

# SUSSEXSCRIBES

## Newsletter January 2015

*Dear Members,*

Wishing you a very Happy New Year and best wishes for 2015.

We have started 2015 with a very successful workshop taught by Jan Mehigan on Illuminated Letters. It was greatly enjoyed by all who attended. Thank you to Jan.

As well as a Certificate of Skills taught over four Saturdays, three months apart by Gaynor Goffe, we have other very interesting workshops this year which I would encourage you to attend if you are able. The workshops are outlined in each newsletter with a booking form and include the materials list for you to print off.

2015 sees the launch of Sussex Scribes website! Thanks to Helen, our newsletter editor, everything you need to know about Sussex Scribes is online, including the newsletter, in case you delete it from your emails by mistake.

On 3rd October CLAS is holding a Regional Day in the South, which will be hosted by South Hants Calligraphers and Sussex Scribes. It is to be held in Chichester and will have a Roman theme. There will be a talk by David Graham, demonstrations, some of which will be by Sussex Scribes members, calligraphy materials and book stalls, raffle etc.

**There will also be an exhibition of work from each of the calligraphy groups and it would be great if as many members of Sussex Scribes as possible could put a piece of work in the exhibition. It can be on any subject that you choose and should be mounted rather than framed.**

More details about this exciting day will follow but please keep the day free and start thinking about your piece for the exhibition. It could be a piece that you have already done.

So there's a great deal to look forward to and it promises to be a very interesting year.

*Cathy Stables, Chair*



Sussex Scribes has a new website! We hope this will become a useful resource both for our members and also for anyone outside the group who would like to know more about our activities.

The website has easy to follow links to the following information:

- Current programme of workshops
- Detailed info about upcoming workshops with materials lists
- Current and past newsletters
- Photos from exhibitions and past workshops
- Information about workshop venues
- Membership forms

Let us know what you think:

[www.sussexscribes.co.uk](http://www.sussexscribes.co.uk)

The CLAS Regional Day, 2015  
will be in Chichester  
Save the date in your diary:  
**Saturday, October 3rd**

# Workshop May 2015

## “Design and How to Set Words Down”

Tutor: Josie Brown

Saturday May 16th, 10am - 4pm

Cost £20 members, £25 non-members

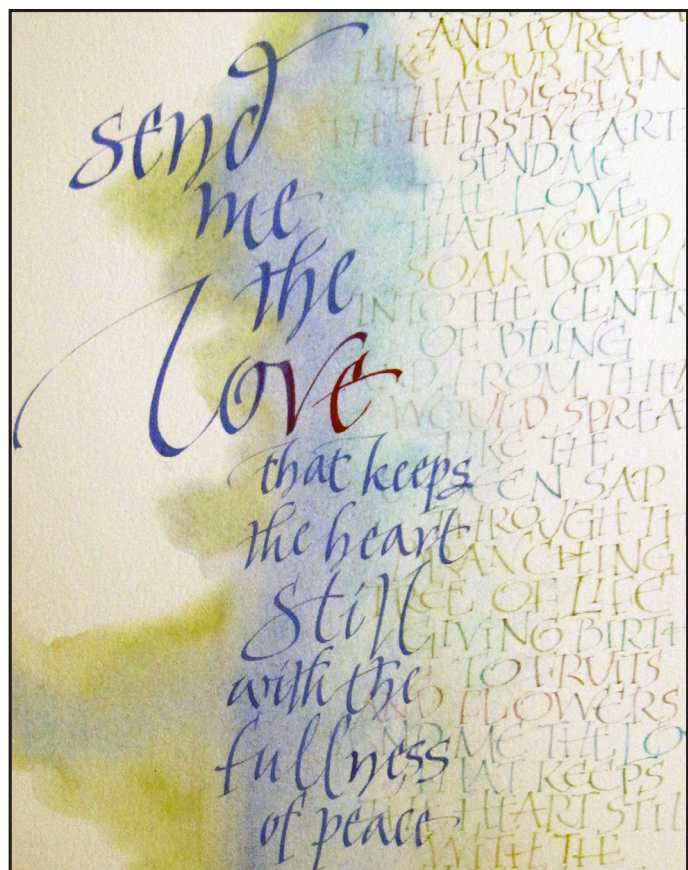
Venue: Pines Day Centre, Worthing

This is a highly interactive workshop combining an in depth consideration of traditional design guidelines with an overview of practices from other cultures, to support our customary design process.

Several paired and group activities, together with discussion and an exchange of ideas will help to inform and develop a fresh approach to calligraphic creations.

We will explore how to branch away from the ordinary and into the realms of the unexpected, as well as questioning our starting points for interpretation.

You won't have a wonderful piece of work to take home, but you should leave with a more innovative or different approach to design.



Josie Brown

To book a place on this and any of our other workshops in 2015 (except CLAS), please use the workshop booking form included with this newsletter

### Materials List for Josie's Workshop

Please bring your usual calligraphic equipment including:

- Layout or cartridge paper
- Scissors or craft knife, metal ruler and cutting mat
- Stick glue (Pritt or equivalent)
- Colour pencils
- 2 or 3 colours in either gouache or watercolour
- A range of nib sizes or various other tools you like to write with
- An open mind!

## Workshop Programme for 2015

*February 21st*

**CLAS Certificate with Gaynor Goffe**

*March 21st*

**Card Making with Sylvie Gokulsking**

*May 16th*

**Design and How to Set Words Down with Josie Brown**

*June 20th*

**CLAS Certificate Part 2**

*July 18th*

**Texture and Rhythm with Sue Smith**

*September 19th*

**AGM with Guest Speaker Peter Amos**

*October 17th*

**CLAS Certificate Part 3**

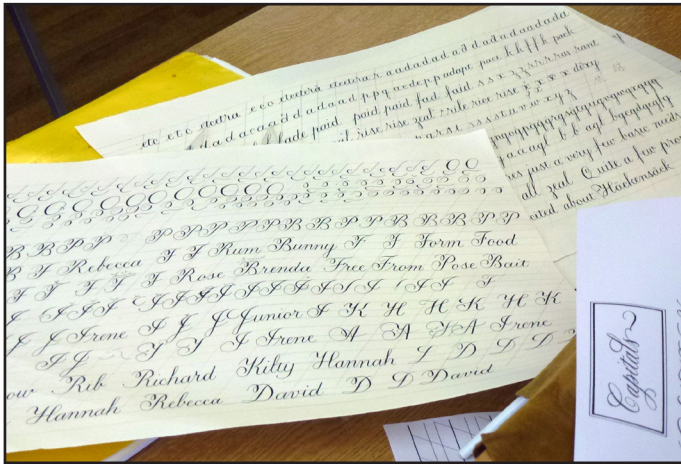
*November 21st*

**Printing Christmas Cards with Mary Kay Stephens**

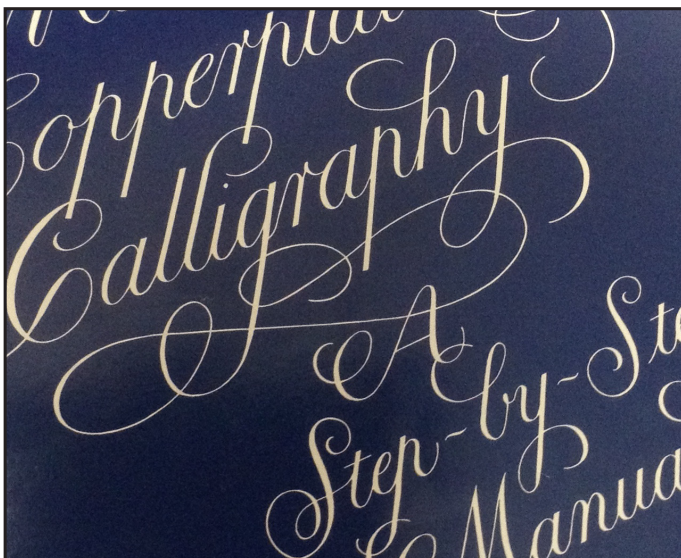
more info at [www.sussexscribes.co.uk](http://www.sussexscribes.co.uk)



# Workshop Review



**“Copperplate”**  
with Eleanor Winters  
October 18th - 19th, 2014



We were 11 on the course held at The Pines Centre in Worthing and were lucky to have plenty of working space and individual attention during the course. We were both beginners like me, and those with more practice and skill. Throughout the weekend everyone gained valuable tips, techniques, and suggestions.

Eleanor Winters was our tutor and author of several books on copperplate. She had just flown in from the USA where she spends six months of the year; for the other six months she lives in Paris. She gives only a few workshops each year in this country, and she hasn't given classes before in Sussex.

The first morning was spent in introduction, history, tools, paper and nibs. Eleanor bought Nikko nibs with her. These are available in the USA and most students preferred these to the nibs readily available here. Paper and ink too have to be chosen well, with such sharp nibs some ink bleeds into the layout paper, I found Higgins Eternal worked well. Following the introduction our practice began in earnest.

We studied the detailed design of the minuscule, Eleanor's teaching skill was in giving close attention to each part of the letter; we learnt the formation of the different letter groups, and like a jigsaw the letter patterns gradually took shape. By the end of the day we were writing several words, it was an intense day and all left tired with the concentration, but glad we had day two ahead in which to consolidate.

On day two we progressed to capitals and decoration, again we concentrated on the design detail for different letter groups, as well as the as important spacing, Eleanor's critique was always really valuable.

One weekend did not make me adept at the copperplate script but it did make me enthusiastic to learn more and keen to keep practising.

It was a real privilege to be taught by someone of such skill, ability and patience. It would be great to see Eleanor again next year for more copperplate classes.

I enjoyed the weekend, it was fun being with a likeminded, happy and friendly group of calligraphers. Thank-you all.

Ros Edwards



# Workshop Review

## Fantastic Foldies for Christmas

with Jan Pickett

November 15th, 2014

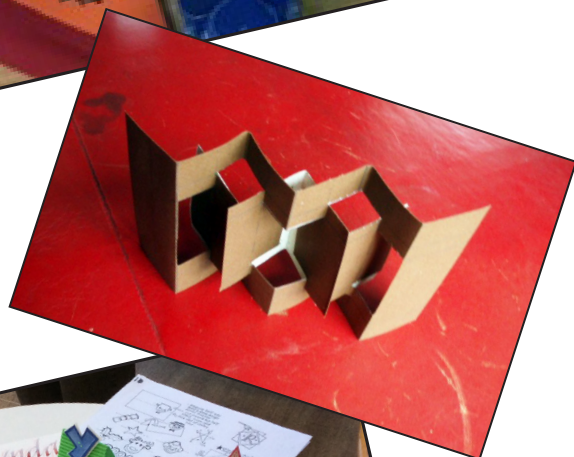
As the flyer indicated, the foldies were fun to make and a pleasure to give and receive. We created cards and containers using different techniques, some harder than others.

Jan provided us with sheets of instructions and illustrations for making A Star Card, A Dinky-Doo for your Delight, Celtic Confusion, Have Fun at Hampton Court, (a foldy thoughtful) A Catherine Wheel, A Tunnel Card and A Hearty Box. These highly inventive titles give you an idea of Jan's light but accurate way of teaching. She was so helpful when the little grey cells gave out! (as in my case!).

We all ended up with beautiful objects that we decorated by making rubber prints to press on them, or by simply painting or colouring them.

Many thanks Jan for a wonderful day.

*Susan Skinner*





# Workshop Review



## Illumination & Exciting Letters with Jan Mehigan

January 17th, 2015

The workshop on Saturday on ILLUMINATING LETTERS was very well led by Jan Mehigan. We learned a great deal and had lots of fun as well.

First of all Jan showed us the wonderful variety of letters she had illuminated - it was worth going to the workshop just to see them.

Afterwards we worked in pencil on versals, using the excellent handouts that we were given. Versals are based on the proportion of Roman capitals but freely drawn with a pen or pencil. Jan showed us how to design our versals in different ways, sometimes adding stars, changing the shape of lines and separating shapes. All of this worked well as long as we kept the to right proportions for the core part of the letter. For all of this Jan's demonstrations were excellent.



After this we chose the letter we wished to design and illuminate, gaining inspiration from Jan's own work. When our letter was designed and ready to illuminate we used PVA glue (dyed pink) to put on gold leaf and then we painted the letter with gouache paints. It sounds simple, doesn't it, but in fact it took a lot of care and attention.

Some of us were unable to finish our letter in time but firmly decided we would complete it at home.

Many thanks Jan for a fulfilling day.

*Susan Skinner*



# *A Workshop With Massimo Polello*

The email came in May. I'd forgotten I'd applied to do Massimo Polello's workshop at the 2014 CLAS festival in Malvern. I'd lost in the ballot for places, but suddenly someone had dropped out and did I want the place? The excitement was incredible and only slightly dimmed by the list of materials. It was of bankrupting proportions. Thank goodness he wasn't teaching gilding.

I'd admired Massimo's work for some time.

He's an Italian calligrapher, a master of the fluid line and not someone who cares about legibility. Is it a letter? Is it a flourish? Who cares. The line is alive, passionate and ecstatic.

We met him on the first evening, a lovely man in his forties with a kind smile and an apology for his 'lack' of English. If we weren't in love with him then, we were by the next morning when we arrived in class to find a curved line of packages. One for each of us, they contained the handouts, our names beautifully written AND a gold wrapped chocolate from his home town of Turin.

We started with Roman capitals written with an Italian 1" flat brush. Within 20 minutes, to everyone's horror, he wanted us to work on our 'good' paper. He thinks the British are crazy with their layout paper and planning. Then we worked in pencil emphasizing the joints of letters. Again 20 minutes practise before working on more 'good' paper. Then came the construction of letters with inky scribbles, then by dripping gloss paint using a potter's stick. We worked on all

sorts of paper in all sorts of ways.

It might have been intimidating to be in a class of mostly SSI and CLAS fellows, but nobody expected my work to be 'good'. And seeing them out of their comfort zones and struggling like I was, was reassuring.

After two days we cut, folded and sewed our experiments into amazing, chaotic books. The

next two and a half days were devoted to the dance of the calligraphic line. Our exemplar was a letter from a Roman senator; lots of curly ascenders and descenders.

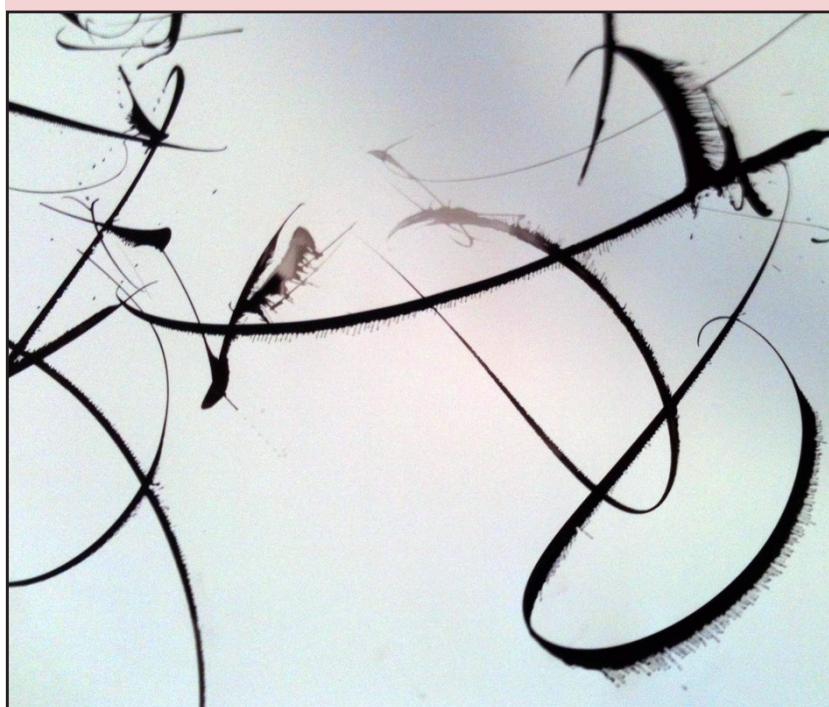
We extended the joins between lines, extending and then sending them in all directions so that a word would zigzag across a page.

We wrote with pens, 4" strips of balsa wood and Massimo's trademark - a medical syringe filled with paint. Again, on different types and colours of paper so that on the last morning we created an even more bizarre book.

Massimo is a lovely teacher who stretches you, way beyond your comfort zone, but is kind and supportive.

His website is [www.lacalligrafia.com](http://www.lacalligrafia.com) He holds workshops in the Tuscan hills where he assured us the wine is very good. I'm saving up to go.

*Dianne Heddy*



# Back Page

**East Surrey College** run classes in Calligraphy, Heraldic Art and Illumination. They run as both short courses and one day workshops. More info from their website at [www.esc.ac.uk](http://www.esc.ac.uk)

## **Free Form Lettering & Calligraphy Taster Workshop.**

Saturday March 21st, 10-3pm, £33

## **Heraldic Art Calligraphy & Illumination**

8 Fridays starting April 24th, 10-4pm, £280

## **Calligraphy Workshop for Beginners**

Saturday June 20th, 10-1pm, £21

## **Calligraphy Workshop Summer School**

Wednesday July 1st, 11-4pm, £33

**West Dean College**, Nr Chichester runs short courses in Calligraphy, Lettercutting and Signwriting.

More info at [www.westdean.org.uk](http://www.westdean.org.uk)

## **Creative Calligraphy With Pattern**

March 27th - 30th with Cherrell Avery, £306

## **Cursive - The Art of Line and Space with Monica Dengo**

Madrid, Spain, May 17th - 23rd

More info email [chiliscubeiro@gmail.com](mailto:chiliscubeiro@gmail.com)

## **Calligraphy and Lettering Arts Society**

CLAS AGM March 14th, 2015 at the British Library

CLAS Festival August 14th-20th, 2015

CLAS Regional Day, Chichester, October 3rd, 2015

more info at [www.clas.co.uk](http://www.clas.co.uk)

## **Society of Scribes and Illuminators**

[www.calligraphyonline.org](http://www.calligraphyonline.org)

## **Sussex Scribes has a Facebook page!**

If you are already on Facebook, we can add you to the group if you would like to join it.

Members can post pictures of their work, ask for advice and share information with other members such as exhibitions, books you have read or workshops you know about.

We will keep the page updated with details of workshops and any other calligraphy news.

Only members will be able to see the posts, and your information won't be shared....



## **Exhibitions**

### **Magna Carta: Law, Liberty, Legacy**

British Library, March 13th - September 1st

### **The 5th International Exhibition of Calligraphy 2015**

March 14th - April 12th at the Contemporary Museum of Calligraphy, Moscow

## **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 Summer. Please send copy to Helen Gibbs by email to [hemgee@ntlworld.com](mailto: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 April 15th, 2015*

**[www.sussexscribes.co.uk](http://www.sussexscribes.co.uk)**