



WENDY KEITH

MEET THE REMARKABLE WOMAN WARRANTED TO
MAKE THE KING'S SHOOTING AND KILT HOSIERY

Wendy Keith became a Royal Warrant Holder in 2004, having begun supplying Shooting and Kilt Hosiery in the early 1990's to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. "It came about in this way," she tells us. "I encountered one of his valets and was asked if I could remake a beautiful pair of shooting stockings which had been a gift to His Royal Highness – now HM The King. The pair were hand-knitted in a very complicated pattern – but holding my breath, I naturally said I would be delighted."

The mandate turned out to be a huge success: "Once completed, I received many further Orders for Kilt Hosiery and Shooting Stockings over the next decade. I was asked to redesign the Kilt Hosiery to match the colours of the many Tartan Kilts he wore when on duty in Scotland."

To look at Keith's work is to see shooting stockings and kilt hose beautifully knitted, as Keith says, "in the grand tradition on four needles, dating back many centuries". But her work, which includes distinctive features such as the 'double barrel cuff' or 'chessboard' design often has an urgency and vibrancy which gives them a contemporary life.

For Keith, who is based in Truro in Cornwall, the process has capped a wonderful career: "I have always been received with extreme courtesy and kindness. Indeed, in 2005, I received a personal letter of thanks direct from His Royal Highness. Five years later, he sent me a further personal letter of congratulation after winning an award for a designer collection of garments,



using the spun wool from his own Highgrove sheep, which he had given me permission to use."

This is a window on the attention to detail which characterises the Royal Family in general, and King Charles in particular. Keith continues: "The working members of the Royal Family display remarkable conscientiousness, determination and stamina in carrying out their many duties. In addition the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and the Prince's Trust give massive opportunity for young people to gain

confidence and show their innate ability."

Keith's association with King Charles III has also led to amusing counters with the monarch himself. She recalls: "I attended a Reception at St James's Palace with my husband who was a Senior QC at that time. I conversation His Royal Highness asked my husband what he was doing there. My husband replied: 'I am merely a companion to my talented wife', to which the reply came 'I know the feeling!'"

www.wendykeithdesigns.co.uk