

SUSSEX SCRIBES



Newsletter October 2014

Dear Members

I hope you had a great summer wherever you were. The weather in England was worth staying put for this year! During the early part of the summer we had our Exhibition 'Aquatic Alphabets – The Sea in Calligraphy', held in Worthing Art Gallery and Museum. It was a very inspiring exhibition with many varied calligraphic pieces on show from members and lots of positive feedback was given, both by members of Sussex Scribes and from members of the public.

Also on display were the 'Letters after Lindisfarne', produced to mark the return to Durham Cathedral of the Lindisfarne Gospels this year, with over two hundred entries from calligraphers from all over the UK, including pages by some of our members. Thanks to all who took part and to those who helped to put the Exhibition together.

It was lovely to see some of you at our AGM in September. Susan Skinner gave us a very interesting talk. It was held in our new venue, The Pines in Durrington which is where all of our meetings will be from now on. We also had some wonderful books for sale, kindly donated by Pat Blamey.

Anita Howes who has been on the Committee for many years as Workshop Organiser and Secretary has decided to stand down due to other commitments. Thankyou for all your hard work Anita. We are pleased that Denyce Aresti will now take over as Secretary. Thank you also to Chris Langley who is standing down, for her input at committee meetings and help with organising workshops.



New System for Booking Workshops

Usually at the AGM we give members, on renewal of their membership, a list of the next years workshops. This year we have decided to try something different as we have realised that it is difficult to know what you will be doing a year ahead!

We recently sent a renewal form by email to members to print off to renew your membership. Those without email would have received it by post. Hopefully you will have renewed by now but if not there will be a reminder sent out soon.

With each Newsletter from now on we will send information about the next three workshops, for example January, February, March in this Newsletter and the next three in the Spring one. Information about the workshops with a materials list will be included so all you have to do is fill in the form and send a cheque to book your place.

Workshops will include a Certificate of Skills in Majuscules taught by Gaynor Goffe over four Saturdays, three months apart. Do consider attending these, it will be a great opportunity.

We are delighted to welcome Suzi Faber onto the committee. She will be responsible for planning workshops for 2016. If you have any suggestions for future workshops they would be gratefully received.

I do hope that you continue to make good progress with all things calligraphic and hope to see you at one of our events.

Cathy Stables, Chair of Sussex Scribes

Aquatic Alphabets - The Sea in Calligraphy

at Worthing Museum and Art Gallery

What a talented group we are! The exhibition at Worthing Museum was a great success and the remarks in the comments book illustrated how impressed visitors to the exhibition were.

When I measured the blank wall space prior to the exhibition, I had visions of two or three pieces on each wall and a lot of white space as at that time not many entries had been received, but when the day came to set up the exhibition there were over sixty entries.

It was quite exciting unwrapping and revealing the art work and then deciding where to place each piece to its best advantage. Fortunately Peter Amos and Cathy had an excellent eye and by mid afternoon everything was completed. There was an amazing variation of style, colour and size which together created a good visual impact.

Dianne had obtained the loan of the Lindisfarne Project Book which was bound into four volumes and they were on display for the whole week. It was a real privilege to be able to turn the pages and see the wonderful diversity of the contributions. We had been promised two display cases but on the day only one was available, nevertheless we



managed to fit them into it.

Anita attended on both Saturdays and spent quite a lot of time turning the pages and discussing the work in the Lindisfarne books with visitors, who showed a lot of interest. She also took along some parallel pens and made bookmarks with people's names on them.

Although there were quite a few visitors and several pieces were sold, there was a lack of communication within the museum and the advertising we had been promised on their website and on the board outside failed to materialise. We may have done a lot better with more publicity. It was also difficult to sell cards as the museum wanted 50% of the sales. There were enquiries about calligraphy courses and some potential new members.

Many thanks to Cathy, Peter, Dianne & Lis for all the

organisation and hard work that went into setting up, and taking down.

A lot of inspiration and effort went into making the exhibition a success. Well done everyone!

Janice Simmonds

Experiments With Capitals

with Gaynor Goffe

June 14th, 2014

I was greatly looking forward to meeting Gaynor. I think her work is beautiful. I have several of her books, and in studying all things italic for the foundation year of my diploma, I thought her sample scripts were the finest, and they were the ones I endeavoured to copy.

I was also slightly apprehensive and I had heard that she is a hard task master, and will tell you directly if she doesn't think something is good enough!

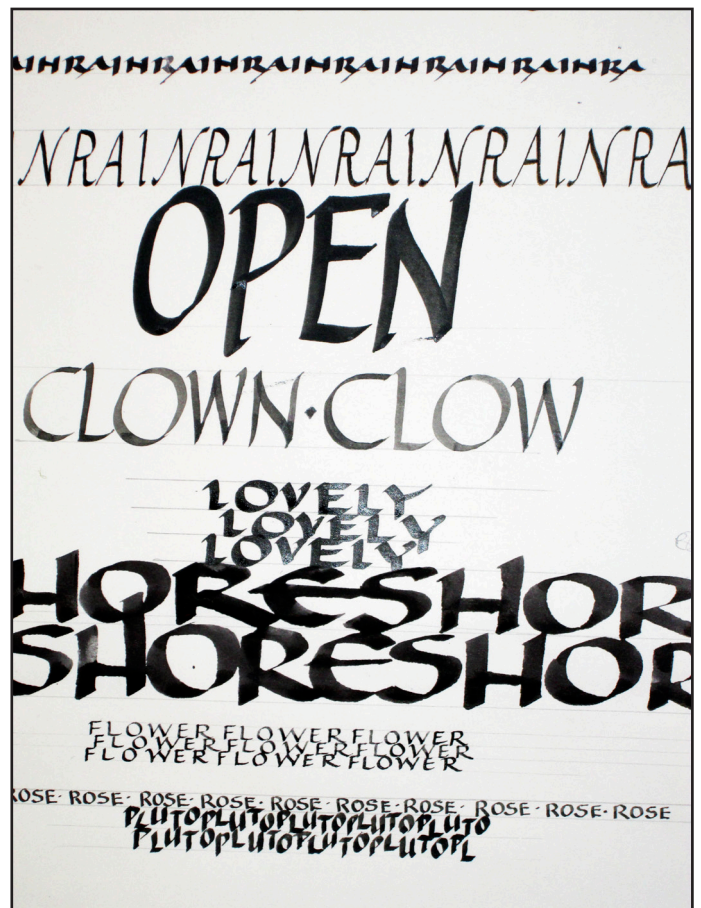
Sure enough, I was told that my capital letters were a muddle of Roman and Italic, my ink was too thick, and my reservoir was too tight. But I was not deterred: quite the opposite. She was quite right on all accounts, and my writing improved immediately.

In the morning, Gaynor had us experimenting with different weights of capitals, using bold, heavy, fat or thin letters and then fine delicate ones. We all wrote one line on the top of a piece of A3, and then passed the page on to someone else who had to write the next line underneath it in a contrasting weight. Spacing also had to be considered. We learnt to create textures, and saw that in general, we rarely left enough space for the letters to breathe.

In the afternoon, we each chose from a list of haikus, wrote them out, cut them up and pasted them onto a blank sheet, playing with different layouts until we were happy. Gaynor then looked at them all and went through each one with us.

I had to leave before the end, but I came away thrilled to have met her, and I am delighted to hear that she has agreed to come and do four sessions with us this coming year as part of CLAS's certificate of skills. Each of the four days will concentrate on a different form of capital letters: formal Roman, Roman cursive, versals and San Vito. For those of us who are beginners, it is a fantastic chance to learn the correct way to approach the basics from a true, if exacting, master of the art.

Susan Faber



Pressure and Release With Pencils

with Marion McKenzie

July 19th, 2014

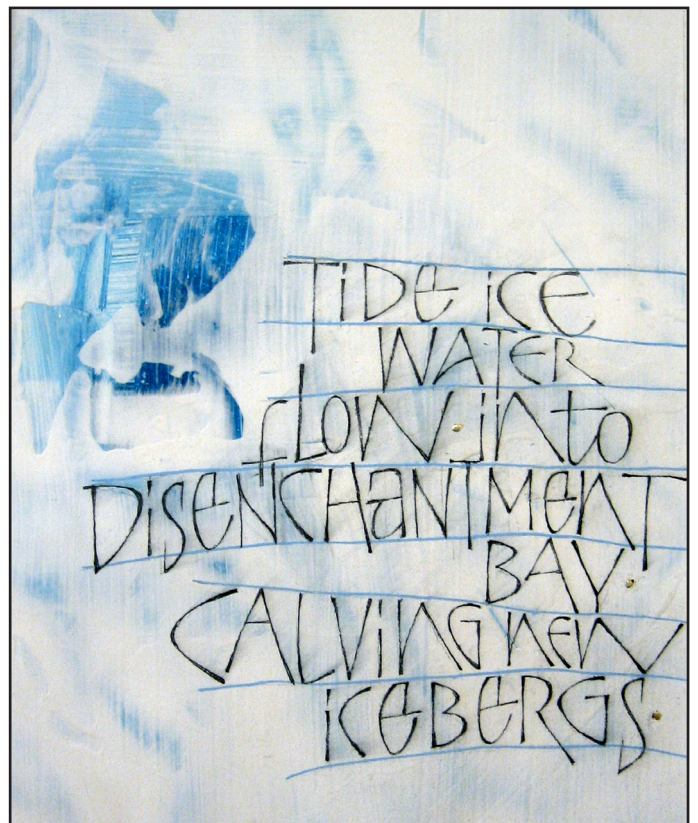
Marion's workshop was 3 months ago (as I write this). I'm not sure that at this stage my description of the day is very helpful other than that I found it very useful!

Covering the Roman Capital structures with Marion and working with pencil to learn about pressure and release in every stroke enabled us to make the basic letterforms look so much more interesting. Tricky though, to keep control of that pressure and within one stroke not just go from pressure to release but also back again and yet make it look subtle was not easy!

We then started to free up our lettering from the rigid Roman structure and worked on a small quote. Deciding on the composition first and then applying the pressure and release technique brought it all together very nicely.

Marion told us on the day how she had learned the pressure and release technique from Peter Thornton originally. I was booked on one of Peter's workshops at the CLAS Festival a few weeks later and found that Marion's teaching had been wonderful preparation for this!

Marriet Hardman

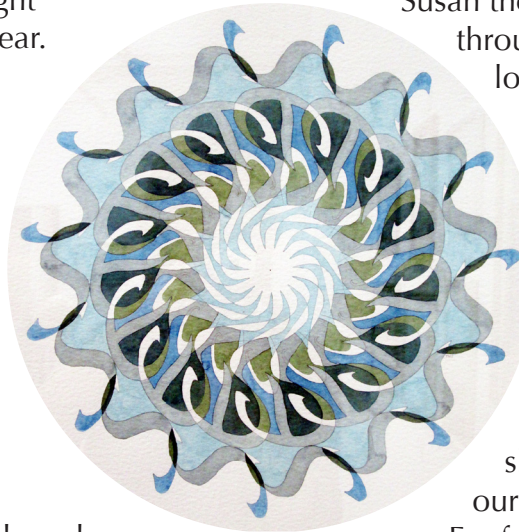


artwork by Marion McKenzie

Calligraphy and the Poetic Universe Talk with Susan Skinner

Thank you to Susan for her thought provoking talk at the AGM this year. Susan gave us a general talk focusing on the question of why, as calligraphers, do we do what we do? Why is it that, in the craft of calligraphy, we don't seem to ignore tradition and why is it that most calligraphers choose to write up meaningful and sacred texts?

Susan took us back in time to consider how the ancients used geometry as a system of ordering the world around them based upon observations of the heavens and earth, of time and space and how, in these early systems, our ancestors formed a sense of poetic spirituality which helped to create purpose and understanding in their lives; science, art and the sacred were one thing. Geometric measurement was based on angles and pattern – the lifeblood of calligraphic mark making.



Susan then brought us forward in time through ancient Egypt and Greece, looking briefly at geometric shapes and how they related to letter forms; "O" the mother of all letters and "I" the father of all letters. Calligraphy offered continuity in a changing world by constantly linking back to the basic geometric forms.

Susan's talk was a great introduction to a big subject and shone a light on the intangibles of our contemplative practice.

For further reading on the subject,

Susan recommends:

"Time Stands Still" by Keith Critchlow

And "The Cave At Lascaux"

Helen Gibbs

Illustration by Teresa Stephens, "Sea One"

New Workshop Venue for Sussex Scribes

The group has moved from Heene Road to the Pines Day Centre and all our workshops and meetings will be sited there from now on. We hope you will appreciate the calm space that the Pines has to offer.



**The Pines Day Centre
Faraday Close
Durrington
West Sussex
BN13 3RB**

By car: off Romany Road which is accessed from Littlehampton Road (A2032). There is ample parking either in the Centre car park or onstreet.

Nearest Train station: either Goring or Durrington, then roughly a 15 min walk.

If you take the train to Worthing, there is a Stagecoach bus number 10 which stops outside the station, frequency every 20 mins, and takes about 25mins to the Pines.

Please contact Cathy Stables 01243 782240 if you have any difficulties with transport to this venue.

Workshop January 2015

Illumination & Exciting Letters

Tutor: Jan Mehigan

Saturday January 17th, 10am - 4pm

Cost £20 members, £25 non-members

Venue: Pines Day Centre, Worthing



Create a single, vibrant decorative letter, using line, colour and gold (the “real” stuff or gold gouache). Even the smallest amount of gold added to your work makes it stunning. We will work on paper. This workshop is for all levels.

At this workshop we will look at Versals, the formal built-up letter and the Roman Capital form, and then adapt them to create a wonderfully decorative Lombardic Capital or a Modern Decorative Letter, which can be beautifully painted and illuminated to make a single vibrant decorative letter or even used to enhance existing or new calligraphy.

We will use bright colour, gold powders, gold gouache and/or Transfer Gold to add a sparkle to our designs.

You may select from drawn letter resources provided for you on the day, or you may wish to research an idea and bring your own exciting design to the workshop.

Letters will be drawn with a pencil or created with a technical pen. The gold will be laid on with PVA Gum.

To book a place on this workshop, please print off and fill in the workshop booking form for “Illumination & Exciting Letters” included with this newsletter

WHAT TO BRING ON THE DAY:

Calligraphy materials which will include: pens, ruler, eraser, 2H and HB pencils.

3M Magic Tape

Some gouache paints in stunning bright colours, including white gouache and perhaps gold gouache.

A small selection of watercolour paints

Paint brushes with good points are essential-

No. 2, plus, either a 00 or 000 (that is, two brushes - a fine and one not so fine, though you may bring more).

An old paint brush for mixing paint would be very useful.

An inexpensive Fineline pen in black would be useful (optional & costs about £2) - or alternatively, a dip pen with fine nib.

A4 or A3 Layout paper or photocopy paper to practise your designs

Quality Paper - about a quarter sheet only. (Waterford or Arches or Fabriano Artistico HP Paper 1401b or better still 260lb) - Or good quality heavyweight cartridge paper

Tracing paper one or two small sheets or one larger one

Two water pots and kitchen towel for wiping brushes

A mixing palette or white plate for mixing paint

Perhaps bring, if possible, a small piece of real silk which would be useful for polishing the gold (or a burnisher, but only if you have one).

Small notebook

If you wish to bring your own size and gold, shell gold or gold powder, gold gouache paint, real or otherwise, and P.V.A. I will be very pleased. Transfer Gold leaf and PVA will be available to purchase from the tutor at a small cost of approx. £2.00 for one sheet of Transfer gold.

Any examples of gold or illumination by participants would be welcome.

Card Making Workshop

Tutor: Sylvie Gokulsking

Saturday March 21st, 10 - 4pm

Cost £20 members, £25 non-members

Venue: Pines Day Centre, Worthing

*Greetings cards for any
& every occasion*

We will explore both design (including pop-ups) and script using texture and colour.

At the end of the day, you will have if not a completed card or cards, a final rough/s and lots of fun ideas for future card-making.

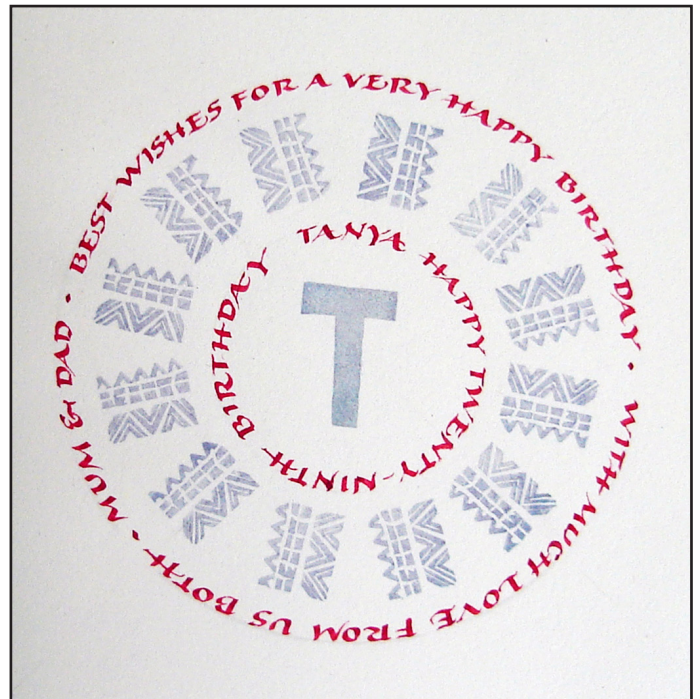
Tool and Materials:

Please bring your usual calligraphy tools and materials, and the paper (about 200gsm) you would like to use for your card/s,

scissors or a craft knife, steel rule and cutting mat, double-sided sellotape, a bone folder, a .5mm or .75mm monoline pen.

A few tubes of gouache, pencil crayons and rubber stamps/pads if you enjoy using them.

Materials will be available for general use. Don't buy anything specifically for the workshop.



To book a place on this workshop, please print off and fill in one of the workshop booking forms included with this newsletter



Calligraphy Course 2015

The CLAS Certificate of Skills: *Majuscules Medley*

Tutor: Gaynor Goffe

Cost for whole course £122

Venue: The Pines Day Centre, Worthing

Times 10-4pm, *see below for dates*

We are delighted to be able to run this year-long course taught by Gaynor Goffe. This is an opportunity for people who would like to study in a structured way, a topic in greater depth.

Students will attend four workshops each three months apart - a format that offers plenty of time for practice in between and useful for people with busy schedules. Homework will be set after each workshop and students will be expected to set aside time for study.

At the end of the course, work will be submitted for assessment and certificates awarded to students who pass the course.

This course is suitable for beginners and those with some experience alike.

Students will need to attend on the following dates: (all Saturdays)

February 21st, 2015

June 20th, 2015

October 17th, 2015

February 20th, 2016

To apply for a place on this course, please print off and fill in the special CLAS form included with this newsletter

Materials list for this course

Please bring with you:

Desk easel /drawing board

Penholders

Range of Mitchell/Rexel/Brause square nibs, and some reservoirs

Black calligraphy ink, eg Pelikan 4001, or Sumi ink (please ensure it does not bleed on your paper! if in doubt get cartridge recommended on list rather than lay out paper)

A3 Goldline or Daler Rowney lay out pad and/or

Winsor & Newton SMOOTH cartridge (says drawing and sketching on cover), 70lbs (or, if not, 60 or 100lbs)

Ruler, HB pencil, Pritt stick or similar gluestick, water pot, masking tape, scissors, craft knife

If you want to write in colour, then also bring a small mixing palette and brush, and 1 or 2 tubes of Winsor & Newton designer's gouache NOT 'primary', as it doesn't flow so well, those labelled series 1 or 2 recommended as cheaper, eg ultramarine, turquoise

Any additional calligraphy tools and materials can also be brought along if wanted.

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Sussex Scribes Programme for 2015

Dates for your diary

January 17th

Illumination & Exciting Letters

Jan Mehigan

February 21st

CLAS Certificate of Skills

Gaynor Goffe

March 21st

Card Making Workshop

Sylvie Gokulsking

May 16th

Design and How to Set Words Down

Josie Brown

June 20th

CLAS Certificate of Skills 2

Gaynor Goffe

July 18th

Texture and Rhythm

Sue Smith

September 19th

AGM

October 17th

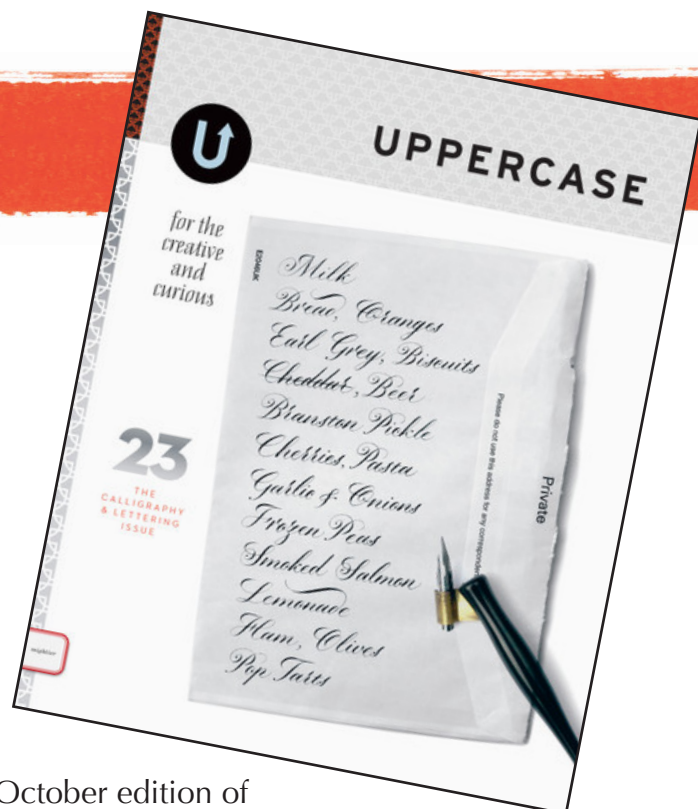
CLAS Certificate of Skills 3

Gaynor Goffe

November 21st

Printing Christmas Cards

Mary Kay Stephens



The October edition of UPPERCASE magazine features lots of Calligraphy and Lettering.

The magazine is published in Canada and is only available at two outlets in Sussex: Castor & Pollux on Brighton Seafront and Much Ado Books in Alfriston. Cost £14.

Committee

Chair:

Cathy Stables 01243 782240

Treasurer /Membership:

Dianne Heddy 01273 699587

Secretary: Denyce Aresti

Programme: Suzi Faber

Bookings: Irene Willard

Newsletter: Helen Gibbs

Committee Members:

Susan Skinner

Janice Simmonds

The next newsletter will be sent out in the Spring. Please send copy to Helen Gibbs by email to hemgee@ntlworld.com. Copy can include: write ups of any workshops you have been to, exhibitions you have visited and indeed anything else you would like to share that you think will be of interest to other scribes. Copy deadline January 15th, 2015