

SUSSEXSCRIBES

Dear members,

Spring has definitely come and everything feels very hopeful.

In February we had our annual free-to-members workshop. This year our tutor was Adele Dark and her subject was "Matisse Lettering". There were some very colourful results and a different way of looking at letterforms. Some of the work done in that workshop is shown here and on page 8.

Thanks to our members for their varied and interesting contributions. In this newsletter you can read about toadstool ink, Brighton Festival and a display of work by Patti Griffiths, Helen's experience of a workshop making scrolls and the Wimborne Minster Chained Library in Dorset. Keep sending in your articles as we love to read them.

In May, Patti will be teaching Wooker script, named after an imaginary bird like creature and we have more workshops planned for the coming months. Thanks to Mariette and Nina who have put together another stimulating and fun programme. Please do remember to book in advance as soon as possible as this helps our planning.

Also in May, there is a study trip to Fishbourne Roman Palace – a great opportunity to meet with other members and be inspired by the beautiful mosaics and relics of Roman times. Details on p 2.

Sussex Scribes are not having an exhibition this year but we are asking you for suggestions for the subject of our



Newsletter April 2026

exhibition next year. There is plenty of time to create something wonderful between now and then and I hope you will find inspiration for a special piece of work in the workshops planned for this year.

Cathy Stables, Chair

SSI Lay Members' Exhibition Art Worker's Guild, June 2026

The deadline for submitting the application form to show your work is May 13th, 2026

This year's topic is:

THE ELEMENTS

e.g. Earth, Air, Fire, Water
or your own choice.

*Details on how to enter
are on the SSI website:*

www.calligraphyonline.org



*What have we been up to? See page 8
Above artwork by Lisbeth.*

Sussex Scribes Workshops and Events 2026

Programme 2026

Don't forget to send in your requests for future workshops to Mariette:
omwdh4@outlook.com

Thursday, May 21st 2026

Study Trip to Fishbourne Roman Palace and Gardens, Chichester.

Meeting point is the ticket place at 12 noon. Event contact Mariette: 07470 417971. Bring note books, cameras, packed lunch etc

May 23rd, 2026

"Wooker Script"
with Patti Griffiths, *details page 10*
Broadwater Baptist Church, Worthing

August 29th, 2026

"Bookbinding" with Lucie Jones
Broadwater Baptist Church, Worthing
details page 11

September 26th, 2026

"Uncial Variations" with Mary Noble
details page 12
Broadwater Baptist Church, Worthing

October 17th, 2026

"AGM"
with guest speaker Gwyneth Hibbett

November 28th, 2026

"Fantastic Elastic Italic" with Ann Mason (zoom) *details page 13*

All the details for our workshops and events are listed on our website at www.sussexscribes.co.uk

Workshop Bookings

T's & C's for workshops in 2026

Our bookings person is Lisbeth Godfray. Please contact her by email to reserve a place on a workshop in 2026:

lisgodfray@sky.com

We welcome non-members to most of our workshops but priority will be given to members if demand is high for a particular workshop.

Please note that the workshop price varies depending on if it is a zoom workshop, in person or a "Member's Special".

Only when the full payment has been received will your booking be complete and a place reserved for you.

We would prefer it if you could pay by bank transfer - please identify the payment you make with your name.

account number 53122093
sort code 20-20-65

Cheques should be made payable to "Sussex Scribes" and be dated two weeks ahead of the workshop date. Please send to **Mariette Hardman, Weald Chase, The Street, Bolney, W.Sussex, RH17 5PF** and include your name, workshop and email address.

Cancellations:

To cancel your booking please notify the bookings officer (Lisbeth) **at least one month** in advance of the workshop. Your booking fee will then and only then be refunded in full.

If you cancel your booking **less** than one month before the workshop date, Sussex Scribes can only refund you in full if your place can be filled from the waiting list.

If Sussex Scribes have to cancel a workshop, your fee will be refunded in full.



Congratulations, Mariette, on taking up your new role as Treasurer for CLAS. We wish you all the best and we can't think of a more reliable pair of hands to look after the penny pot.

The image above shows Mariette beside her entry for the CLAS "Art and the Letter" exhibition at Regent's University in March. perhaps more of us could be encouraged to enter something for this show....

If you missed the exhibition you can still see the entries on the CLAS website. The judges comments are also available to read.

Summer School at Claridge House

"Heraldic Art, Illumination and Calligraphy"

with Gerald Mynott

August 17th - 22nd, 2026

"A very peaceful setting with great cake!"

www.claridgehouse.org.uk

The new CLAS **LiveOnline** Program of classes starting April 2026 is as follows:

Decorative Ottonian Letter

with Margaret Morgan 29 April and 13 May

Ampersands

with Julia Baxter 30 April and 14 May

Formal Italic

with Mary Noble 6 May and 20 May

Lindisfarne Lettering

with Liz Barrow 7 May and 21 May

Decorative Borders

with Jan Mehigan 3 June and 10 June

Creative Backgrounds and Composition

with Sunita Auger 10 June and 24 June

Hermann Kilian's Capitals

with Ann Mason 1 June and 25 June

Pencil Gothic

with Gwyneth Hibbett 4 June and 18 June

All courses run from 7pm to 9pm.

Cost £50 members of CLAS/£65 others

Please see the **LiveOnline** webpage for further details and booking

www.clas.co.uk/clas-live-online

Calligraphy Exhibitions This Summer



Brighton Festival

I'm jolly excited to say that I've been accepted to exhibit at The Claremont Hotel on Second Avenue, in Hove actually (13 Second Avenue, BN3 2LL), as part of the Brighton Festival Artist's Open Houses initiative.

An artist friend of mine suggested I apply and a lovely meeting with the owner Coralie later secured me a spot. This led to a frenzy of finishing off, card making and framing to make sure I had enough work to make a decent showing. I'm very proud to be flying the calligraphy flag and I shall be waving it for all I'm worth during May.

I hope some of you will be able to make it to The Claremont. It's a lovely building quite close to the sea and they have a lovely garden where you can sit and have refreshments. They show a lot of artists and it's always been a bit of a destination for me when I've done the Hove trail in the past. But then, I'm a sucker for a pretty garden and a cuppa. *Patti*

Here are the dates the hotel will be opening its doors to the public:

Bank Holiday Monday **4th May** (I'll be there from 11.45-2.45)
Saturday **9th May** (I'll be there from 2.45-6.00) &
Sunday **10th May**,
Saturday **16th May** (I'll be there from 11.45-2.45) &
Sunday **17th May**,
Saturday **23rd May** & Sunday **24th May**,
Bank Holiday Monday **25th May** (I'll be there from 11.45-2.45).



Hampshire Calligraphers Group Exhibition 2026

"Folklore, Myth and Fable"

For venues and dates please check the group website: www.hampshirecalligraphers.co.uk

South London Lettering Association presents its
ANNUAL CALLIGRAPHY EXHIBITION 2026

time
to
shine




29 SEPTEMBER – 16 OCTOBER 2026 | WEEKDAYS 8AM - 4PM
(Exhibition ends 1pm on Friday 16 October)

Free lunchtime drink on the open day:
Tuesday 29 September from 12 - 2pm

ADMISSION FREE

GALLERY 101
at The Salvation Army International Headquarters
101 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4V 4EH | sar.my/gallery101

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

  South London Lettering Association
www.southlondonlettering.co.uk 

Member's Pages

Toadstool Ink

A short report about alternative ink

I was walking up the road to my home a few weeks ago when I noticed some unusual mushrooms growing on the pavement by a neighbour's gate. They had tall, domed caps and the largest one had a little black frill and seemed to be dripping ink.

I was thrilled. It was a Shaggy Inkcap mushroom (*Coprinus comatus* for serious fungus lovers). They are part of a whole group of fungi which were commonly used as a source of ink for writing and drawing for many centuries before the manufactured inks we know today became available.

Different fungi vary, but Inkcaps are the most obliging plants. They are safe and non-toxic to handle and also perfectly edible. If you try looking them up on Google you find more recipes for eating them than writing with them.

Once picked, they simply dissolve, stalks and all, into a black gloop and after about 48 hours the process is complete. I put mine into a glass bowl so I could see what was going on and left it in the fridge overnight then took a picture of the result in the morning.

The change was impressive, it was already more than half liquid, so I went back to pick a second, smaller Inkcap which by then had also started to drip ink. I dropped it in the dish and it soon merged with the first one. The technical term for this is deliquescence and it's extraordinary to

watch them melt away, although if you try it at home the family will probably appreciate you putting cling film over the dish. The smell is awful. The internet told me, too late, that if you add clove oil and or salt at the start, it prevents them getting whiffy.

After they are fully dissolved, the ink can be poured through a sieve to smooth it out (I didn't bother) and you're ready to go.

I tried it with both a dip pen and a quill. It performed beautifully with both. My very basic attempt produced a grey ink which flowed freely and added great character to the writing because it reflected the pressure on the nib. The quill, especially, really worked well with it and the results were paler than with the dip pen.

As a rank amateur I found it very useful to see how my letters were forming. A light grey meant I was keeping the nib light and moving freely, darker marks meant I was either slowing up or pressing harder. Flourishes came out dark and satisfyingly dramatic. However, seeing a word getting blacker and

blacker meant I was unconsciously slowing up as I tried to make shapes I found tricky. Concentrating on keeping it light improved my script.

Used with a paintbrush I could easily build up layers of grey wash. I'm no artist but I think illustrators would enjoy exploring its uses.

Do try this at home if you see an inky mushroom preparing to deliquesce. It's great fun. *Shan*



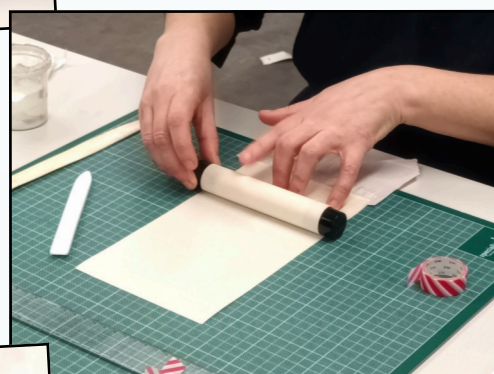
Member's Pages cont.

In February, I enrolled for a scroll making course taught by Lucy May Schofield at West Dean in London. It was a delightful experience, partly because of the esoteric nature of the subject matter, but mostly because Lucy is a wonderful teacher and really made the experience a joy for everyone there. For myself, as a bookbinder, the three days of exploring washi (paper) and nori (paste) felt like heaven, but this course would be great for anyone with an interest, regardless of your previous experience.

After three days we all had a small treasure to take home, and the simple elegance of the object somewhat belies the energy and skills involved in its production. We learnt a lot of technical skills especially various ways to apply the paste and I took many notes and photos. Even so, I will not remember everything Lucy told me as she has a huge amount of experience and knowledge of the subject.

I think one of the main things the group learnt was that Japanese scroll making takes time. We mostly used nori paste which is very slow drying, only dipping into the PVA to fix a flat wooden stick into the edge of the cover. After each pasting step we needed to let the work rest, often overnight.

I used my new knowledge to make a scroll for the Little Books spring swap. The theme we were given was *water* which I thought lent itself to the scroll format. *Helen*



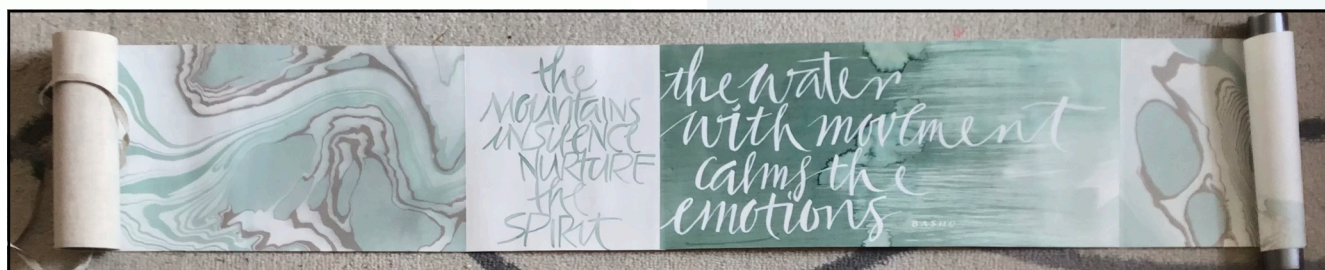
Top: Lucy May Schofield

Top left: Lucy's large collection of Japanese brushes

Above: rolling the dowel on to the end page

Left: the finished scrolls.

Bottom: my "water" scroll

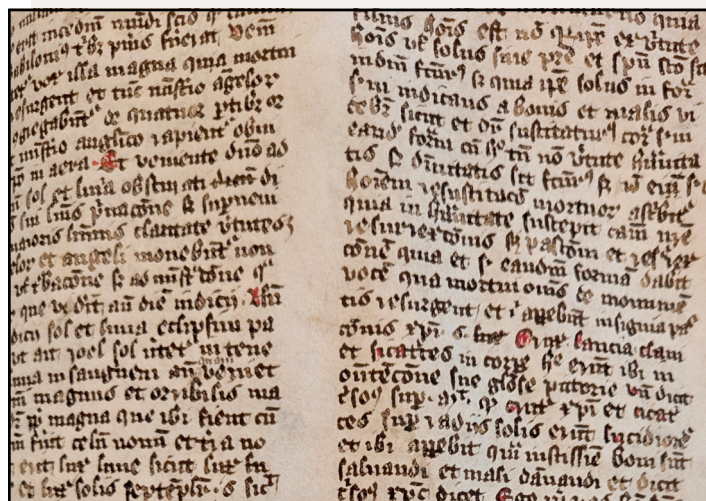
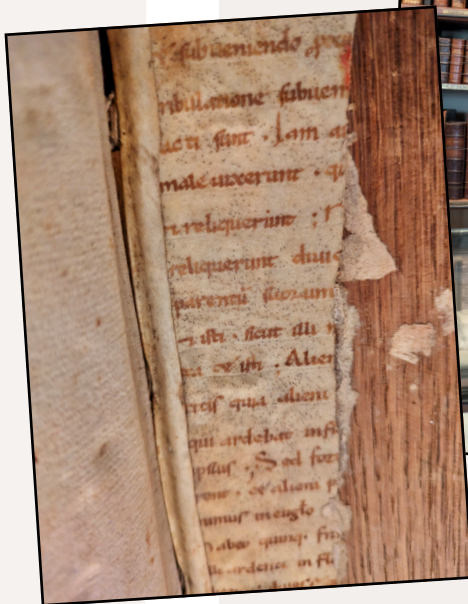


Member's Pages cont.

I had a thrilling visit to the Wimborne Minster Chained Library in Dorset. The brilliant local guide, Jayne, showed us some of their treasures including their oldest book, a Regimen Animarum dated 1343 and written in Gothic cursive book hand.

We also encountered a new mystery: a scrap of writing recently found pasted into a Missale Romanum published in Antwerp in 1640. The scrap seems much older than the book. Ewan Clayton kindly looked at photos and he first thought the scrap was English Carolingian and likely to be late 11th century. On further inspection the vellum looks more continental than English and the writing is similar to an example written at Avignon between 1040 and 1069. I never expected this visit to lead to calligraphic sleuthing - a whole new experience!

Do visit the Minster if you can. For the library you need to book in advance by phone 01202 884753 or email parishoffice@wimborneminster.org.uk The Minster also contains a fabulous astronomical clock. *Wendy*



Left: On a recent trip to Italy, I visited Lucca, a beautiful walled city in Tuscany. I took photographs of some of the shop signs that caught my eye. They were generally painted on glass. *Mariette*

Matisse Lettering *Online with Adele Dark*

On Valentine's day this year we held our annual "Members' Special" workshop, a freebie for our Sussex Scribes members to say "thank you for being part of the group", and to give us an opportunity to try out something a little bit different to traditional calligraphy.

This year our topic was "Cut, Colour and Collage – Matisse Lettering", taught by Adele Dark. Adele introduced us to Matisse's paper cut-outs, a technique he took up after surgery that left him wheelchair bound and less able to paint. These cut-outs represent both forms and letters, and are a wonderful source of inspiration.

In the first half of the workshop we looked at Matisse's letters and used an automatic pen to combine writing and drawing the letters, with the aim to create our own alphabet and including some interesting letter joins. Then in the second half we used coloured pages from magazines as well as papers we had prepared ourselves by covering them in gouache.

We cut out shapes to reflect our own initials in Matisse's style and copied a word from his work, to help us understand proportions and techniques.

Two hours was not enough to create a finished piece of work, but it was super interesting to look at letters in a different way and focus on contrast. I will have another go at home, and try to think how this might be used in other work, maybe even combined with more traditional lettering. *Mariette*

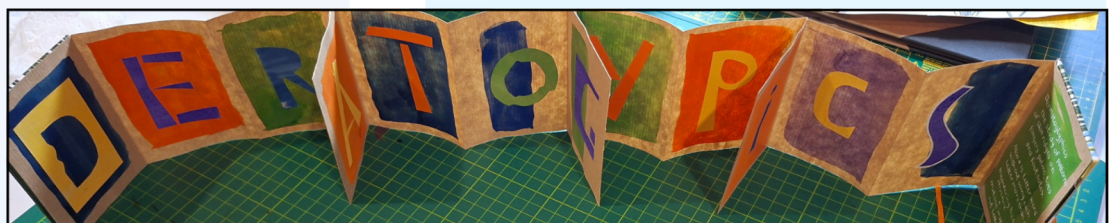


Above: Matisse lettering

Left: workshop trial by Helen

Below: demonstration piece by Adele

Bottom: follow up piece by Mariette



I would like to recommend that I have had very good results using FISKARS classic needlework scissors, 13cm. They are excellent quality with a super fine pointed tip. I find that cutting the letters with scissors creates a far more interesting shape, than a letter cut with a knife. Verity

On Saturday April 18th, Rachel Yallop taught the fourth and final module of the "Alternative Tools Specialist Skills Award" course – the topic this time was "Pencils".

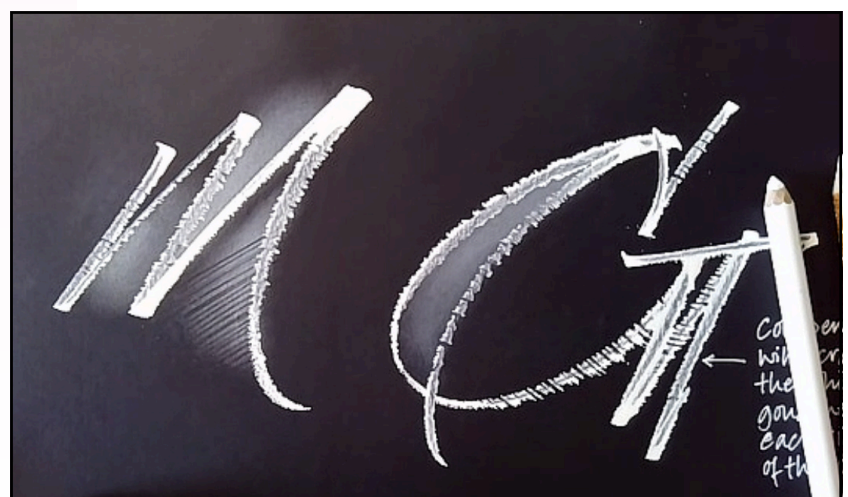
In the morning we explored a wide range of pencils and the marks they can make; from "ordinary" pencils all the way through to 9B, but we also looked at colour pencils, watercolour pencils, charcoal and compressed charcoal, and one of Rachel's favourites, the Conté Pierre Noire 'B' pencil, which leaves a gorgeous thick deep black mark, that can be softened by rubbing over with your finger, or by using a brush and a little water. This technique can also work well for watercolour pencil marks – doing an outline of a letter in colour and adding a little water to add a "shadow" gives beautiful effects. We also looked at how pressure and release can provide interesting marks.

The next part focused on shading, and how a very soft and gentle touch can provide beautiful gradations of shading to letters. Once you create a patch of darker shading the edge of a sharply cut plastic eraser like the Staedler Mars can be used to create super fine lines through it – a revelation!

In the afternoon we looked at how pencil marks and shading can enhance letters created with the tools from previous sessions, broad edged and pointed tools, as well as ruling pens, and make them stand out.

It has been a fascinating course following Rachel's guidance over the past four sessions, and gaining confidence in using these alternative tools.

Mariette



“Wooker Script”

with **Patti Griffiths**

Saturday May 23rd, 10am - 4 pm

at Broadwater Baptist Church, Dominion Road, Worthing, BN14 8JL

Cost: members £25/ non-members £30

This workshop is suitable for all levels.

Named after an imaginary bird-like creature, ‘Wooker’ was developed when I decided to turn a story into a physical book.

The script is a mash-up of some of the many calligraphic elements I enjoy: illuminated manuscripts, Art Deco curls, italics and uncials.

Initially designed to fit into a two column page format, it’s actually quite a fluid script and can be expanded and compressed at will. This makes it very suitable for fitting into specific line lengths. You can stick letters together, miss letters out, fill a gap with a pattern; it’s a very versatile script.

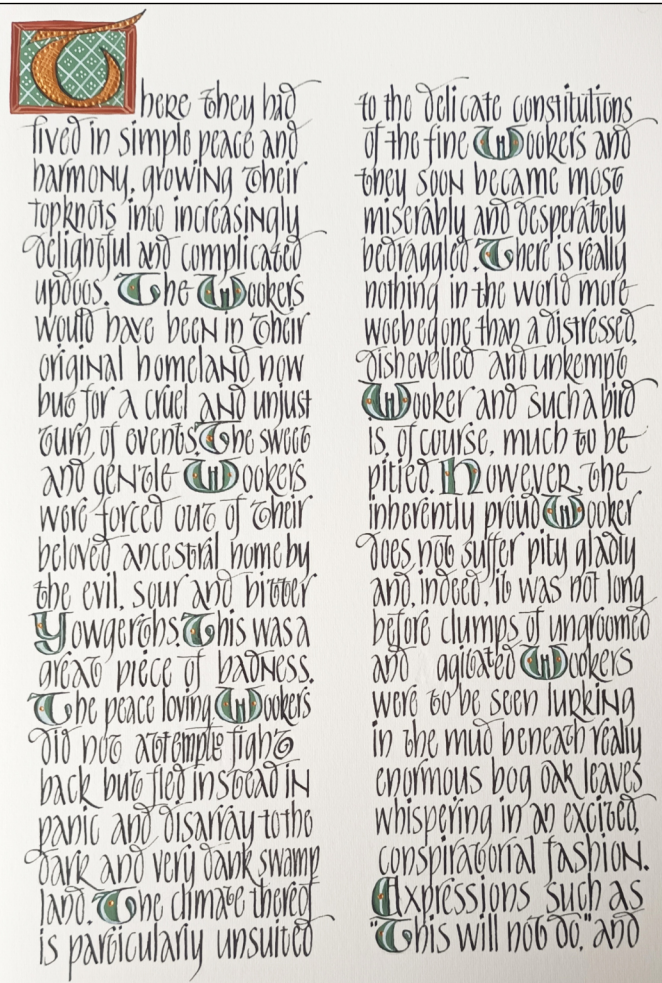
This workshop will introduce you to ‘Wooker’ and I hope you will explore it, develop it and have fun with it.

Equipment and Materials - Essential

- A selection of small - medium nibs.
- Pen holders
- Black Quink/Sumi ink or similar
- Pencil, T-square/ruler, eraser
- Cartridge paper for practice, A4 or A3
- Writing board if you like to use one
- Layout paper or similar
- Some text that you like.

Additional Materials if you have them:

- Dividers
- Gouache paint, a few colours
- Finetec (Coliro) gold and a few colours
- Mixing dishes and brushes



Patti Griffiths has been enjoying calligraphy for many years. She initially learned under Nancy Ouchida-Howells in Southwick before quite a long “children and career” break but, over the last few years since retirement has been studying with Ewan Clayton on his long course and with various other teachers on many Sussex Scribes’ workshops and quite a few CLAS festivals.

BOOK THIS WORKSHOP

Please reserve a place in advance by contacting our bookings person, Lisbeth by email: lisgodfray@sky.com

“Bookbinding”

with **Lucie Jones**

Saturday August 29th, 10am - 4 pm

Broadwater Baptist Church, Dominion Road, Worthing, BN14 8JL

Cost: members £25/ non-members £30
This workshop is suitable for all levels.

Participants will hand bind a 6” x 6” hardcover book with plain pages, to be used as a sketchbook, notebook or journal. We will be creating the entire project from scratch: hand-sewing the text block, attaching endpapers, making a cover using greyboard, patterned papers and bookcloth, then gluing the text block in to complete the book.

The workshop is suitable for complete beginners as well as those who may have some experience of bookbinding.

Equipment and Materials:

All equipment and materials will be provided but if participants wish to bring their own cover papers, this should be of a suitable weight (i.e. around 120gsm) and measuring at least 14” wide by 8” high.



We would like to welcome a new tutor to our programme. Lucie Jones is an artist and maker based in East Sussex. Working mainly in digital art for the last few years, Lucie has recently discovered the beautiful craft of making books and is now combining the two: designing patterned papers and using them to cover her books or as decorative endpapers. Lucie produces small batches of handcrafted items, each one unique and exclusive.

www.smallyellowbird.com

BOOK THIS WORKSHOP

Please reserve a place in advance by contacting our bookings person, Lisbeth by email: lisgodfray@sky.com

“Uncial Ancient and Modern”*with Mary Noble***September 26th, 2026****10am - 4pm**

Cost £25 members / £30 non-members

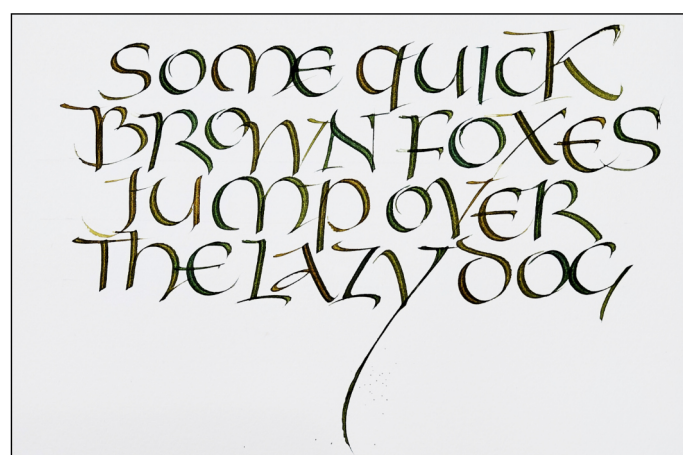
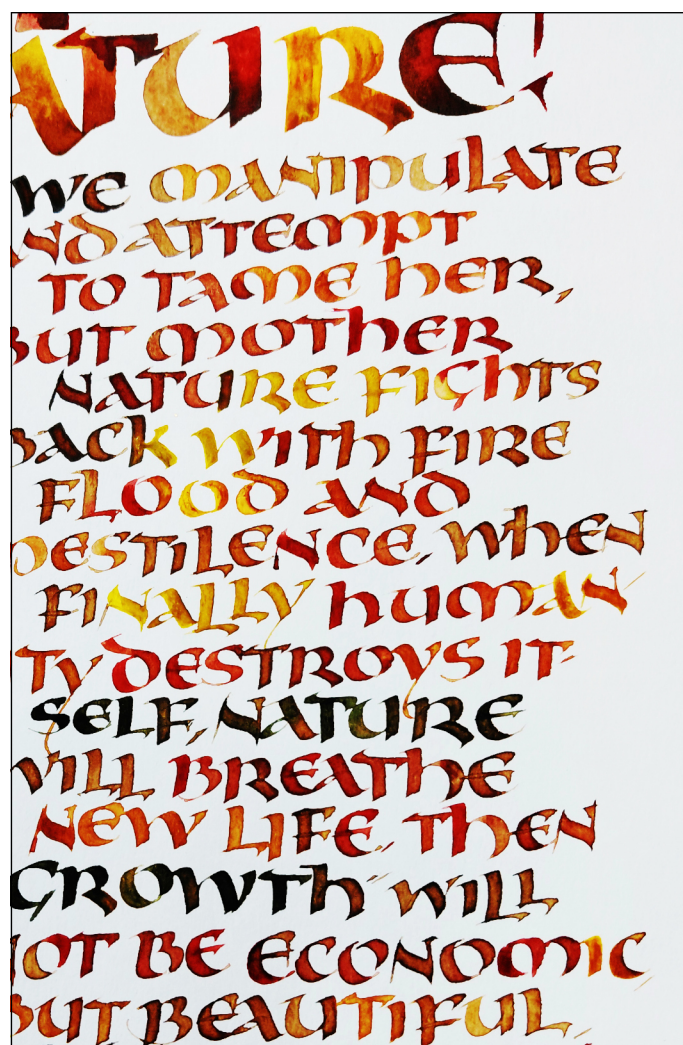
*Beginners and more advanced*Venue: Broadwater Baptist Church,
Dominion Road, Worthing BN14 8JL

Uncials occupy that halfway-house in letterform evolution of being capitals that want to become lowercase, which we can explore from various angles. Some of the earliest archaic versions are labour-intensive yet others charmingly modest; we'll look at both, then work towards some contemporary options.

In order to cater for all levels, be assured there will be escape routes for those who don't feel able to travel the full journey to manipulation or gestural options.

Equipment and Materials to Bring:

- Layout pad (A4 is fine) plus optional cartridge paper to try out a quote
- Pencil, ruler, eraser
- Your favourite pens, especially larger sizes eg Mitchell 2 or above or Brause 2.5 or larger,
- and if more experienced, a small pen such as Speedball C2 or Brause 1mm or Mitchell 3 or 4 for gestural work.
- Ink, any colour, check it doesn't bleed on your paper; or gouaches and mixing gear.

*And...**don't forget your reading glasses...***BOOK THIS WORKSHOP**

Please reserve a place in advance by
contacting our bookings person,
Lisbeth by email: lisgodfray@sky.com

“Fantastic Elastic Italic”

with Ann Mason

Saturday, November 28th

10 to 12am and 2.30 - 3.30pm

Cost £20 members/£25 non-members

A zoom workshop with recordings

Participants should have some previous experience of the italic script

To explore the decorative and design potential of manipulating the ligatures of cursive italic.

Equipment and Materials:

- Your usual calligraphy kit and writing slope
 - A pencil, ruler and eraser.
 - A pointed nib that is quite flexible.
 - A selection of broad nibs, 1.5mm and smaller will be most useful.
- Your favourite ink - a fairly free-flowing ink will work best eg Pelikan, Higgins Eternal, but don't buy these especially. You can use gouache or watercolour if you prefer.
- Layout paper or other practice paper.
- Cartridge paper – smooth.

BOOK THIS WORKSHOP

Please reserve a place in advance by contacting our bookings person, Lisbeth by email: lisgodfray@sky.com

Luscious Ligature
der spacing, to allow the
l swing, a graceful italic
eed to join every letter. gaps
ms contribute to an appeara
mply be an illusion! try an
htweight - hairline ligature
Enjoy!

fantastic elastic italic
seven swans float down from the sky an
urface of the inlet, they sail in solemn
seven swans float down from the
ng on the surface of the inlet, they s
mn procession - seven
notes on the rippled st
ark bay.

What's On



SSI Open Day and AGM

Saturday June 13th, 11am - 4pm
The Artworkers Guild, London
With a talk by Tim Noad

There will be displays of work from Lay Members and the Creative Development Course, from the archive of the Crafts Study Centre and from the late Estonian calligrapher Villu Toots.

£10 for non-members, lunch included.
Reserve a place by emailing:
bookkeeper@calligraphyonline.org

Hampshire Calligraphers Group Exhibition 2026

"Folklore, Myth and Fable"
Basingstoke, Petersfield and Romsey.
Please see their website for more info.
www.hampshirecalligraphers.co.uk

Blackmore Vale Scribes Annual Exhibition 2026

Gallery Sherbourne Abbey, Dorset
July 14th - 27th
www.blackmorevalescribes.co.uk



British Landscapes: A Sense of Place

Exhibition at Pallant House, Chichester
May 30th - November 1st, 2026
www.pallant.org.uk



Dragons

Royal Pavilion & Garden, Brighton
March 28th - November 1st
Exploring the power, beauty and mystery of
the world's most iconic mythical creature.
www.brightonmuseums.org.uk

Mindful Marbling - The Art of Suminagashi

West Dean in London
July 27th & 28th, 2026
www.westdean.ac.uk

Suppliers

Scribblers

All your calligraphic supplies
Great for beginners with tips and nib sets.
www.scribblers.co.uk

Blots Pens

Ink, paper, penholders and nibs, automatic pens, gilding supplies, gouache, Finetec, knives, blades, cutting mats etc
www.blotspens.co.uk

London Graphic Centre

www.londongraphics.co.uk
Retail shop in Covent Garden, London

Cornelissen

Pigments, paints, egg tempera, gilding materials, historical inks, stick inks and grinding stones, www.cornelissen.com
Retail shop in Great Russell Street, London

Paper Tree Nook

Amazing collection of patterned papers
www.papertreenook.co.uk

Ewan Clayton

Ink sticks and stones,
goose quills for curing
and cutting, pre-cut
quills ready to use

www.ewanclayton.co.uk



Jackson's Art

General art supplies, good selection of quality papers in sheets and blocks
www.jacksonart.com

William Cowley

Bespoke service for parchment and vellum
www.williamcowley.co.uk

A. S. Handover

Specialist suppliers of brushes, gilding materials, signwriting equipment.
www.handover.co.uk

Cass Art

General art supplies and a few nibs & penholders. Da Vinci brushes.
www.cassart.co.uk
Retail shop in Brighton

Pen to Paper

Stationery, some inks and pens
Retail shop in Sydney Street, Brighton

Jackson's Art

General art supplies especially for printmaking. www.tnlawrence.com
Retail shop in Portland Road, Hove



Khadi

beautiful handmade papers from India
www.khadi.com

Seawhites

General art supplies, recycled and affordable paper
Factory showroom in Partridge Green
www.seawhite.co.uk

Calligraphy

Specialist book shop
www.calligraphy.com

Stuart R Stevenson

Gilding supplies
Shop in Clerkenwell, London.
www.shop.stuartstevenson.co.uk

Back Page



Thank you to everyone who contributed articles and images for this newsletter.

The next newsletter will be sent out at the end of July 2026.

Please send any copy to Helen:
email: hemgee22@gmail.com

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

Copy deadline July 15th, 2026

Your Committee

Chair: Cathy Stables

07810 693988

Secretary: Denyce Aresti

Bookings: Lisbeth Godfray

Newsletter/ Membership:

Helen Gibbs

Treasurer: Mariette Hardman

Programme: Nina Green and

Mariette Hardman



The Sussex Scribes Instagram challenge continues with two intrepid calligraphers. Above work by Helen and Angie on the theme of "Enormous Flourishing"

[@sussex_calligraphy](https://www.instagram.com/sussex_calligraphy)

Sussex Scribes

Find us on Facebook



www.sussexscribes.co.uk