



## From Wing Commander Russ Gleeson - Clerk to the Worshipful Company of Framework Knitters

While I was on duty with 601 Squadron last month I met the Director of the wonderful Bently Priory Museum and once she discovered I was Clerk to the Framework Knitters she became very excited indeed! As we chatted it soon became apparent why – Museum staff and volunteers had undertaken a project to knit/crochet 544 poppies which represent the number of Battle of Britain aircrew who sadly lost their lives during the Battle of Britain. These poppies will make a display to commemorate the 85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the conflict later this year.

Museum volunteers and local knitting groups have amazingly already surpassed this number, and they now have nearly 1,000 which would enable them to represent the all of the Battle of Britain aircrew who lost their lives during the whole of the Second World War period. However, with the help of this ancient Livery Company and our knitting friends across the Livery and in our local groups they dream of going even further - If they were able to get just under 3,000 they would be able to create a display which would represent **every** Battle of Britain aircrew who bravely flew between 10 July and 31 October 1940.

If other groups were able to support the project, it would enable the Museum to also create some Battle of Britain commemorative Post Box toppers and also send some poppies to local Schools during the Remembrance period with stories of local Battle of Britain aircrew attached to them.

They are not looking for uniformity of the poppies, so they can reflect the diversity of the aircrew who flew from 16 nations, however, they should be a shade of red – the pattern attached could certainly be used and has been used by some volunteers.

So if you, a local craft group, friends, family or anyone else you may know would like to help us please do grab your needles! Completed poppies should be sent to the address below by the **1<sup>st</sup> of September 2025** to allow us to get them to the museum in time for the Anniversary later that month.