since 1993.

The Mark is awarded to British manufacturers that have demonstrated incredible standards across all areas of the business by successfully passing a rigorous, independently reviewed audit against a comprehensive set of criteria, including design, product development, manufacture, HR, financial stability, sustainability, and sales and marketing. ●

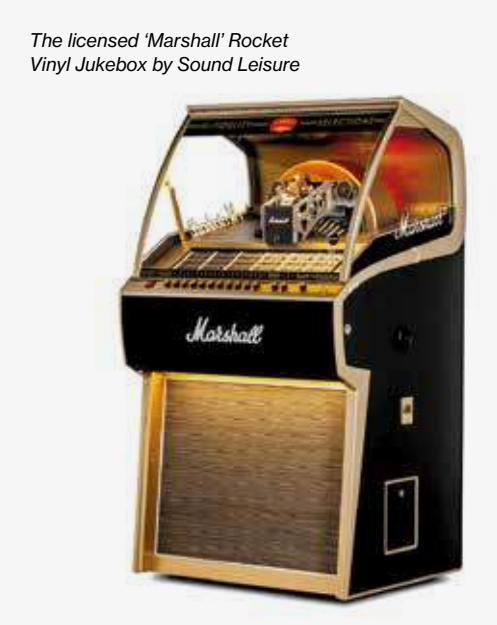
The current holders are:

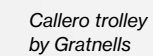
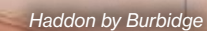
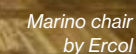
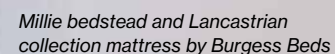
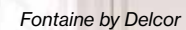
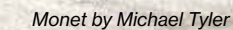
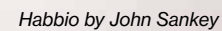
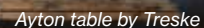
- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Artistic Upholstery | Jay-Be |
| Bisley | John Sankey |
| Burbidge & Son | Michael Tyler Furniture |
| Burgess Beds | Paneltech |
| The Cornish Bed Company | Parlour Farm |
| Delcor | Relyon |
| Ercol | Rivelin |
| Gratnells | Silentnight |
| Harrison Spinks | Sound Leisure |
| Herman Miller | Treske |
| Howdens | Wren Kitchens |

SPONSORS



MEDIA PARTNER







Rob Livingstone,
operations director



such, the company decided to exit all products which were slow and bulky to deliver.

In 2018, the company entered the rolled mattress market, launching its first range of environmentally friendly children's mattresses, which was followed by the launch of an eco-friendly adult mattress range in 2020.

Today Jay-Be celebrates its proven history of inventing products by expanding its offer into a comprehensive collection of folding beds, adult and children's mattresses, as well as premium sofa beds for domestic and contract markets.

There's no doubt that Jay-Be is proud of its history and being a UK manufacturer, primarily because of the trust and confidence it gives to customers. Wishing to promote and demonstrate its self-belief as an exemplar to the UK furnishing industry, in 2019 Jay-Be applied and was successfully awarded the Manufacturing Guild Mark.

Founded in 1993, the Manufacturing Guild Mark is awarded to British manufacturers that have demonstrated high standards across all areas of the business. To achieve the Mark, a business must first pass a rigorous, independently reviewed audit against a comprehensive set of criteria, including design, product development, manufacture, HR, financial stability, sustainability, and sales and marketing.

"To be awarded the Manufacturing Guild Mark is a great honour," says Rob Livingstone, Jay-Be's operations director. "Not only does it represent the recognition of excellence and high standards throughout our business, but it also recognises the hard work and dedication of our employees. To have an accreditation that is developed and awarded by some of the most well-respected members of our industry is something we are very proud of."

One of the ambitions of the Manufacturing Guild Mark is to provide assurance to retailers, specifiers, distributors and customers that the furnishings they purchase are manufactured with care and that the company they are doing business with strives for excellence in everything it does.

Staying relevant in an ever-changing and uncertain world is fundamental. For some businesses, this kind of agility may be alien, but for Yorkshire based manufacturer Jay-Be it is part of the company's DNA.

Jay-Be's manufacturing roots can be traced back more than 130 years. The original business began life when John Richard Burrows, the great-great grandfather of current CEO Roger Durrans, started trading with merchants in wool and textiles. Evolving the business in the early 1900s, the family harnessed new skills and entered the bed and mattress market.

Fast forward to the 1960s, and the company established a new division to manufacture upholstered products. Jay-Be diversified again in the 1980s with metal bed frame manufacturing, which saw the launch of the official Jay-Be brand, focusing primarily on folding beds, sofa beds and metal bed frames.

Around the turn of the millennium, the company recognised that the way consumers were shopping was changing, the internet was accelerating, retailers and consumers were demanding faster delivery, and the competition was fiercer than ever before. As

Profile Jay-Be

Rob explains: “As a business, we understand that great value, quality and world class service is important to everyone. Being a Manufacturing Guild Mark holder confirms to both our retailers and the consumer that we not only manufacture products of the highest standard and quality, but that our business and business processes are of exemplary standards.

“Being a Manufacturing Guild Mark holder is very important to us, our company is expanding into new markets and experiencing a rapid rate of growth, so it’s crucial that our established business processes and excellent standards are not only maintained but immediately recognised within the industry.”

Sustainability is already a criterion that the Manufacturing Guild Mark audit incorporates. Against a backdrop of growing demands from people expecting businesses to be morally responsible for how they produce goods and minimise their carbon emissions, it’s pleasing to see that some companies, like Jay-Be, are demonstrating continuous improvement throughout their business.

Rob explains: “One of our important commitments as a leader in our field is to design and make sleep-smart, environmentally conscious products which reduce and minimise our carbon footprint. We consider the full life cycle of our products at every step of development, from design to production planning, logistics and even supply chain management.

“Working with the UK SME Climate Commitment towards Net Zero, we’re doing our bit to cut carbon emissions and protect the planet, setting science-based targets to achieve our reductions. We are committed to cutting carbon emissions in half by 2030 and reaching ‘net zero’ by 2050, meaning that we’ll be putting no more carbon into the atmosphere than what we are taking out of it. We’re already able to report zero carbon emissions for our purchased electricity from SmartestEnergy’s Renewable Natural product, providing certified 100% renewable electricity from a blend of 100% sustainable sources of wind, solar and water.



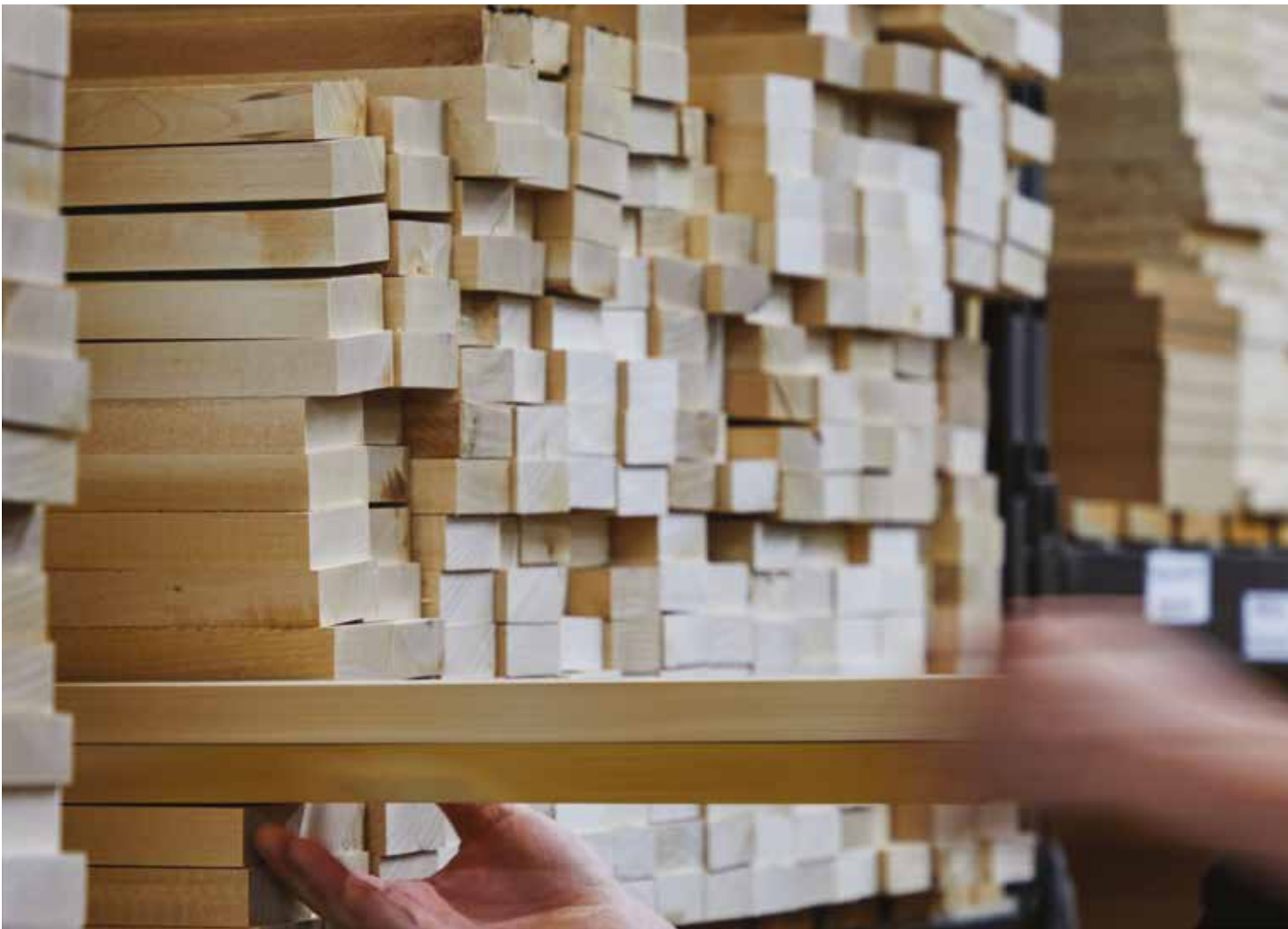
“We are committed to the future of our planet, and we will keep taking steps to ensure we remain one of the industry’s most responsible manufacturers.”

Amid the positive steps being made by the company, the economic environment Jay-Be and other businesses are operating in remains challenging. However, Rob remains buoyant about the steps Jay-Be is taking to navigate the waters.

“Like within all industries, there are mounting pressures with operational costs and raw material prices continuing to rise. There are strains across the supply chain, with port closures and delays, but our teams have been working hard with suppliers to keep us ahead of the game.

“Throughout the year, we’ve continued to invest in our staff through apprenticeships, promotions and recruitment, as well as purchasing the necessary equipment to secure future growth and jobs. Our production capacity and output continue to increase throughout all areas, and we have new product developments at their final design stages, almost ready for launch.

Rob concludes: “We’re thrilled to have achieved production and sales records over the last 12 months, which is a great achievement and testament to everyone working hard to deliver the first-class service to all our customers that we are well known for.” ● jaybe.com



BELOW CEO Roger Durrans being presented the Manufacturing Guild Mark by Ben Burbidge, former Manufacturing Guild Mark chairman



The UK has a thriving furnishing industry that contains many outstanding businesses designing, manufacturing, selling and distributing goods to customers all over the world. We want to make sure that the furnishing industry is regarded by young people as a sector of choice in which to develop a successful career, whatever path they wish to take.

In 2022, after two years of inactivity due to the pandemic, we were overjoyed to restart our programme of educational events and initiatives designed to inspire, steward and support learners and graduates interested in the sector. The achievements detailed in the following pages are just the beginning, though. We are on the cusp of implementing a new education strategy that is bigger than anything we have ever done before. Working collaboratively with businesses, trade associations and educational institutions, our new educational programme will influence, signpost and help connect young and new learners to incredible opportunities while helping companies retain the best people already working in the trade.

These are exciting times, and we're more committed than ever to ensuring that the future of the industry is bright and that it flourishes, root and branch.



Education

ABOVE A student
from Rycotewood
Furniture Centre

Why Education Matters

By Helen Welch, founder of the London School of Furniture Making



Helen Welch
London School of
Furniture Making

DESPITE THE LESS THAN SUNNY OUTLOOK, BRITISH FURNITURE MAKING CONTINUES TO BE A CREATIVE POWERHOUSE, COMBINING INNOVATIVE DESIGN, WITH TRADITIONAL CRAFT SKILLS, SMART BUSINESS PRACTICES AND CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY

Awards in 2022, I got to see first-hand the amazing work coming out of the country's schools and colleges and how The Furniture Makers' Company provides a much-needed showcase for this talent. With The Furniture Makers' Company helping the brightest and the best into the sector, encouraging them to thrive through educational programmes and fostering lasting relationships with industry professionals, I can't help thinking that British furniture making will eventually come out of the current crisis in decent shape. ● furnitureschool.co.uk



Despite the gloomy headlines, I'm feeling somewhat upbeat about the future. Why? Well, furniture making and heritage crafts, in general, are in a great place. The wider public has a newfound love of making things, and the British furniture making industry is bursting at the seams with genuine talent and know-how.

I founded the London School of Furniture Making (LSF) in 2013. My aim is to fill the void left by dwindling local authority run courses. When I started teaching in 1994, it wasn't hard to find an evening class where you could just turn up and make a coffee table. Provision was, dare I say it, good. The classes brimmed with enthusiasm, community and good cheer. Sadly, most of these workshops have gone and the buildings that housed them sold or given over to something less specialised.



Helen facilitating a Talks session with Daisy Brunsdon at the 2022 Young Furniture Makers exhibition

The need for a creative outlet, and a place to do it, hasn't gone away. During the last 18 months, our school has seen its highest level of demand in over a decade. Much of that was driven by enforced leisure time and a lack of travel opportunities, but I believe it also speaks to a desire to spend less time in front of a screen and more time engaged in making real, tangible objects.

At the LSF, we deliver short, intensive classes focussed on the core skills of handcrafted furniture. The lessons cover everything from joinery to steam bending, fitted furniture making to finishing, furniture design and timber technology. Most classes are four or five days and are designed to be bolted together to form a comprehensive study package. They aren't meant to replace full-time instruction, but they do give an insight into how to get started.

But what about the proliferation of online craft classes which continues to grow unabated? To be honest, I'm all for the democratisation of education, which the internet provides for free or at very low cost. Instant access to information has changed the way we learn, but despite the dire warnings that it will kill off in-person classes, none of it has come to pass. It seems just the opposite has happened, and the demand for one is driving demand for the other. Win, win.

There is no doubt that furniture makers and schools are facing a series of monumental challenges. The increasing cost of heating, materials and workshop rental, combined with a lack of consumer confidence and cancelled orders, has already seen many businesses at risk of closing. The pressure on industrial estates to make way for residential development is also sounding alarm bells, and there are no easy answers.

Despite the less than sunny outlook, British furniture making continues to be a creative powerhouse, combining innovative design with traditional craft skills, smart business practices and cutting-edge technology.

This is a great industry for emerging designers and makers to join. As part of the judging panel of the Young Furniture Makers



Helen with an LSF student

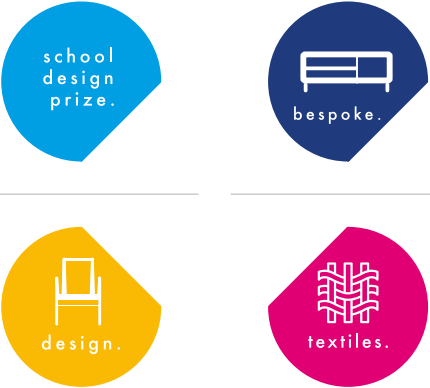
Young Furniture Makers Awards 2022

For over a decade, the Young Furniture Makers Awards have recognised outstanding designs from students and recent university graduates.

Every year we receive a huge number of entries for these highly competitive awards. The designs that impressed our judges were invited to be showcased at the 2022 Young Furniture Makers exhibition so our judging panel could review the piece in person and select winners.

The judges for the 2022 Young Furniture Makers Awards were Sebastian Cox, award winning bespoke furniture designer; Peter Sharratt, former technical support advisor at Blum; Alan Styles, managing director at Axminster Tools; Claire Vallis, creative director at Sanderson Design Group; and Helen Welch, founder of the London School of Furniture Making. ●

PRIZES



BESPOKE AWARD WINNER
Sponsored by Axminster Tools
Clare Ng for the Gemini Cabinet

Clare Ng, a graduate of the Waters and Acland school, was awarded first place for the Gemini Cabinet, a solid oak drinks cabinet that she designed during lockdown.

The cabinet features subtle curves and soft edges on its door handles, shelves, base rails, and edge profile on the compartment dividers.

Clare said: "I chose oak alone to be the material to be crafted, bringing out its beauty to convey feelings of elegance and luxury. The hand carved tactile door handles allure you to open the door and take a glass or decanter. The secretive revolving chamber quietly awaits you to spin and pick your favourite liquor."

"It's truly an honour to have won the Bespoke Award. The whole experience was utterly surreal and emotional, and I'm grateful for all the support I received throughout the entire process of creating the Gemini Cabinet. No doubt it is a strong recognition, also a reminder for my future self to stay passionate and dedicated in this journey."



DESIGN AWARD AND BEST IN SHOW AWARD WINNER
Sponsored by Blum
Jack Briggs for Wave

A graduate of Sheffield Hallam University, Jack Brigg's shelving system Wave was this year's big winner, with the judges awarding the piece both the Design Award and deeming it as the 'Best in Show' at the exhibition.

Wave is a flexible modular shelving system that Jack believes pushes new ways of thinking when it comes to furniture design, especially in mass manufacture.

Jack said: "With no visible fixings and a 'no tools required' assembly, making it easily movable from home to home, Wave can grow with the user and their changing needs."

"I would like to thank The Furniture Makers' Company for the opportunity of exhibiting Wave at the Young Furniture Makers exhibition. With such a high standard of talented designers, I was shocked but thrilled to have won both of the awards, and I am excited for what the future holds."



TEXTILES AWARD WINNER
Sponsored by Sanderson Design Group
Krav Metcalfe for the Cochise Chair

New for 2022, the Textiles Award recognised an outstanding design that incorporated textiles in some form.

Inspired by the designs of Edward Barnsley and Sam Maloof, Krav Metcalfe's Cochise Chair was selected as the winner of the inaugural prize, with the judges impressed by the carver chair's intricately woven seat made from natural Danish cord.

Commenting on the award, Krav, a Rycotewood Furniture Centre graduate, said: "I want to say a huge thank you to The Furniture Makers' Company and Sanderson Design Group for awarding me first place for the Cochise Chair. What an honour."

Lisa Montague, CEO of Sanderson Design Group, said: "At Sanderson Design Group, we were thrilled to sponsor the exhibition's inaugural Textiles Award. Nurturing the next generation of creative talent is something we hold very close to our hearts, so it was hugely exciting to see such skilful craftsmanship from so young a cohort of creators. Congratulations, again, to Krav for winning first prize and thanks to The Furniture Makers' Company for hosting a fantastic event."



SCHOOL DESIGN PRIZE WINNER
Jim Notcutt for Chair

Jim Notcutt, our youngest exhibitor at 12 years old, wowed the School Design Prize judging panel with his Roman-inspired chair that demonstrated creativity and making skills deemed well beyond his age.

Jim said: "My original design came from the Roman campaign chair – a foldable and easily carried stool. The design developed to become more stable and comfortable until I eliminated the folding aspect completely. The final design was crafted out of oak."

Joe Earley, head of design and technology at Orwell Park School, Jim's teacher, said: "Jim did an excellent job of constructing his throne-like seat. It was a complicated design to resolve as there needed to be a balance between the stability and the width of the chair. A high level of technical ability was demonstrated by him."

Eita Araki, also a student at Orwell Park School, was awarded second place in the category for his Mushroom Table.

Young Furniture Makers Exhibition 2022

Our Young Furniture Makers exhibition made a triumphant return in 2022, following a three-year hiatus, with 100 of the UK's best emerging designers and makers exhibiting cutting-edge furniture and lighting in the City of London to packed out crowds.

We set up the exhibition over 15 years ago for school children, students and graduates to showcase their work to the design community and connect with potential employers.

The 2022 event was the first live exhibition since 2019 due to the pandemic and took place on Wednesday 12 October at Furniture Makers' Hall and the Dutch Church in Austin Friars, London.

Students and graduates travelled from across the UK to be part of the event, with the youngest exhibitor being 12 years old, the oldest at 59 and one exhibitor returning from Switzerland to exhibit at this wonderful celebration of furniture and furnishing design.

We were thrilled to welcome special guest William Hardie, founder of Studio Hardie, who announced the winners of the 2022 Young Furniture Makers Awards during the evening ceremony.

William Hardie said: "I was astounded by the calibre of craftsmanship and quality of design shown at the Young Furniture Makers exhibition, it is so inspiring to see that children as young as 12 are designing and making beautiful and well thought out pieces. The exhibition was a brilliant chance for young makers to show and present their work to industry leaders and the public at a prestigious venue. The result was over 100 remarkable and diverse pieces of furniture, demonstrating that the future of the furniture making industry looks very bright." ●

SPONSORS



Visitors at the exhibition



Visitors enjoying one of the Talks Programme sessions



Alistair Minus and his Walnut Dressing Table



ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT January Furniture Show Prize Winners and William Hardie; the award ceremony; Clare Ng being presented the Bespoke Award by William Hardie; Tab van der Lande with the Reversible Games Table and Rocking Chair

BELOW The Master with National School Design Prize winner Jim Notcutt, second prize winner Eita Araki and Orwell Park School teacher Joe Earley



Isabel Rough and the Snoopy light



The Frederick Parker Collection and Archive

By Wendy Shorter-Blake, chairman of the Frederick Parker Collection

The Frederick Parker Collection is often referred to as one of the treasures of The Furniture Makers' Company. This collection of almost 200 chairs, dating from the 1660s to the present day, together with an extensive archive of furniture history and design, forms a key part of the Company's educational and outreach work. The collection is housed in purpose-designed and climate-controlled galleries at London Metropolitan University's Special Collections building. Going forward into 2023, some exciting new developments will make the collection accessible to an even greater number of students, furniture historians and enthusiasts.

Spring 2023 will see the launch of the long-awaited online catalogue of the chair collection. Over the past few years, every chair in the collection has been newly photographed, and the catalogue will feature at least five high resolution digital images of each chair. These exquisite new images will show each chair from a variety of angles and allow fine detailing, such as carving, to be viewed close-up. The photographs will be complemented by newly researched in-depth chair descriptions. These have been written with reference to recently published works by furniture historians to ensure that they are accurate and authoritative.

The new catalogue will be accessible online, allowing those who are not able to visit the collection in person to view and study the chairs in a way which has not previously been possible. It will sit alongside the catalogue of the Frederick Parker and Parker Knoll archive, which has been available online for several years. A selection of digitised images from the archive, focusing on the extensive range of 20th century furniture catalogues and other design and promotional items in the archive, is constantly being added to and is available online.

The increased online access will complement the educational and outreach work of the collection, which, following the pandemic, bounced back with a wide range of exhibitions, events and visits in 2022. The events diary for 2023 is already filling up with numerous student groups eager to visit the collection and make use of the archive, particularly for student projects. 2023 will also see the revival of the schools and colleges touring exhibition, with a selection of chairs going out on loan to furniture colleges and schools to enable students to study them in-depth. The tour will include specialist furniture history and design talks about the collection.

Further broad engagement with the Frederick Parker Collection is now also possible through the distribution of a biannual newsletter. During 2022 this was sent electronically to an extensive mailing list, keeping friends and supporters of the collection up to date on education and outreach activities as well as events like the annual lectures and dinner. It is also helping to raise funds to maintain and develop the collection through the 'sponsor a chair' scheme and sales of a specially designed pack of Frederick Parker Collection playing cards.

For any enquiries about the Frederick Parker Collection and Archive, attending the annual Frederick Parker Lectures and Dinner or about supporting the collection by becoming a 'Friend of the Frederick Parker Collection' or sponsoring a chair, please email. ● specialcollections@londonmet.ac.uk

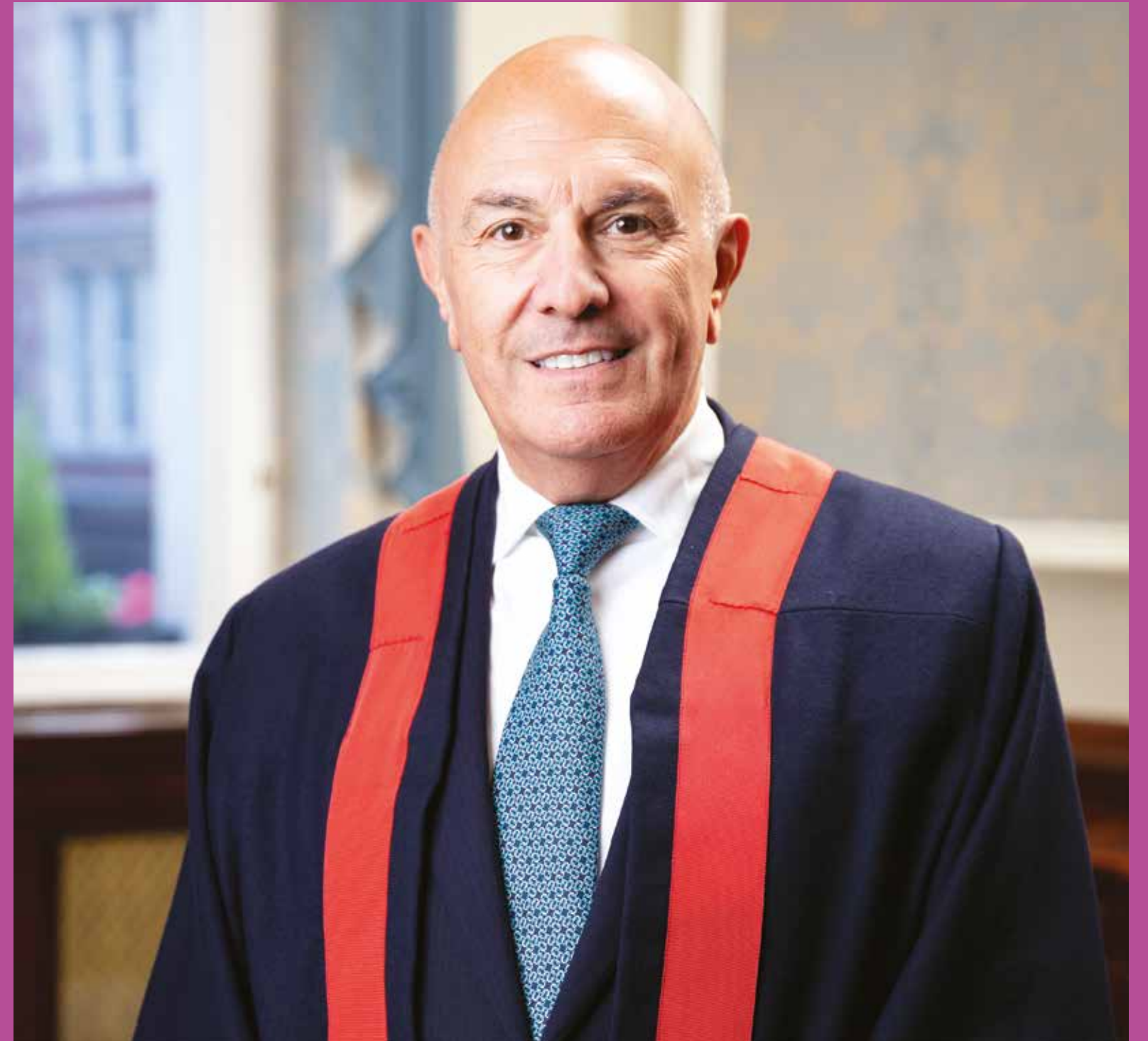


Since our formation as a guild in 1951, our membership has expanded significantly. Today, we're proud to say that our freemen, liverymen, corporate supporters and corporate members come from all sectors that make up the vast UK furnishing industry.

As a closed livery company, we exist solely for people who are actively working or have retired from the industry. This exclusivity helps us maintain industry relevance and facilitate meaningful business connections for our membership.

It's by working with our passionate members, harnessing their influence and experience, that we have been able to make the strides that we have done in the areas of education, excellence and welfare.

With 2023 marking 60 years since we were established as the 83rd livery company of the City of London, we thank the members who have helped us on our journey to date and look forward to welcoming new individuals and companies that will contribute to our success over the next 60 years.



Membership

ABOVE Liveryman
Sir Anthony Ullmann,
chairman and CEO of
Shackletons Group



My interest in the furniture industry began in the early nineties. My parents founded a trade magazine in 1993, and, as a result, I spent a lot of time visiting trade shows with them in and around Europe. It's difficult to imagine it now, but I remember walking through sawdust-filled exhibition halls with my sister, cheekily filling up our rucksacks with promotional teddy bears, fuzzy logo bugs and sweets as my parents interviewed product specialists and photographed the very latest products to enter the market. I didn't know it at the time, but attending exhibitions like these would stand me in good stead in my adult life.

While many of the friendly faces I came across have since moved on or retired, they played an important role in forging my career and helped me gain valuable insight into an industry I'm proud to be a part of. Today, I am the managing director of CSJ PR & Marketing Limited – one of the only international PR and marketing agencies to specialise in the furniture manufacturing and design industry. For over 10 years, my company has represented leading brands in the woodworking machinery, component and materials industry – both in the UK and abroad. It's my job to deliver creative and impactful solutions to the industry, and as my company continues to grow, so does my passion and enthusiasm for the industry I work in.

Freeman Profile

Catherine Earle, managing director of CSJ PR & Marketing, was admitted as a freeman in 2022

WE NEED TO FIND WAYS TO SHRUG OFF THE OLD SPIT AND SAWDUST IMAGE THAT PLAGUES OUR INDUSTRY AND FIND INNOVATIVE WAYS TO SHOWCASE THE AMAZING OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREER PATHS AVAILABLE TO PEOPLE – WHATEVER THEIR BACKGROUND OR SKILL SET

I was first introduced to The Furniture Makers' Company in 2018 when I was managing the PR for the W Exhibition, a biennial woodworking machinery and components trade show. Working alongside the then event director, we reworked the show's format and introduced an Education Zone that was designed to encourage young talent to enter the industry. We arranged for trade associations, charities, colleges and universities to take part and as a result, I met my sponsor, Gary Smith. We spent a considerable length of time discussing The Furniture Makers' Company and the amazing work taking place. I was also fortunate enough to be introduced to other members. I listened to their experiences first hand, and they talked freely about the different welfare, excellence and educational programmes they had taken part in. Their stories were honest, and the praise bestowed on The Furniture Makers' Company was sincere. Who wouldn't want to be a part of an organisation that has helped so many people in our industry? Because of these heartfelt conversations, I decided to become a freeman.

I have been fortunate enough to work with several trade associations in the UK and USA and while they approach tasks differently they all share equal amounts of passion for the industry they are in. We all want our industry to thrive, but to do this, we need to attract the right people with the right skill set. Yes, it has been said before, but what stood out for me was The Furniture Makers' Company's



Catherine at her admission ceremony with the Master, wardens and other new freemen

ongoing commitment to doing something about it. Hearing about their education and development programme – which actively helps, supports and encourages the next generation – made me sit up and take note. I found myself asking, would I have known what an amazing industry this is to work in if my parents had chosen a different career path? Would I have known what opportunities were available to me? And ultimately, would I have ended up working in it? Hand on heart, I doubt it.

My job is to promote my clients and get their name, and products in front of the right people. But who is promoting our industry in the same light? We need to find ways to shrug off the old spit and sawdust image that plagues our industry and find innovative ways to showcase the amazing opportunities and career paths available to people – whatever their background or skill set. I believe, with help from its members, The Furniture Makers' Company can achieve this, and I want to help drive this change. ●

csj-pr.co.uk



Catherine with her sponsor, Gary Smith



Catherine and her team at the Furniture & Joinery Conference



Catherine interviewing Help For Heroes' Dean Williams at last year's Furniture & Joinery Conference



Past Master Edward Tadros
and liveryman Henry Tadros

I'm proud to say that I am the fourth generation of Ercol to work at the manufacturer. My great grandfather, Lucian Ercolani, founded the company as a young Italian immigrant in 1920. The company was originally set up in the heart of High Wycombe, a traditional furniture-making hub. Today we manufacture from a 16,000 sq. m factory in Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire, and work with customers and partners all round the world.

I've been at the business since 2010 and have worked my way round all the departments in that time. I decided during university that I wanted to join the family firm as I felt that there was a real direction and purpose I could bring to the business.

I started at Ercol as a management trainee. The first of three years of training was spent immersing myself on the factory floor – understanding machining, assembling, finishing, inspecting, prototyping and anything else I could find and learn.

After a year, I moved up into the office to get an understanding of the business's various office roles before being appointed as area sales manager for the southwest of the UK. The final stage of my initial training involved me working for bed manufacturer ViSpring, where I shadowed their team in Plymouth and their European team in Leuven for a year.

After this broad introduction to the business, I was appointed European sales manager, focusing on exporting to the high-end retail and trade markets in northern Europe. I later progressed to international sales manager as we started building our US and rest of world business and then international sales director, at which point I joined the board. I took over as chairman from my father, Edward, in July 2022.

Ercol is a business based around familial tradition, and I feel the same about The Furniture Makers' Company too. Six of my family members have been liverymen, with four of them Past Masters, and Lucian was a founding member of the Company. I don't think there was ever any doubt that I would join. It was always just a matter of time.

I have fond memories of the year my father was Master – his Installation Dinner and Master's Outing to Venice, carrying the Furniture Makers' banner at the Lord Mayor's Show. I also played my bagpipes at the opening of Furniture Makers' Hall and piped in Sir David Brewer, the Lord Mayor at the time. More recently, I enjoyed cycling in the London to Bordeaux bike ride. Being admitted as a liveryman in 2022 felt part of the culmination of my own personal journey to being appointed chairman of Ercol.

I've still got a lot to learn about the livery, but everything I've seen and heard that is planned is very positive for the industry.

ERCOL IS A BUSINESS BASED AROUND FAMILIAL TRADITION, AND I FEEL THE SAME ABOUT THE FURNITURE MAKERS' COMPANY – SIX OF MY FAMILY MEMBERS HAVE BEEN LIVERYMEN, WITH FOUR OF THEM PAST MASTERS AND LUCIAN WAS A FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE COMPANY



All three areas of the Company's output are extremely important in their own way. Welfare is key regarding looking after our workforces, especially in the difficult times we all find ourselves. Meanwhile, excellence drives us all to be the best manufacturers and designers that we can be. Finally, education is critical to ensuring the next generation will work in the industry and take us further.

Attracting as many manufacturers as possible will always make the livery more relevant and helpful, and while there is a huge pool of experience in the membership, it would always be beneficial to get the next generation of the industry involved earlier than they traditionally do.

It would be an honour to follow in my family members' footsteps and be Master someday. Currently, I'm focused on Ercol's journey to a sustainable modern future. I would – when ready – like to work on a similar journey with the Furniture Makers. ●

ercol.com



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT Ercol's factory;
Ercol Marino Chair and Ibstone Cabinet;
L.Ercolani Original Butterfly Chair



Liveryman Profile
Henry Tadros, chairman of Ercol,
was admitted as a liveryman in 2022



I've been with Sanderson Design Group for nearly 30 years – take it from me, time does fly when you're having fun. Back then, I started as a designer in our wonderful wallpaper factory, Anstey. Anstey works across the whole design industry with all the top interior brands in the world, so that was incredible exposure for me as a young creator. I then came across to the brands side of the business, creating the Harlequin design studio. It's probably one of my proudest achievements since joining Sanderson Design Group, watching this fledgling brand become an inspiring and galvanising force in the sector.

In more recent years, I've worked across all our brands: Archive, Clarke & Clarke, Harlequin, Morris & Co., Sanderson, Scion and Zoffany. One of the great privileges of my life has been to work alongside brands of such heritage and British pedigree. Seeing brands such as Morris & Co. grow massively in cultural recognition, while remaining true to their original identity, that's what makes this job simply the best. For Morris in particular, we're always evolving this historic brand, making it relevant for new markets and audiences. One example might be the shift in colour treatments from our Pure collection to our Simply Morris range.

Another big factor that keeps me at Sanderson Design Group is our history. We've two brands formed in the 1860s

WE'RE HUGE ADMIRERS OF THE WORK THE FURNITURE MAKERS' COMPANY DOES IN SUPPORTING EMERGING DESIGN TALENT AND CRAFT SKILLS – WE SHARE A COMMON CAUSE; TO MAKE OUR CREATIVE INDUSTRY ACCESSIBLE TO A WIDER AUDIENCE BY ATTRACTING NEW TALENT TO THE SECTOR AND CELEBRATING GREAT BRITISH DESIGN

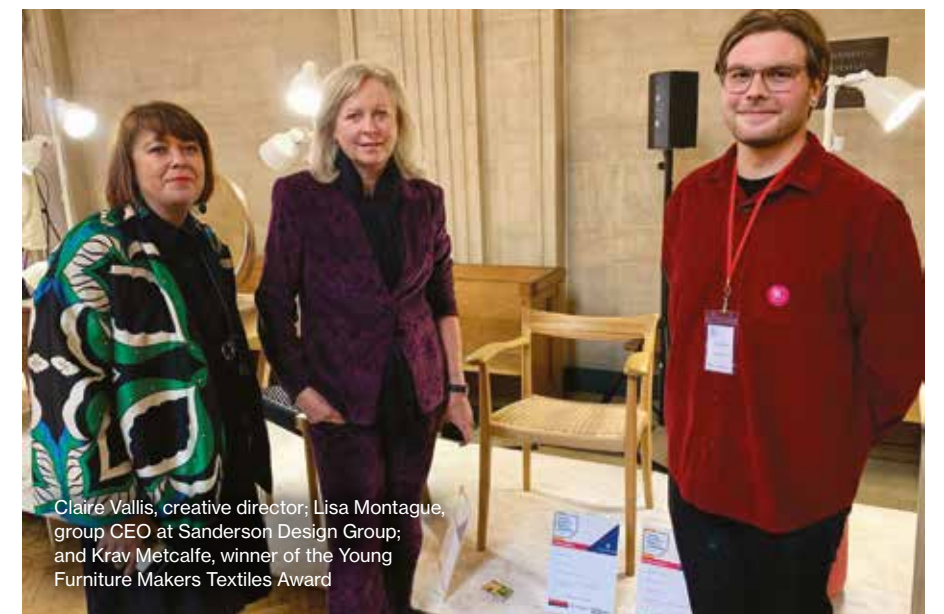
with Sanderson and Morris & Co., with the former boasting a Royal Warrant since the 1920s. On top of that, our archive is internationally renowned, with two British factories that ensure we continue to produce at the highest possible quality.

In 2021 we decided to join The Furniture Makers' Company as a corporate member. We're huge admirers of the work The Furniture Makers' Company does in supporting emerging design talent and craft skills. Sanderson Design Group and the Company share a common cause – to make our creative industry accessible to a wider audience by attracting new talent to the sector and celebrating great British design.

One of the ways we have supported the Company with this is through the launch of the new Young Furniture Makers Textiles Award, which we proudly sponsored. We, and I personally, simply adored judging the awards at the 2022 Young Furniture Makers exhibition. Seeing such talent makes me excited for tomorrow's creative world. We were also overjoyed to offer the winner and runners-up placements and tours at our design studios and factories.

I'm very keen we share the Company's educational output. Helping aspiring craftspeople into the sector is largely a knowledge-sharing mission. I've so enjoyed my 30-year career in this industry and would love for others to learn and understand the wonderful craftsmanship that goes into what we do. Working with the Company is an important part of achieving this. ●

sandersondesigngroup.com



Claire Vallis, creative director; Lisa Montague, group CEO at Sanderson Design Group; and Krav Metcalfe, winner of the Young Furniture Makers Textiles Award



Corporate Liveryman Profile

Claire Vallis is creative director at corporate member Sanderson Design Group

Thank You

Our highly valued corporate members and supporters

 <p>A Cyncl Company</p>	 <p>We share your passion.</p>				 <p>Brentwood</p>		
	 <p>surface design solutions</p>		 <p>EST. 1873</p>			 <p>The south east's largest quality furniture store</p>	
					 <p>Family Bedmakers since 1840</p>		
		 <p>THE MOST COMFORTABLE BEDS IN THE WORLD</p>	 <p>PIONEERS SINCE 1916</p>			 <p>THE EXPERTS IN SLEEP</p>	 <p>AN OCEE INTERNATIONAL COMPANY</p>
 <p>MADE IN BRITAIN ESTABLISHED 1948</p>			 <p>Handmade in England</p>	 <p>The secret to a great night's sleep</p>			



Peter and the Master

We were thrilled to present Peter Harrison, executive chairman of retailer Furniture Village, with the Lifetime Achievement Award in 2022, recognising his 50-year career in the furnishing industry.

Our Lifetime Achievement Award is presented annually to a visionary leader who has devoted their life to the furtherment of the trade and left an indelible mark on the industry.

Peter started his career in 1965 at the age of 19 when he got his first job as a management trainee at UDS, which later became Allders Department Stores.

Peter spent 20 years at Allders, rising to become a main board director. He moved on to join the board of the Gillows Group in the mid-1980s, where he met David Imrie, and together they co-founded Furniture Village, opening their first store in Abingdon, Oxfordshire in 1989.

Today Furniture Village has 55 stores and a strong online presence that is still growing. It is currently the largest independent furniture retailer in the UK, with an annual order intake of circa £500m (including VAT).

Furthermore, Peter is a massive supporter of the British furniture manufacturing industry and a keen supporter of British furniture designers. He has been a long-time supporter of

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IN AN INDUSTRY
I LOVE**



Alderman and Sheriff Alison Gowman and the Master presenting Peter Harrison with the Lifetime Achievement Award



the Company and our charity, with Furniture Village being a founding corporate member.

We were delighted to honour Peter during the commemorative dinner of newly installed Master, Tony Attard OBE DL, on Monday 9 May 2022, at the Mansion House in the City of London.

Peter was joined at the celebration by friends, family and colleagues, including his son Charlie Harrison, who is the managing director at Furniture Village.

Commenting at the time, Peter said: "I am both thrilled and honoured to receive such an acclamation from The Furniture

Makers' Company for purely doing a job I enjoy, alongside people I admire, in an industry I love."

The Master said: "We are delighted to be able to present the Lifetime Achievement Award to Peter to honour his outstanding contribution to the furnishing industry by establishing Furniture Village, the largest independent furniture retailer in the UK, which remains a family firm. As a corporate member, Peter has long been a generous supporter of the Company, besides other sporting and medical foundations." ●

furniturevillage.co.uk



Lifetime Achievement Award Peter Harrison, executive chairman of Furniture Village, was honoured in 2022

Membership

Livery Events

As one of the 110 ancient and modern livery companies, we are justifiably proud of our role and significance within London's famous Square Mile.

Our livery events are as grand as they come and offer members the opportunity to experience some of the pomp and ceremony of this distinctly British institution with peers and colleagues from industry.

The keynote event for the year is always the Installation Ceremony of our Master, which is followed by a celebratory dinner at the Mansion House, the residence of the Lord Mayor of London. Other events include our quarterly admission ceremonies of new freemen, liverymen and corporates as well as our annual Royal Charter Dinner.

In addition to our own calendar of events, our members get the chance to attend other unique and wonderful occasions organised by the City of London and livery movement.

To this very day, livery companies remain integral to the City's governance, with our liverymen welcome to vote in the election of the Sheriffs of the City of London as well as the election of the Lord Mayor.

For those interested in the lighter side of the livery event calendar, the annual sheep drive over London Bridge or the Pancake Race in Guildhall Yard are as wacky and enjoyable as they sound. ●



A liverymen and corporate liverymen admission ceremony



Paul Hammond, freeman; Tony Attard OBE DL, Master; Nancy Wellman, regional fundraising administrator; and Brian Ahern, junior warden, at the Pancake Race on Shrove Tuesday



The Master presenting Senior Past Master Roger Richardson with a commemorative box to celebrate 60 years of membership



Guests at the Installation Dinner



The Installation line-up

Membership

Networking and Fellowship

In addition to the packed calendar of livery events, we organise a whole host of networking and social events for members to connect with each other in both a professional and informal setting.

A highlight towards the end of the 2022-2023 livery year was the 'Routes to Greater Sustainability' Industry Day, organised by our newly formed Climate Change and Sustainability Committee. We welcomed more than 60 guests to Furniture Makers' Hall for a fascinating day of conversation and idea exchange.

For our growing corporate members, we offer shared learning opportunities through our Best Practice Days, where one corporate opens its doors to others to provide insight on a particular theme or business process they are excelling in.

Corporates also get the opportunity to attend our Confederation Lunch, which is hosted at the Palace of Westminster in partnership with the British Furniture Confederation. At this exclusive event, members get the chance to hear from and speak to members of parliament who make up the All Party Parliamentary Furniture Industry Group, allowing them to voice concerns directly to MPs.



Blum hosted a Best Practice Day on how to implement a leadership programme



Members touring Sanderson Design Group's wallpaper printing factory Anstey Wallpaper Company



Networking at the Confederation Lunch



ABOVE & LEFT
Networking at the Routes to Greater Sustainability Industry Day



Guests at the Confederation Lunch





CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT
Delegates at the Routes to Greater Sustainability Industry Day; members on a historic walking tour of East London; guests on the Master's Outing in Morecambe; the classic car and wine outing



Membership

Regional Activity

While our livery is based in the City of London, the trade we represent is spread across the UK, with large corporates, small and medium sized businesses and sole traders all dotted around the country.

We want to engage with everyone in the industry on a local level, and to help us do this, we have set up several regions – each with a committee – to help us organise regional networking, fundraising and social events, transporting the fellowship and camaraderie of the livery beyond the City.

- The East of England region covers Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk, Northamptonshire and Suffolk, and the regional committee is chaired by liveryman Joanna Knight of the Knight Partnership.
- The North East region is chaired by liveryman John Conroy of Novuna and includes Northumberland, Tyne and Wear and County Durham.
- The North West region, chaired by freeman Phil Hopkins of Essential Soft Furnishings, includes Cumbria, Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire.
- The South West region, chaired by Past Master David Dewing, includes Cornwall, Dorset, Devon, Gloucestershire and Somerset.
- The Southern region, chaired by liveryman Lizzie Shaw of Celtheath, includes Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire, Oxfordshire and Wiltshire.
- The Yorkshire region, chaired by liveryman Fara Butt of Shire Beds, includes East Riding of Yorkshire, North Yorkshire, South Yorkshire and West Yorkshire. ●

furnituremakers.org.uk/regional-association



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT

A Tempur colleague enjoying Northern Big Shots; The Yorkshire Committee at the Curry Night; Alan Galloway of AIS, overall winner of the Teesside Golf Day organised by Barker and Stonehouse; The Yorkshire Curry Night; Guests at the Yorkshire regional bowling night



The Master's Challenge

London to Lancashire Bike Ride

In recent years it has become customary for the incumbent Master to set themselves a personal challenge to either buoy our fundraising or raise awareness of a particular area of our output. For 2022, Master Tony Attard OBE DL took on the herculean task of leading a team of 12 cyclists from London all the way to his home county of Lancashire in the hope of raising £50,000 for our charity.

The 300+ mile challenge took place from 12-16 September 2022 and had some long days and gruelling ascents for the team to complete.

Collectively, our cyclists – Rollie Attard, Tony Attard OBE DL, Ben Burbidge, Stuart Daykin, John Irwin, Paul von der Heyde, Stewart Linford, Andrew Sykes, Edward Sykes, Nick Westlake, William White and Aidan Wilson – raised a phenomenal £54,000 for our charity.

We were honoured that Alison Gowman, Alderman and Sheriff of London, and Martin John Ainscough DL, High Sheriff of Lancashire, joined us for the departure and arrival ceremonies, respectively.

The Master said: "What a fantastic week we had. This was a substantial challenge for all of us, with some very tough climbs throughout the week. All the participants agreed that it was a hard trip but worth it to raise the significant sum of £54,000 for our charity. I would like to express my deepest of thanks to our corporate cycle jersey sponsors as well as for all the individual donations we received through JustGiving."

SPONSORS



















ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT
The cyclists on day two; the Sheriff of London with some of the riders and well-wishers at Furniture Makers' Hall; the cyclists in St Albans

BELOW
At the finish line



The peloton in action



Membership Fundraising

As the charity for the UK furnishing industry, we have a packed summer and autumn calendar of sport-based fundraisers, where we bring together people from across the UK to enjoy a unique day out with just a hint of friendly competition.

Last year's fundraisers included the National Golf Day, our longest running event; Big Shots, our can't-miss clay pigeon shoot sponsored by Furniture Village; and our growing-in-popularity five-a-side football tournament, the Tim Bloyce Cup, sponsored by Ocee Design.

The vital funds raised at our events are crucial in enabling us to support people from the industry who have fallen on hard times and help steward young people who are looking to build a career in furnishing. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of these events in 2022. ●



The players of the Tim Bloyce Cup five-a-side football tournament



RIGHT, ABOVE
Top Team at our National Golf Day – Jay-Be

RIGHT, BELOW
Players from the JPA Workspaces team at the Tim Bloyce Cup



ABOVE
Guests at our popular fundraiser Big Shots

LEFT Chris Shaw being presented the Top Gun (Novice) Award at Big Shots by Dr Ranj Singh, Charlie Harrison of Furniture Village and Master Tony Attard OBE DL

Furniture Makers' Hall

Discrete, professional and beautifully catered events

Furniture Makers Hall – situated in historic Austin Friars, conveniently close to Liverpool St, Bank and Moorgate London Underground stations – offers an outstanding choice of beautifully furnished rooms complete with first-class AV facilities, professional customer service and excellent catering from our venue partners, Life's Kitchen. Whether you're in need of an intimate meeting spot, a central location for a board meeting or looking for a venue to host a function for up to 120 people, Furniture Makers' Hall is ideal. ●

fmhvenuehire.co.uk
020 7248 1163
sales@furnituremakers.org.uk



British Furniture Confederation

By Jonathan Hindle, British Furniture Confederation chairman



Jonathan Hindle
British Furniture Confederation chairman



PINK MEMBERS

- British Furniture Manufacturers (BFM)
- Commercial Interiors UK (CIUK)
- National Bed Federation (NBF)
- Furniture Industry Research Association (FIRA)
- The Furniture Makers' Company (WCFM)
- and associations with many others, including Anti Copying in Design, British Plastics Federation (BPF – Flexible Foam Group) and the Association of Master Upholsterers & Soft Furnishers.

The British Furniture Confederation (BFC) is an executive body made up of representatives from the UK's leading furniture, furnishing and bed trade associations. It meets to discuss developments within the sector and strategies to further its aims and communicate these to government. The BFC also provides a secretariat to the All Party Parliamentary Furniture Industry Group (APPFIG).

The BFC continued to have close dialogue with government throughout 2022 on several matters affecting the UK furnishing industry as well as making progress in key areas.

New government under Prime Minister Rishi Sunak

The decision by the former Prime Minister, the Rt Hon Liz Truss MP, to resign triggered a leadership contest that was won by the Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP. He became Prime Minister on 25 October 2022 and undertook a significant ministerial reshuffle.

A number of the ministerial changes were relevant to the furniture and furnishing sector. These included Rebecca Pow MP, who was appointed minister for environment quality and resilience, with responsibility for waste. Kevin Hollinrake MP was appointed minister for enterprise, markets and small business. His responsibilities include the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS), small businesses and enterprise.

UK furniture industry representation

The BFC commissioned new research which ranked parliamentary constituencies alongside the number of furniture and furnishing businesses in each constituency. This was completed by Brevia Consulting in August 2022. This data is now being used to identify and communicate with parliamentarians with large numbers of businesses in their constituencies.

Energy utility survey

At the September 2022 BFC executive meeting, the BFC agreed to conduct a

survey on energy usage within the sector. A comprehensive set of questions was agreed within the BFC for circulation with their respective members. The BFC is now looking to raise the findings with government and the All Party Parliamentary Furniture Industry Group.

Ongoing engagement with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)

The BFC has continued to liaise with civil servants in BEIS to ensure that industry concerns and issues are brought to the immediate attention of ministers. These have included labour shortages, business rates relief, the future of the super-deduction capital allowance, skills and training, the cost of energy, and supply chain challenges.

Consistent industry data

BFC executive members agreed at the BFC meeting in May 2022 to make the data used to measure the success of the furniture and furnishing industry more consistent. The aim is for the industry and government to speak with one voice on statistics like the size of the industry, the value of exports and the number of people employed. Following this work, I'm pleased to report the latest figures.

In 2021 the total value of the UK furniture and furnishing industry was £41.2bn, with UK manufacturing making up 30% (£12.36bn) of this figure, retail being 45% (£18.44bn), and imports accounting for 25% (£10.4bn) of the total.

In 2021, exports grew 56% to £1.78bn, an outstanding performance given the world issues and changes in our relationship with the EU. What is interesting is that while the value of manufacturing has grown to £12.36bn, the number of companies and employees in industry have both fallen – in 2020 there were 6,503 manufacturers employing 97,000 people. This suggests a significant change in the efficiency of our manufacturers which in turn implies a

notable level of investment in improved manufacturing.

Meanwhile, the number of retailers selling furniture, lighting and other household articles in 2020 was 9,813, with 2,406 wholesalers also operating.

I'm pleased to say that these figures suggest we are a modern resilient industry that is adapting to the changing market conditions and succeeding, both at home and abroad.

Flammability regulations

The BFC is seeking clarity from the government on their work to review and amend Flammability Regulations. Following the appointment of a new minister, the BFC will seek clarity on the safety requirements and types of furniture that will be covered in any proposed amendments, along with the revised timetable for the revision of the regulations.

Tradeshaw support

The BFC is working with the All Party Parliamentary Furniture Industry Group to address the need for better trade show support. The BFC is supporting a proposal submitted by Export Partners UK (EPUK) that offers an enhanced and simplified UK Tradeshaw and Mission Programme to support the furniture and furnishing sector.

Climate change and sustainability conference

The BFC was delighted to co-host the Company's 'Routes to Greater Sustainability' Industry Day in February 2023. Around 60 people from across industry attended the one-day event at Furniture Makers' Hall. Members of the BFC executive were in attendance with myself and Jessica Alexander, executive director of the National Bed Federation, giving an update on forthcoming legislation. ●

britishfurnitureconfederation.org.uk



James Daly



Mark Eastwood



Paul Howell



Kim Leadbeater



Greg Smith



Baroness Warsi



Mike Wood



Mark Eastwood MP, chairman of the APPFIG, speaking at the Confederation Lunch



2 Rifles

The Furniture Makers' Company continues to be very proud of its affiliation with 2 Rifles

2022 was another busy year for 2 Rifles, as events in Eastern Europe changed the battalion's direction and put us at the forefront of the UK's response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Having only recently returned home from Exercise Askari Storm in Kenya in December, the battalion moved on to Joint Expeditionary Force readiness in January 2022. With plans for a 'reset' year in place, what was to follow was a year of challenge, opportunity and ultimately great success.

In January, C Company kicked off the year by honing core infantry skills at home in Northern Ireland, while B Company swiftly departed for sunnier climes, deploying to the deserts of Jordan for two months of joint training with the Jordanian Armed Forces. Meanwhile, in the UK, the remainder of the battalion focussed efforts on support weapons cadres (I Company), tunnel warfare at Corsham tunnels (A and B Company) and polishing urban skills and 'owning the night'.

On 19 May 2022, all remaining planned activity for the year was put on hold, as 2 Rifles were notified that they were to deploy at short notice as the Agile Task Force to Estonia on Operation Cabrit. A gargantuan task which would normally take months or even years in the planning, was conducted in a matter of weeks. By mid-June, the 2 Rifles battlegroup was complete in theatre with a squadron of field engineers (20 Field Squadron) and a battery of artillery (88 Battery).

Shortly after arriving in Estonia, I Company recommenced providing support weapons cadres, and HQ elements started work on developing Estonia's National Military Defensive Plan and integrating with the 2nd Estonian Brigade. C Company however didn't hang around, as they deployed via Chinook to Finland for two months on Operation Casaria. This was part of a bilateral agreement between the UK and Finland, which came a matter of weeks after NATO signed an accession protocol with Finland to join the military alliance. The training was punctuated by two large multinational exercises. The first,



Exercise Vigilant Fox, saw a total of 750 British, US and Finnish troops deployed on a four-day exercise. The purpose of this exercise was to test how quickly units could be mobilised in Finland and be set to defend the nation. C Company later found themselves well within the Arctic Circle, this time simulating enemy against Swedish and Finnish Battlegroups on Exercise Vigilant Knife. C Company found themselves fighting armour daily, proving both the agility and lethality of riflemen against an abundance of Swedish Leopard 2 Main Battle Tanks (MBT).

In September, B Company and elements of I Company made the journey to Latvia to support NATO allies in the Latvian enhanced Forward Presence's (eFP) summative exercise, known as Exercise Silver Arrow. B Company

were one of five companies within the 'enemy' battlegroup, comprising of US, Polish, German, and Latvian soldiers. B Company were vastly outnumbered, however relentlessly resisted the eFP battlegroup. Riflemen were waiting in small pre-set ambushes with NLAW (Next-generation Light Anti-tank Weapon) and Javelin at the ready to destroy the advancing columns of MBTs and aviation. This exercise once again demonstrated the effectiveness of light role infantry at combating armour.

While B Company group were deployed to Latvia, the remainder of the Agile Task Force was deployed on a snap exercise, a minimal notice mobilisation exercise, working to our Estonian counterparts. The snap exercise tested our ability to rapidly mobilise forces and establish defensive positions orientated towards the Russian border. The snap exercise provided the perfect opportunity to practise digging defensive positions at speed and allowed us to build rapport with the Estonian public, demonstrating British and NATO support to the region.

The final major deployment of Operation Cabrit saw A Company deploy to Lithuania on Exercise Iron Wolf in late October. During the exercise, B Company were the only light-role infantry company within an armoured battlegroup, creating challenges many had not faced before. The riflemen adapted superbly, utilising both British and Estonian anti-tank weapons to counter Czech BMPs and American Abraham tanks in the close terrain. The deployment was hugely beneficial, proving how we would integrate into an armoured battlegroup and how we would integrate with NATO counterparts in any future European theatre.

The battalion is now safely back home in Northern Ireland and looking forward to what 2023 has in store. In 2022, The Furniture Makers' Company award for 'Best Rifleman' went to rifleman Fletcher from Communications & Information Services, who was recognised for his hard work and impressive performance in enabling communications within the 2 Rifles Battlegroup. ●

army.mod.uk

RAF XXV (Fighter) Squadron

Livery companies of the City of London traditionally have formal links with the armed services, with many companies having more than one link to a military unit. Affiliations have an important role for both the military and the livery company.

In 2022, we were thrilled to strengthen our relationship with the armed services by establishing bonds of affiliation with XXV (Fighter) Squadron of the Royal Air Force.

XXV(F) Squadron was formed in 1915, during World War One, as part of the Royal Flying Corps. The squadron displayed significant prowess during the Great War, credited with shooting down the infamous Max Immelmann – the first German flying ace – as well as boasting nine flying aces of its own. Marching on with the pace of aviation technology, the squadron then operated numerous aircraft types during World War Two. Among these was the De Havilland Mosquito, the keystone to the squadron's recent affiliation with the Furniture Makers. UK furniture makers were essential to building the spectacular and famously wooden-framed aircraft, both reliably and at rapid pace for the war effort. Post war, during the Cold War era and beyond, XXV(F) Squadron continued securing the skies over the UK as a Quick Reaction Alert (QRA) squadron, and overseas, seeing action in Iraq and former Yugoslavia. The squadron was disbanded in 2008 as the drawdown of the Tornado F3 began.

In response to an increased demand for fast jet pilots, XXV(F) Squadron stood up once again in 2018 with a new role that continues to endure to this day. Flying from RAF Valley in Anglesey, the role of the squadron is to take a trainee who has never flown a jet aircraft before and develop their skill set in order to deliver a fast jet pilot suitable to continue towards the front line.

While on the squadron, pilots are trained in the nuances required to fly a high-performance jet aircraft, then undergo training in tactical skills such as low-level navigation and formation flying. By the end of their course on XXV, trainees are transformed

into pilots that possess all the skills, knowledge and airmanship required to perform one vs one air combat against another fast jet.

The aircraft that is used to accomplish this is the Hawk T2 advanced jet trainer; a significant development upon the Hawk aircraft, which has been the backbone of RAF Advanced Fast Jet Training since the late 1970s. The Hawk T2 combines high-performance jet handling with a comprehensive glass cockpit, a head-up display and onboard facilities to simulate weapons, countermeasures and radar – mirroring a front-line fast jet cockpit. This allows trainees to be immersed in tactical scenarios and prepares them well for their onward journey to the front line in either the Typhoon or F-35B.

Throughout the last year, XXV(F) Squadron proudly celebrated Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee, flying a four-ship formation of Hawk T2s over Buckingham Palace as part of the coordinated fly-past of over 70 aircraft. The squadron's association with The Furniture Makers' Company also came to fruition, with gracious opportunities to attend both the Installation Dinner of Tony Attard OBE DL and enjoy lunch at the exquisite hall in Austin Friars. It was also a great pleasure to reciprocate in hosting the Master and the clerk, Jonny Westbrooke, at RAF Valley, who engaged first-hand with the squadron history and day-to-day life – an opportunity we look forward to extending to more members going forward. *Ferrens Tego - Striking I defend.* ● raf.mod.uk



The Master presenting wing commander Timothy Simmons with the bonds of affiliation at the former's Installation Dinner



The Master Tony Attard OBE DL and clerk Jonny Westbrooke with a Hawk T2



Thank you for helping us make a difference

Gary Smith, fundraising chairman

These are challenging times. The rising cost of living has resulted in what some fundraising bodies have called a cost of giving crisis for charities, with donations and fundraising expected to fall across the not-for-profit sector.

Despite this, I'm pleased to say that support for our key fundraising events has held up over the past year, with old and new faces joining us for some memorable days.

As chairman of fundraising, I want to offer my whole-hearted thanks to everyone who has donated, sponsored an event or attended and helped contribute to the success of our various initiatives in the past year.

Although important, national events are only one aspect of our fundraising effort. Our legacies, or gifts in wills, programme is gathering momentum and we envisage it becoming a significant part of our fundraising strategy.

In the past year alone, we have received several incredibly generous gifts from legators which will enable us to make long lasting impact through the careful use of their legacies. While none of us want to think too hard about our own mortality, a gift in a will is one of the most meaningful donations that a giver will ever make and hopefully something that more people will consider.

Meanwhile, our regional committees continue to make important strides, with more and more events being planned around the country, enabling people from the industry outside of our immediate membership to get involved with activities and support local fundraising efforts. Long may this continue and our thanks to all who continue to volunteer their time to the success of the regions.

Your support, especially during these testing times, remains vital, so thank you and I hope to see you at one of our many events in the future.




Gary Smith






Thank you for your support

- Alex Dymock
Alina Cooper
Anthony Attard OBE DL
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Barker and Stonehouse
Ben Burbidge
Ben Fowler
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In memory of
liveryman Vince Linnane
1964-2021

Posthumous recipient of the
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