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Q R S T U V W X Y Z A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P

# Alphabetical Order

canberra  
CALLIGRAPHY  
society



Newsletter 165 - December 2009



# Merry Christmas

# For your diary

Sunday 28th February 1:30—4:30 <b>Spencerian</b> Marg Peachey
27th & 28th March Two days <b>Gilding</b> Olive Bull
25th April 1:30—4:30 <b>Layering</b> Angela Hillier
30th April—2nd May <b>Jindabyne retreat</b> DIY Maximum ten people. Contact Jill or Angela
Sunday 23rd May 9:30—4:30 <b>Marrying Calligraphy with other Calligraphic Marks</b> Elaine Witton
Sunday 27th June 1:30—4:30 <b>Woven Words</b> Elizabeth Delaney

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Wrap writer: Karen Woodhall

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**Cover:** Jill shows the influence of the recent workshop with Charles Pearce in her contribution to this year's Christmas card swap.

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*If you would like to receive this newsletter in PDF format and are not yet doing so, please email James Hislop, and let him know at [jameshislop@ieee.org](mailto:jameshislop@ieee.org)*

# President's Report

Dear Calligraphers,

First of all may I wish you a very warm and happy Christmas, with lots of Christmas cards with interesting calligraphy on them.

The latter part of this year has been full of activity and the beginning of 2010 looks like continuing in the same vein. Our exhibition has just closed at Cornucopia Bakery, so our work has been on display in one venue or another for 5 weeks now, so that is very good exposure for us all.

Having been untimely in my sick bed for the Christmas party this year I missed out on seeing the original cards for our card swap. This is always one of the highlights of that time together and one we want to continue. I hope to see some of them one day!



Two interesting invitations have come our way because of our presence on the internet with our website. The first is a request to be part of a day to be held on 30th May at the National Museum here in Canberra when they want to highlight some of the original calligraphic pieces they have, and have us as modern calligraphers demonstrating and showing people how the writing was done. They are hoping to have an original illuminated address from 1866 by William Barak on display at the time and we can show how to do the copperplate (at least I presume it will be copperplate!)

The other request has come from Rochester, New York state, where a calligrapher is wanting to show an exhibition of work from calligraphers around the world on the subject of Peace. His thesis is that the creative arts around the world can contribute to the pressure on our governments to take the need for peace seriously. It is a great ambition and I really hope that you will take up the challenge to do a piece on peace! Email me if you missed out on getting the details about that.

Other than that, our year comes to an end now and I want to thank everyone, and especially those on the committee, for all the hard work that has gone into a great year for us in Canberra. I wish you all a very good summer break and I hope you find the time to put pen to paper in an artistic manner very frequently!

Best wishes,

Jill

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# pen manipulation

## Charles Pearce Workshop – Pen manipulation

When I (Elizabeth) heard that Charles Pearce was coming to Australia and giving a two-day workshop in Canberra, I knew that I wanted to do it! When I was first introduced to calligraphy, a calligrapher friend told me many times how much Charles Pearce had influenced her. At the same time, “pen manipulation” sounded as though this workshop was only for the “experts”.

Whereas most calligraphy involves holding the pen at a more or less fixed (constant) angle, Charles informed us that Arthur Baker was the first to consciously change the pen angle. Edward Johnston who taught that the pen angle was fixed, had in fact, changed angle – a matter of “sleight of hand” he said!

Explaining that the pen is held differently for these techniques: with the pen parallel to the middle joint of the index finger and much more upright than normal, Charles began by showing some basic pen manipulation movements. Giving only minutes to practice these movements, he moved into a demonstration of the



minuscule letters.

The pace was quite fast, with Charles demonstrating each letter only once. However, hav-

ing drawn the letter he then showed the changing angle of the pen on each letter. Having reached the letter zee/zed (we chided him on the use of the American pronunciation), Charles moved around the class, spending time with each person, demonstrating the specific skill or letters that each person most needed help with.

Some of us were still becoming accustomed to using pens that we had not used previously – automatic pens, coit nibs, steel brush (not Charles’ favourite) – minimum width of 3/8 inch or 10 mm. Working large, we went through many sheets of paper, and I suspect,



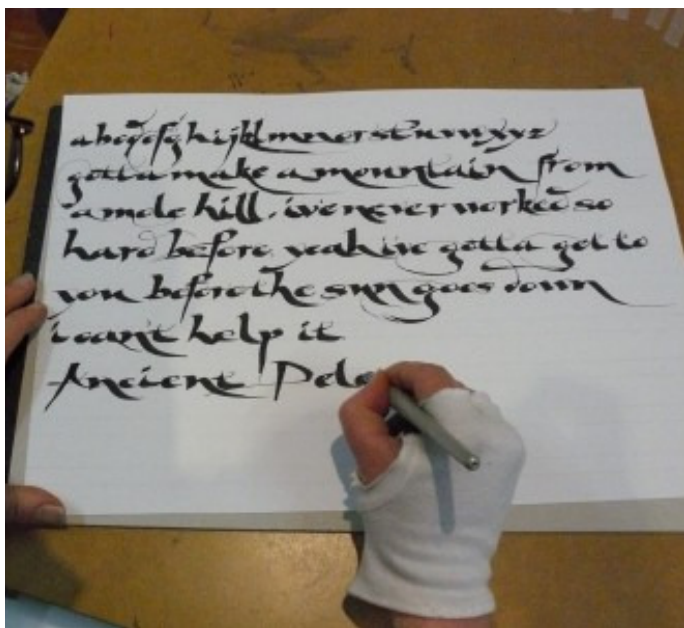
will go through many more before we are satisfied with our pen manipulated letters.

In response to the question “Which side of the nib do you watch?”, Charles replied “Neither! You watch where you want the pen to go.” I found myself likening his movements to dancing – ballroom dancing. Just as I could watch ballroom dancing with great pleasure, I found myself simply enjoying the movements of the pen as Charles formed each letter with skill and apparent ease. He suggested that we close our eyes and imagine where the pen is going to go. He also urges us to study the exemplar prior to commencing a letter and then proceed to write it without pausing to refer back to the exemplar, otherwise we introduce



pauses or hesitations to our letters.

All the while, Charles explained the differences between letters and gave reasons for letters taking the form that they do. He suggested that different letters may have different descender heights, depending on what looks right; he likes the dot of the "i" and "j" to commence at the same height as the ascenders. He gave a unique approach to some letters, e.g. "r", "g".



**Day two** commenced with Charles demonstrating each of the majuscules. This was a bit easier as we had spent the entire day previously doing some of the same strokes. Again he demonstrated each letter once and then marked the changing angle of the pen on the letter. This was then followed by more practice time, with Charles giving attention to each person and demonstrating the letters that each person requested.

Lest this sounds all rather serious, Charles broke into song – picking up on comments of participants and singing a line or two from songs from as early as the 60s and taking on accents from the UK and USA. He liked to tell a few jokes too, "oldies"...like: Two men were walking down the street, one with a banana in his ear. The other man asks, "How come you've got a banana in your ear?" The first man says, "I can't hear you I have a banana in my ear" (groan)!

In the last hour, Charles demonstrated a pen manipulated alphabet with x-height of 1 pen width. Having demonstrated it for the class, he then wrote out an alphabet for each member of the class for us to keep.

Charles' clear demonstrations, his inviting and responding to questions and his excellent ex-



emplars as well as his attention to each person all testify to his excellence as a teacher. While this hand will take some practice for most of us, before we become confident with it, I suspect that everyone found it very enriching.

We had some trouble with paper and inks bleeding, so some combinations that seemed to work were:

- Reflex 80gsm + Pelican 4001
- Canson Bleedproof 70gsm + Noodlers Ink (USA)
- Arttec Bleedproof 50gsm + Quink (black)

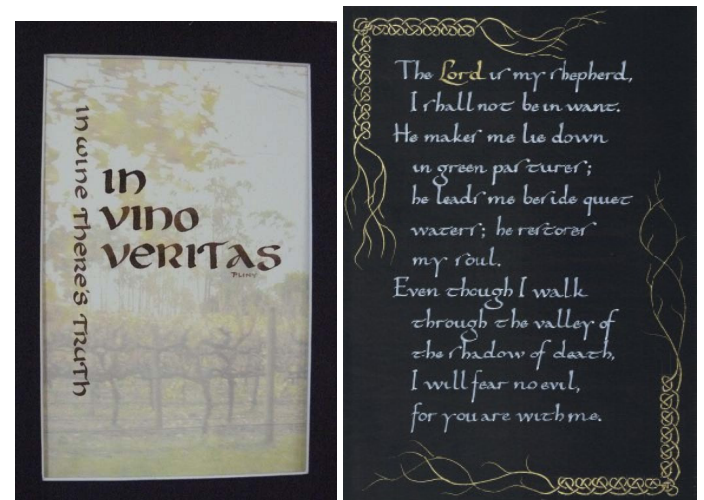
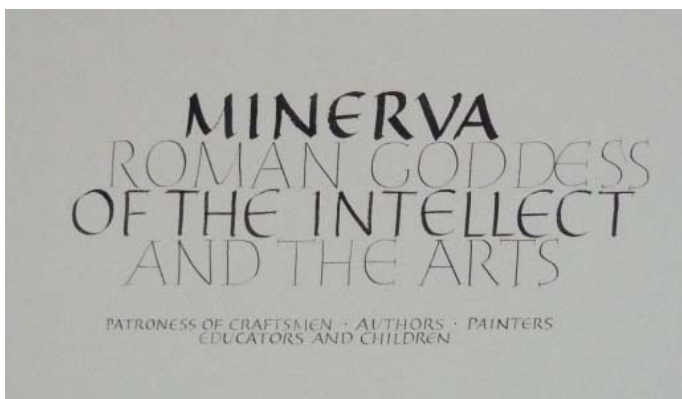
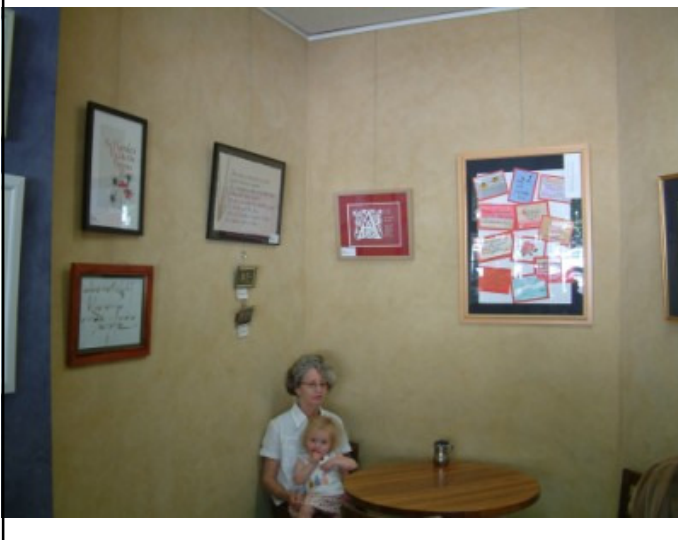
Elizabeth Delaney and Christine Wilde



**Photo gallery.**

The Society has been very active in the past few months with workshops and exhibitions. On these pages are some photographs of what as on show at this year's exhibition.

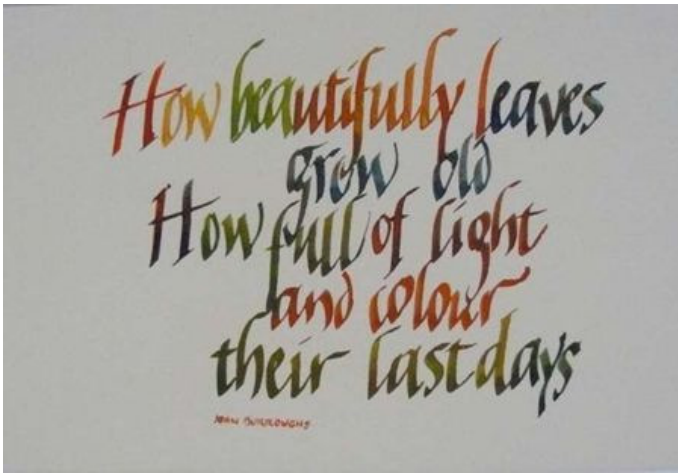
**The exhibition at Cornucopia.**





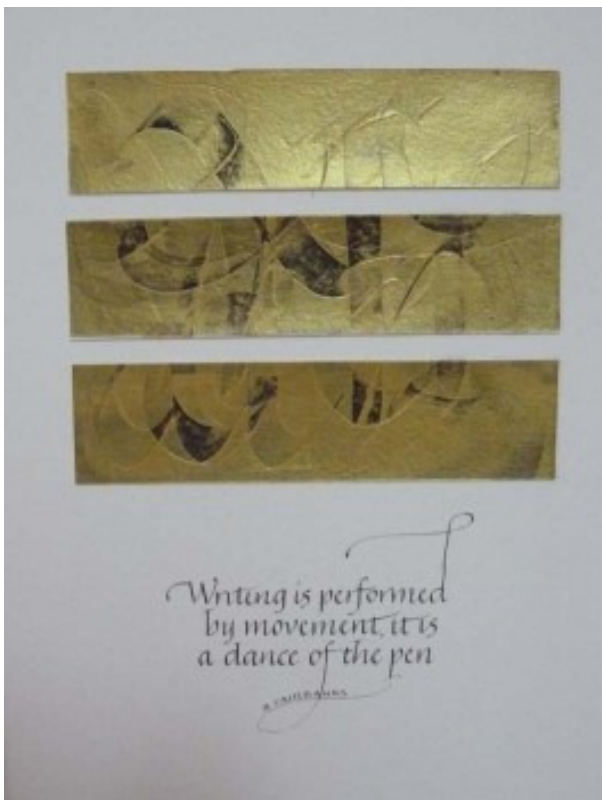
## Melbourne Cup Day

The race that stops a nation and provides the national capital with a public holiday didn't stop Angela from putting her calligraphic talents to good use on the day. Angela created an eye-catching hat by decorating it with the name of every Melbourne Cup winner since inception. Angela didn't say if her hat won any prizes. Unfortunately, Angela's hat is unable to provide the name of next year's winner.



The scribes responsible for the pieces pictured at left are:

- Minerva — Pam Kemp
- Theory & Practice — Ann Streeter
- Yes & No — Angela Hillier
- In Flanders Fields — Lyndell Dobbs
- In Vino Veritas — Maureen Worsnop
- Psalm 23 — James Hislop
- Beautiful Leaves — Angela Hillier
- Illuminated M — Gemma Black
- Dance of the Pen — Pam Kemp



# Brendan and the Secret of Kells

reviewed by Jill Robertson

If you see this film coming to a screen near you, then you would enjoy going to see it. It is directed by Tomm Moore and Norma Twomey with Thomm Moore being the main artist.

The story is about the Book of Kells being taken from Iona to Kells for safekeeping because of the Viking invasions. So the story is true, but the film is an animation for children, so the characters are very much the goodies and the baddies. The Vikings are more like monster Transformer toys, but I guess they were pretty fearsome and they did destroy monasteries and manuscripts!

The story follows the role of a 12 year old trainee monk, Bendan, in helping to finish the book after it gets to Kells.

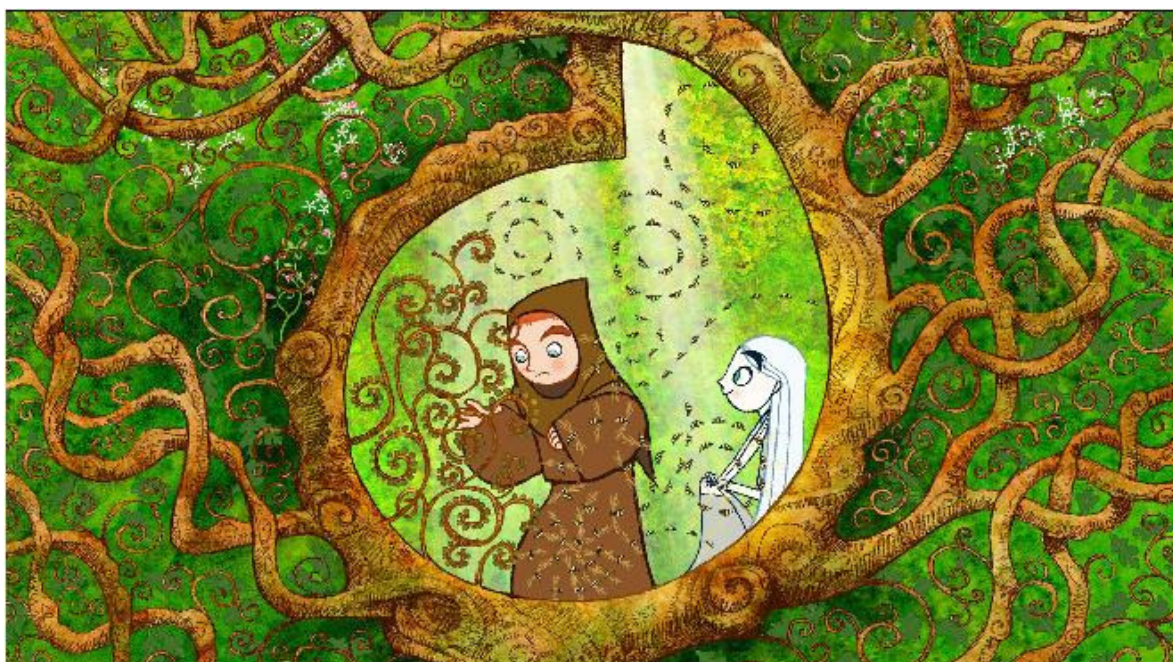
The reason I enjoyed the film, apart from the

storyline, was the brilliance of the art work. As you can see from this picture I was able to download from a free educational resource, the backgrounds were a delight of Celtic patterns. Right up my street, as you may guess!

The last few seconds were a brilliant animation of one of the carpet pages of the Book of Kells. You could watch the ribbons intertwining and the little people and animals hiding amongst the decorations. Just amazing to see and I wished it had gone on for longer - but then, I am a calligrapher!

An example of the way that Celtic knotwork and spirals were interwoven into the backgrounds of the film. A good link to see the way it is done is <http://www.theseecretofkells.com>

Do go and see Brendan and the Secret of Kells if you have the opportunity.





# DIY Card Workshop

**CARD WORKSHOP – 22 November 2009**  
**Jenni Cole**

Twelve CCS members attended the card workshop. It was a hot day, and it seemed to get hotter and muggier as the day progressed. The people in the pool were certainly enjoying themselves.



With no tutor, I wondered if we would produce many cards. Some examples of previously made cards were put out on a spare table to give us inspiration. The Society had an assortment of paper, card, stickers etc and these were also put out for participants to help themselves. We were quickly “into it”, punching, glueing, cutting and even some calligraphy was done as well.

It wasn't too long before it was afternoon tea and the watermelon, cheese & biscuits and lamingtons were appreciated together with the open door, where a slight breeze had come up. Magazines from the other calligraphy groups were on display for us to have a look through during our break. One of the quotes in one of these magazines had an appropriate saying for the day – “ Cards are hugs with a fold in the middle”.

We were keen to continue, so it wasn't long

before we were back producing more cards. I went for the make them up, ready for some calligraphy at a later date and others made up the cards with the calligraphy ready for giving.

Everyone had a great day, some more productive than others, but I think we all enjoyed ourselves and there were a few comments about having a full day making cards, I will certainly be interested in that !!



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NOTE: The Royal Canberra Show has a Papercraft section (page 31) in their Craft Show for next year. Entries close 15 December 2009.



# News from the Library

## JOURNALS RECEIVED

The DANCING PEN (from Tasmania) has some lovely examples of Charles Pearce's pen manipulation.

The COLOPHON (from the Australian Society of Australia) has published pieces of work from their book, "Book of Heroes and Champions". The calligraphy is stunning and the overall project obviously a huge success.

The Colophon is also giving advance notice of the Royal Easter Show of 2010. Closing date for postal entries is 9 December 2009. See the Colophon for more information.

SCRIBES (Victoria) have published some wonderful examples of work undertaken for and shown at the Royal Melbourne Show. Fabulous calligraphy! Pity that it wasn't published in colour for the full effect.

Also received was Capital Letters from Ottawa, Calligraphy South Scribes from NSW, the newsletter from the Calligraphy Society of New Zealand and Scribes from South Australia.

All these titles are available at the workshops to browse, admire and gain ideas for future pieces of calligraphy.

## CALLIGRAPHY NEWS FROM CALLIGRAPHERS OF KAPITI, NEW ZEALAND

A most interesting newsletter with some lovely calligraphy examples to gain inspiration from or just look at and admire.

Amongst the interesting articles were:

- Instructions on how to make a reed pen using bamboo
- Colour reproductions of a recent exhibition from five calligraphers entitled 'Alphabet Soup'.

- The use of possum skins for parchment! According to the article this medium works extremely well and is endorsed by Diedre Hassed. I wonder if the Calligraphy society might be interested in exploring this further for one of the workshops.

- How to add a reservoir to a Brause nib.

As with all the other newsletters, this one is also available at the workshops for perusal or borrowing.



### News from England

Ricky Edmunds, one of the founding members of the Society, now a UK resident, sends his best wishes to all.

## FOR SALE

Large plain wood frames, 885 x 665. \$10.00 each (as seen in Lake Ginninderra College entry at exhibition)

Glass can be fitted for \$22.00 at Discount Glass at Belconnen.

Contact Angela  
Email & phone in front of newsletter.



## Exhibition opening

A very successful evening was enjoyed by around 20 people on 26<sup>th</sup> October for the Society's official opening of our annual exhibition at Urambi Village, Kambah. Luckily, we were able to have Charles Pearce (see report of workshop elsewhere in newsletter) stay on in Canberra an extra day to open the exhibition for us.

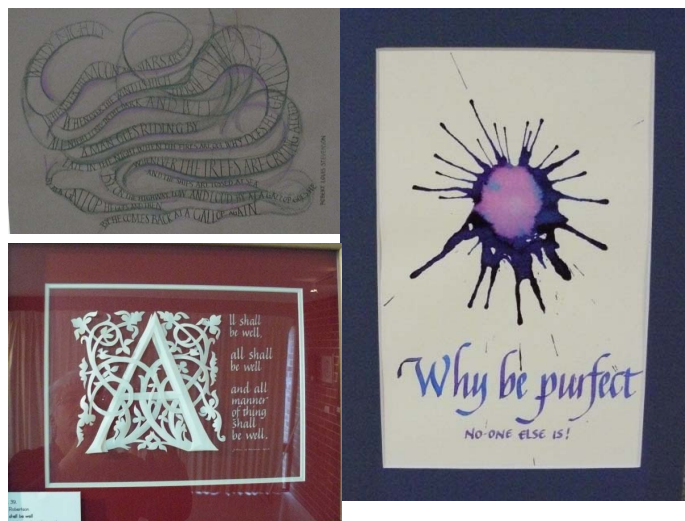
There was a great variety of works, formal and informal, and also a table of "other stuff" we do, like concertina books, book marks, boxes, paper sculpture and cards. This latter display proved popular with everyone as they were able to pick things up and look more closely (not sure we intended that!).



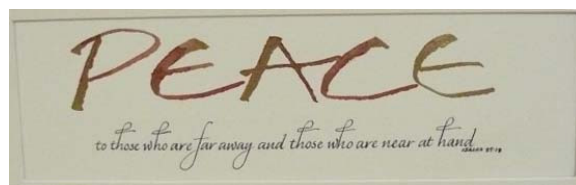
Maureen organised "nibblies", Tony Hillier brought some lovely wine, Christine provided some background music, and those in attendance helped to make the atmosphere festive. Everyone present was given a lucky door ticket, and Pam was the lucky winner of a calligraphic fridge magnet made by Jill, with Pam having her choice between the four magnets on display (on the fridge, of course!).

When giving his opening speech, Charles said he didn't particularly like calligraphy exhibitions because they tended to be put on by calligraphers, for calligraphers, as he believes that we should be displaying to the general public. He was pleased to hear that our work is also displayed in other exhibitions, such as The Canberra Show, for the general public to see.

Charles gave a very interesting slide show presentation of some of his work, telling an in-



teresting story about each piece. He has worked in different mediums, including paper, canvas, ceramic, glass, fabric and wood. He often works on a large scale, one piece pictured being about nine feet high, showing a scaffolding in front of it so he could work at the top.



The exhibition was taken down at the end of the night, packed into Angela's and Jill's cars, and re-hung the following day at the Belconnen Community Centre Gallery. Many thanks go to them both, as well as Maureen, for spending another couple of hours each to arrange our pieces for show until 6th November. The exhibition was again taken down and re-hung at Cornucopia Bakery in Braddon by Angela, Ann, Pam and Jill.

Christine





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## Words for Peace

As Jill indicated in her message, the Society has been invited to contribute to an exhibition to be held in New York on the theme of 'Words for Peace.' Mike Warner of Genesee Valley Calligraphy Guild in Rochester, NY, USA has issued the invitation. Mike would like to receive submissions by Easter next year.

Previous exhibitions on this theme can be found on the internet at <http://www.wordsforpeace.org/>. For any questions, Mike Warner can be contacted at [mwarner51@yahoo.com](mailto:mwarner51@yahoo.com)



## Christmas Lunch

For its Christmas function this year, the Society went to A Bite to Eat at Chifley for lunch and conducted its usual Christmas card swap. The range and depth of artistic talent on display was impressive, to say the least, and showed the results of a busy year of workshops.

