

## Lorna's Inspiration

Drawing and sketching freehand would be the basis and beginning for many of Lorna Holder's designs and ideas. These free flowing drawings, through the skill of the assistant designers and pattern cutters along with crucial guidance from Lorna, would become the designs for Davies & Field. One design could become a popular piece and be used again and again with slight design changes to different details.

The drawings — one of which has been enlarged and is a feature within this exhibition — were inspired by many things happening in society and music at the time. Princess Diana and her style and way of dressing was something that Lorna looked toward whilst also taking inspiration from UK music of the time. Bands such as Adam Ant, Duran Duran, Culture Club and Bananarama all had a hand to play in the style of the era, shaping the way that Lorna was designing clothes and shaping high street fashion. Lorna has travelled extensively throughout her career, some of the places she regularly visited for trade fairs were New York, Los Angeles, Hong Kong, Germany and Paris. It was here that Lorna could keep in touch with current international fashion trends and production techniques.

## The Process

Lorna was involved in the early and most creative aspects of production. This would start with a first sketch and inspirational drawing, which would then be drawn up into a working sketch by an assistant designer/sketcher. The working design at this stage would reveal the required specifications for the garments. With Lorna's guidance, the pattern cutters would make the patterns to the design specifications. Sample garments made from these patterns were given to the sample machinist to reproduce with the guidance of the pattern cutter.

These garments form the basis of a collection which would be presented to buyers who would visit Davies & Field each season to select clothes for the companies that they represented. Lorna remembers vividly the excitement of taking a clothes rail down to Mr Davies containing the season's collection and the buyers then selecting the pieces which would make it into full production.

Once garments had been selected by the buyers the patterns for these and the fabric and trimming details were then passed on to the production department. For different sizes of clothing the patterns were also passed to a 'Grader' who produced the required garment sizes and the specifications for these different sizes.

Factories and also home makers were then sourced to put the chosen garments into manufacture. Finally the garments were finished, packed and dispatched.

From start to finish the garment industry was labour intensive with all the steps of production, from drawing to finished article, happening in the UK.