

Karen Finch OBE 1921-2018

On 15 April 2018 Karen Finch, an Honorary member of TENEN, died, until the last moment surrounded by her loving family.

As many might know, she was a Danish-taught weaver, but after the war she married an Englishman and went to live in London.

We have published several articles about her work to build up conservation of textiles at the Victoria and Albert Museum and later on Hampton Court Palace. In 1976 she was appointed Officer of the Order of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth – a title that is seldom awarded to foreigners, but which made it much easier to get the means that are necessary for the often costly work of conservation and its training. She has herself written books about the profession, and in our magazine she writes about one of most exciting and surprising projects: Tipu's war jacket at Windsor Castle.

Philip Sykas was one of her grateful pupils who kept contact throughout all the years, and when he wrote his publication about the history of sewing thread¹, Karen helped us translate it into Danish.

Former students all over the world kept her informed about everything that was happening inside the world of textiles – exhibitions, books, and much more.

I know that she also treasured her connection to Denmark.

Lone de Hemmer Egeberg

1. 'Rethreading: Notes Towards a History of Sewing Thread in Britain', published in *Textiles Revealed: A Festschrift for Karen Finch OBE, D.Litt, FIIC*, Dec 2000.

Articles in TENEN

- Vol 8, nr 4, Spring 1998: Karen Finch and conservation of tapestry in Britain
- Vol 9, nr 1, Summer 1998: Additional to the above article
- Vol13, nr 3, Winter 2003: Tipu's war jacket - an armour prepared from the world's finest and softest wool
- Vol 15, nr 3, Winter 2005: Two Grand Old Ladies, Karen Finch and Aagot Noss, appointed Honorary members

Translated by Karen's sister Dr Ruth Sinding and her daughter Katrina Finch.