



# SUSSEXSCRIBES

Newsletter October 2017

*Dear Members,*

Did you get to see Sussex Scribes exhibition at the Jubilee Library in Brighton recently? Thank you to all those who submitted work for the exhibition. There was a great variety of excellent pieces of work and it was a very good space in which to showcase our calligraphy and lettering

If you were at our AGM recently you would have heard a very interesting talk from Tim Noad, our speaker. He had brought some of his exquisite work to show us and told us about his recent meeting with the Queen where she asked him if he had a good pen for her to write on the vellum. (She doesn't sound as if she's a fan of vellum).

Tim expressed some sadness at the introduction of the new pound coins, not because of the fact that they don't fit into parking machines but because they have replaced his lovely designs which were used previously.

At the AGM we said goodbye and gave our thanks to Ros Edwards our Treasurer. She is moving to Cornwall very soon. We'll all miss her and wish her well. Thank you to Mariette Hardman for coming to the rescue and agreeing to step into her shoes.

It's time to renew your membership if you haven't already. We have lots of very interesting workshops planned by Suzi Faber for 2018.

We are changing our venue for the workshops next year and they will be held at Angmering School instead. Unfortunately, this means we will have to increase our workshop fee to cover the higher cost of this venue but we hope you will still feel that our workshops are good value. Hope to see you at one of them.

*Cathy Stables, Chair*



Our new venue for workshops in 2018 will be

**The Lavinia Norfolk Centre  
at Angmering School**

Station Road  
Angmering  
West Sussex  
BN16 4HH

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

The school has ample car parking.  
If you are travelling by train, the school is about a half mile from Angmering Station.





## Exhibition in the Foyer of Jubilee Library, Brighton

*"Sussex Scribes – 25 Years of Creative Lettering"*

September 4th - 16th, 2017

Thank you to everyone who participated in this show to make it such a success - to the people who submitted work, the hanging team (!) and everyone who enjoyed seeing the work on the wall. We showed a wonderfully diverse variety of lettering styles and texts, which made a display fully representative of the group.



The hangers - ready to go for a well earned breakfast after hanging the show in under two hours and finishing just as the library was opening. *From left to right: Helen, Dianne, Denyce, Gerald, Irene, Cathy and Janice.*

## AGM 2017

We had a wonderful AGM, our last at the Pines Day Centre in Worthing.

Our thanks must go to everyone who helped to make it so enjoyable - to Nancy for bringing her mobile shop of calligraphic delights, to everyone who brought delicious cakes and biscuits, to all the helpers who set up and tidied the room afterwards and especially to Tim Noad for such a wonderful talk about his work as a Heraldry artist.

There were some technical hitches with the projecting equipment which meant we couldn't show Tim's slide show but this didn't lessen the impact and inspiration we gleaned from his talk.

Tim had brought with him a number of examples of his amazing art works, which one or two people held up (for some time!) for all to see whilst Tim described their content.

Tim was also very patient with our many questions. We were intrigued to learn that he became interested in Heraldry at the tender age of twelve inspired by a love of history and drawing. He later went on to study at Reigate with Antony and Margaret Wood and Gerald Mynott.

There is so much detail in a Coat of Arms it should not have been a surprise when Tim said it could take a couple of years to work through a commission from beginning to end. The artwork and the text has to be carefully considered and then laid out to make a balanced composition both on vellum and on paper.

Tim also showed us his designs for the now old pound coins. (He won a competition to have his designs used.) Whilst these may be out of circulation and lost to the past, this certainly cannot be said of Tim's wondrous works of art that will no doubt continue to show his fabulous skills to many future generations.

*Helen Gibbs*



## Calligraphic Handwriting & Contemporary Cursive

with Veiko Kespersaks

November 18th, 2017

Pines Day Centre

Worthing

10am - 4pm

Cost £20

In this modern calligraphy workshop you will learn everything about how to get started with quirky handwritten lettering styles. You will learn how to write with a traditional dip pen, using lightness and pressure to create beautiful thin and thick strokes. We will cover pen "pressure and release" techniques along with the basics of decorating letters.

We will explore different inks, pens and papers, as well as consider how to choose the best materials for your own work.

This is a practical, informal class and the focus will be on having lots of fun while learning. At the end of the workshop you will take home example alphabets, so you can continue to enjoy modern calligraphy.

### Tools and Equipment to Bring:

Layout Paper (A3)

Good quality smooth hot pressed paper

Eraser

Gridded Ruler 50cm

0.3 Automatic Pencil

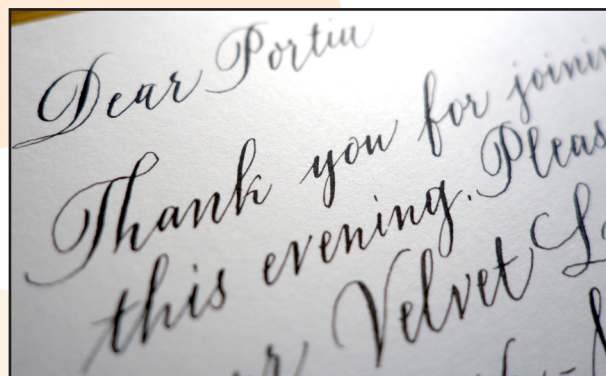
Japanese Calligraphy ink stick and ink stone (if you have)

Speedball 2968 Oblique Pen Set, black

Set of Watercolours

Water Container

Some materials will be available for purchase during the course.



**For last minute bookings, please  
contact Irene Willard:  
01273 888798**

## Gilding Without Gesso

with Cathy Stables

January 20th, 2018

Angmering School

10am - 4pm

Cost £25

In this workshop we will use Gum Ammoniac and PVA Wundasize and Gold Leaf to achieve raised and flat gilding for writing, capital letters and patterns.

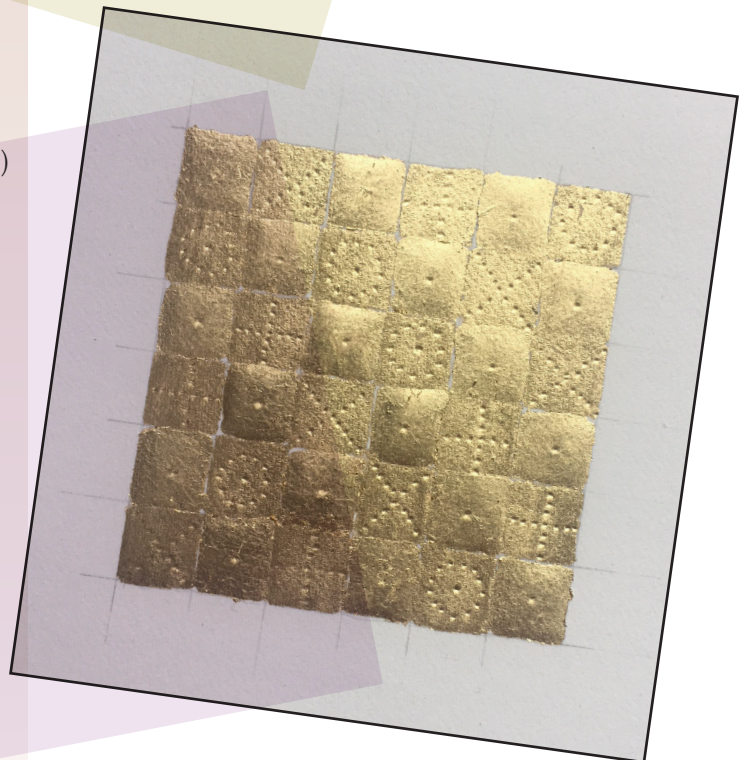
Different coloured and kinds of paper will be explored as a base for the gilding.

### MATERIAL LIST

- Usual Calligraphy equipment including pencils, pens, ruler etc
- HP Watercolour Paper – A4 or larger
- Coloured Pastel Paper ( Mi-Teintes or similar)
- Dog tooth and pointed burnishers if you have them
- Watercolour brushes – small sizes – at least size 1
- Mixing brushes
- TRANSFER Gold Leaf 23 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> carat or similar
- Wundasize\*
- Gum Ammoniac\*

\*These will be supplied by Cathy for a small extra charge.

Cathy will have some extra burnishers to borrow and sheets of Transfer Gold Leaf to buy. Cornelissen's in London supply the Gold Leaf by mail order if you want to buy it.



**To book a place on this workshop , please use the booking form at the end of this newsletter or contact Irene 01273 888798**

**NB: The cost of our workshops will increase to £25 per day in 2018.**



# Workshop CLAS Traditional Skills Part 4

## Egg Tempera with Josie Brown

February 10th, 2018  
Angmering School  
10am-4pm

In this session, we will learn about where certain pigments come from and how to use egg yolk and glair as a binding medium.

We will grind and prepare our own paints from powder pigments as well as use egg with ordinary gouache to render it both waterproof and full of lustre.

This fully practical session will then offer demonstrations and time to experiment with different methods for applying the paint and how to gain particular effects.

It will be possible to make our own dragon's blood transfer paper and complete a decorated letter, border or illustration.



Please note this workshop is already full. We will be running another CLAS Certificate Course in 2019

## Tools and Materials Needed:

- Cartridge paper
- Drawing materials - pencil, rubber, sharpener etc
- Good quality, fine paint brushes, Sizes 2, 0 and 000 (sable isn't necessary, synthetic will do)
- Cheap brushes for mixing paint
- Powder pigments \*\*
- Glass slab and muller\*
- Gouache paints
- Kitchen roll
- An egg\*\*\*
- Dish/saucer to separate the egg in to
- Several water pots
- At least 8-12 clean palette sections (preferably ceramic)
- Cling wrap\*
- Heavy-weight smooth surface cartridge paper or an A3 size piece of HP watercolour paper
- Your own prepared design in outline - anything you wish
- Tracing paper
- Face mask
- Note book

\* The tutor will bring enough for everyone so only bring if you already have them and want to use your own

\*\* The tutor will bring powder pigments for people to use at a small cost

\*\*\* We won't ALL need an egg each, so one between two people will be plenty, unless everyone wishes to have a go at pinching the yolk to retain the sac!

**NB: You only need a face mask if you have a vulnerable chest - the amount of powder pigments we're likely to use will not create even a remotely worrying level of dust.**



Workshop

March 2018

## Batarde Miniscules & Batarde Majuscules with Gerald Mynott

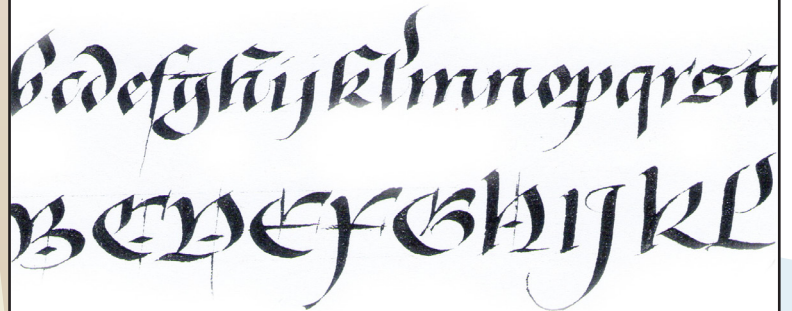
March 17th/18th, 2018  
Angmering School  
10am - 4pm  
Cost £25 per day

All students, during the two-day course, will have the opportunity to understand the theory and practice of the Gothic Batarde hand, both lower and uppercase.

Alongside Gothic hands, there existed, during the 14th and 15th Centuries, numerous cursive scripts, which were used for legal and other documents.

Batarde is a book hand which evolved in France as a formal version of these scripts. By the end of the 15th century, Batarde very often accompanied large scale and richly illuminated volumes.

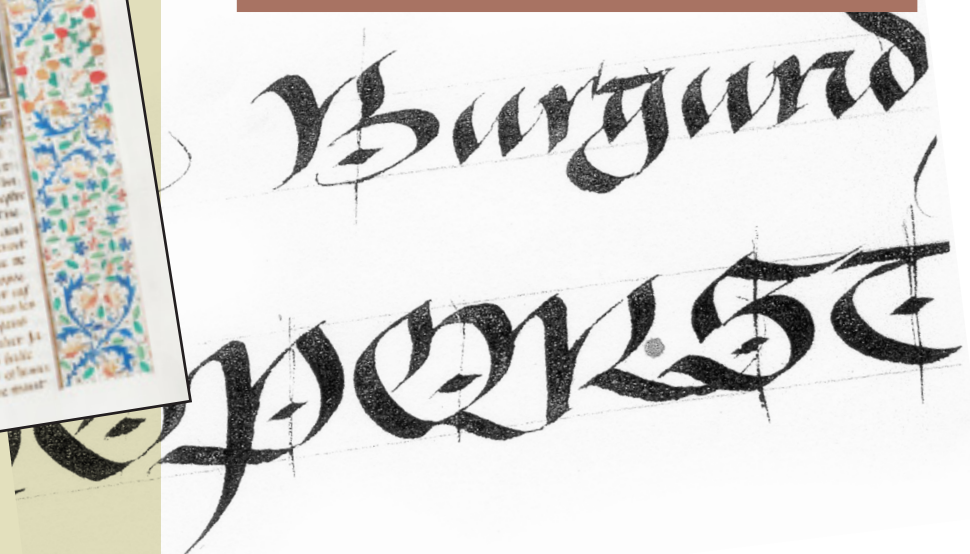
Froissarts Chronicle in the British Library is possibly the finest example in the country.



### Please bring along to the workshop:

- Cartridge Paper A2 – A3
- Mitchell nibs and holder
- Black Quink ink or gouache
- Flame Red gouache
- Gold Gouache – Schminke or W&N
- White gouache (W&N) or Dr Martins
- Bleed-proof white
- Coloured paper -0 black, red, or dark blue
- Automatic pens – optional and can be supplied by tutor
- Pencils
- T square
- Drawing board
- Palettes for mixing
- Water pot
- Rags/tissues for cleaning

**This short course can be booked for one day only or for both. Please use the workshop booking form at the end of this newsletter or contact Irene 01273 888798**





## Its A Kind of Magic

with Tina Warren

May 12th, 2018

Angmering School

10am - 4pm

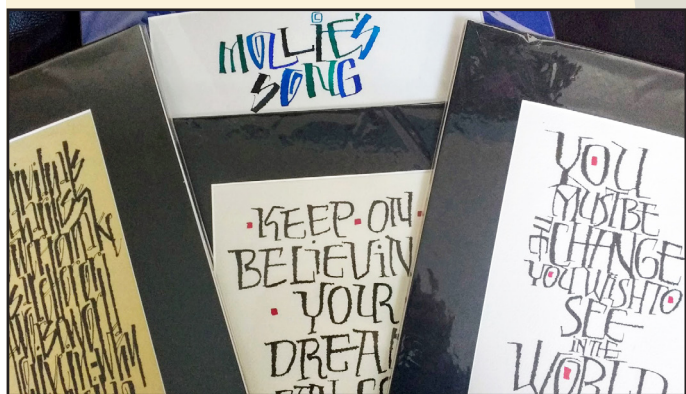
Cost £25

*Suitable for all levels*

Black and white magic?

A workshop combining a morning working with bleach and ink followed by an afternoon experimenting with the folded pen.

We'll start off with a squirt of bleach – what will it reveal? This will be followed by floating sumi ink on still water to create stunning marbled paper – each piece unique!



In the afternoon we will explore the wonderful mark making properties of the folded pen – a great tool that happily skips along the surface of textured paper and teams up well with suminagashi paper.

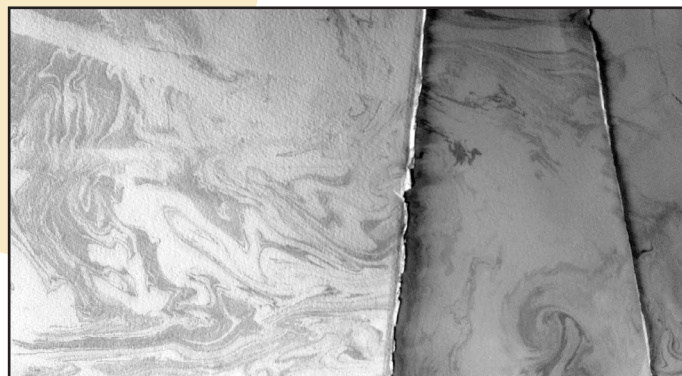
Drawing on techniques learned from traditional scripts we will loosen up and break some rules!

For those who have not made a cola pen we can also make one of these to use.



### Equipment to bring:

- A tray which much be at least the size of the paper you intend to dip – new cat litter tray, casserole dish, rectangular washing up bowl etc work well
- A bottle of sumi ink E.G. Moon Palace (or you can grind your own)
- 2 small jars – one will have sumi in and the other a dispersant
- Water colour paper (I will have Saunders Waterford for sale) and any other paper you would like to experiment with. Cartridge paper is not good.
- Folded nib (Penman Direct UK, Tim Leigh USA or Dreaming Dogs USA)
- Layout paper
- Clean empty cola can, scissors, masking tape, dowling rod or old pencil (if making a cola nib)
- Newspaper to lay wet suminagashi on



**To book a place on this workshop , please use the booking form at the end of this newsletter or contact Irene 01273 888798**



# Workshop Review

August 2017

## Sewing Pages, More Volume Bookbinding with Helen Gibbs

August 12th, 2017

Pines Day Centre, Worthing

10am - 4pm

There are three essential requirements for a successful workshop: good preparation of materials and pace of work, clearly written instructions and diagrams in the handout for future reference and careful demonstrations spaced throughout the day.

We are guaranteed all three, together with her skilled help and happy disposition, when Helen teaches us another wonderful book structure.

On this day we learned two. In the morning, Helen showed us a limp book with French sewing requiring no glue. It had the added attraction of incorporating ribbons in the sewing which reappear through slots in the cover and as a tie on the fore-edge. Meanwhile we glued up the second book to be ready for the afternoon.

This was a Drum Leaf binding, a method new to me, where the spine is glued earlier on and allowed to dry. Then alternative pages are glued at the fore edge enabling the inner pages to be free of sewing threads. The book can include endpages before the covers are attached.

We all brought our own 'art work' to use for the covers and the finished books made a splendid display at the end of the afternoon.

Helen demonstrated how to make a recess in the cover so that a special highlight could be incorporated that is flush with the cover and she introduced us to a beeswax product which protected the otherwise vulnerable paper from general wear.

We all enjoyed the hard work but agreed that it was a stimulating and rewarding day.

*Teresa M Stephens*





## CLAS Certificate of Skills Part 3: Quills

with Josie Brown

October 14th, 2017  
Pines Day Centre  
Worthing  
10am - 4pm

Session three of a four part Traditional Skills course was devoted to all things quills.

Trepidation turned to excitement as Josie shared her passion for cutting a quill and then using it with the right medium for a particular piece of work.

We began with a discussion about the different types of feathers and were introduced to the terminology. Josie's enthusiasm became contagious as we learned about the different methods of curing quills, be that hanging them for a long period, the hot sand method or using a dutching tool and a hot iron.

Using crochet hooks to release the inner membrane, we scraped off the outer membrane from the barrel and then took it in turns to attempt the hot sand and the dutching tool methods. Then came the cutting.

Having established the importance of safety when using extremely sharp knives - the sharper, the better - we nervously set about following the instructions for making several cuts in each quill, which

would hopefully result in the production of a beautiful, handcrafted tool for writing.

Josie patiently explained how to cut different widths, different angles for specific scripts and how to make reservoirs using strips from an aluminium drinks can or a piece of micropore tape.

Everyone then used their quill to attempt writing using different media such as ink, gouache, gesso, etc. We tried different widths of nibs and different letter weights, followed by a trouble-shooting session.

As in previous sessions, the subject matter was fascinating and there was much to learn. Josie always incorporates a good deal of humour and encouragement in her teaching sessions, and on this occasion she also showed us examples of a previous student's work to inspire us and to help us with ideas about

presentation of our work at the end of the course.

Our final session next February will be egg tempera painting and I know that we are all looking forward to that with eager anticipation.

*Alison Millin*





# Visit to Downside Abbey by Irene Willard

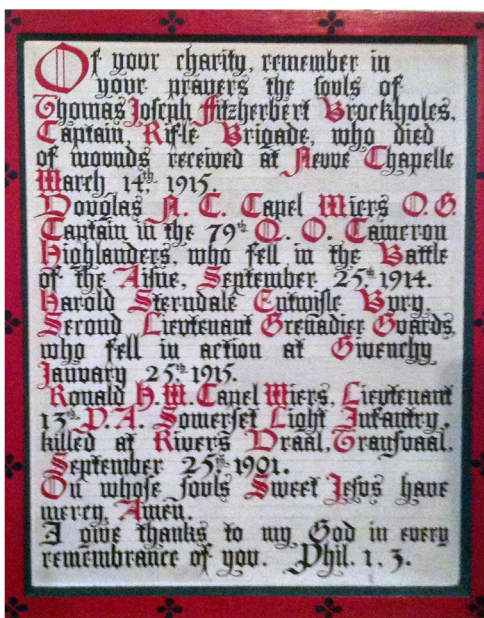
I was lucky enough recently to be invited to visit Downside Abbey/School by a friend who had worked there. We had a privately conducted tour of the Abbey to see various things and wow was I amazed. I was invited to look at some illuminated manuscripts but saw much more than that.

Downside Abbey/School in Somerset was founded in 1872. It is a co-educational Catholic Independent School attached to Downside Abbey. Its proper title is The Basilica of St. Gregory at Downside and it is a Benedictine Monastery, one of only four Minor Basilicas in England. It is also just one step down from St. Peter's in Rome. It is also the largest Abbey Church in the UK and boasts the largest Sacristy in the UK.

There is lots to read about the Abbey on the web but one of the things it doesn't tell you is that the organ, which is absolutely magnificent, is made of wood from Napoleon's ship the Bellerophon.

The whole place was just jaw dropping: the magnificent windows, the numerous chapels, the reredoses, the alabaster frescoes etc. etc. They also have a swimming pool dating back to 1875.

After the tour of the Abbey, I was taken to look at the library, which consists of many thousands of books which are still



being catalogued. They are still finding things they never knew they had including a letter from Charles Dickens and a cook book dating back to 1793. Their illuminated books are really superb and it always amazes me how anyone could write such superb books in such small writing (and I didn't find any errors or alterations). In total there are some 500,000 items in the library, some of the books dating back to the 11th Century.

They also showed me a letter from the Duke of Wellington stating that he had found papers proving that the Prince Regent had in fact married Maria Fitzherbert, a Catholic and a widow, which would have prevented him from inheriting the throne. The Duke of Wellington was purported to have destroyed the papers but they were found to prove that he was married and that Maria Fitzherbert had lied when saying she was not married to him. In the travel journal of John Smith, a naval man, he refers to how Pocahontas saved his life, thus proving that legend.

It was a truly superb visit and I recommend it to anyone. If you contact the Abbey in advance, you can book a visit and also request to look at some of the magnificent illuminated manuscripts. *Irene Willard*



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#### February 10th

Certificate of Skills 4 with Josie Brown

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#### March 18th

Batarde Majuscules with Gerald Mynott

#### May 12th

Alternative Calligraphy with Tina Warren

#### June 16th

Numerals & Flourishing with Nancy O-Howells

#### July 14th

Italic for Beginners/Improvers with Gaynor Goffe

#### August 11th

Collector's Piece - Bookbinding with Helen Gibbs

#### September 15th

AGM with Guest Speaker Sylvie Gokulsing

#### October 13th

Embossing With Extra Pzazz with Jan Pickett

#### November 10th/11th

Copperplate Weekend with Eleanor Winters

*For workshop bookings and enquiries please use the booking form included with this newsletter or contact Irene Willard 01273 888798*

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Sussex Scribes run a letter and birthday card exchange. To join this small but beautiful group please contact Helen (hemgee22@gmail.com) or Suzi (suzifaber@outlook.com)

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Courses and Workshops with Ewan Clayton in Brighton: [www.ewanclayton.co.uk](http://www.ewanclayton.co.uk)

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

Thank you to everyone who sent articles and photographs in for this newsletter.

The next newsletter will be sent out at the end of January, 2018. Please send any copy to Helen Gibbs: email [hemgee22@gmail.com](mailto:hemgee22@gmail.com)

Copy can include: write ups of workshops, exhibitions and anything else you would like to share with the group.

**Copy deadline January 15th, 2018**

## Your Committee

**Chair:** Cathy Stables  
01243 782240

**Secretary:** Denyce Aresti

**Programme:** Suzi Faber

**Bookings:** Irene Willard

**Newsletter/ Membership:**  
Helen Gibbs

**Treasurer:** Mariette Hardman

**Committee Members:**  
Janice Simmonds

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