

for your diary

Committee 2011-2012

Sunday 22 April

1:30-4:30

POP-UP CARDS

Lyndell Dobbs

Sunday 27 May

1:30-4:30

ROTUNDA

Jill Robertson

Sunday 24 June

1:30-4:30

ABU DHABI SCRIPT

Christine Wilde

Sunday 22 July

1:30-4:30

WHITE VINE ILLUMINATION

Ann Streeter

Sunday 26 August

12:30-4:30

ALPHA ERASERS + AGM

Pam Kemp

Fraktur & Versals Calligraphy

with Angela Hillier

Apr-May 2012

Lake Ginnindera College

<http://www.lakenitelearning.com.au/>

Calligraphy

with Pam Kemp

Apr-May 2012

Erindale College

<http://www.erindalecep.com.au/>

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Marg Peachey

Dear Calligraphic Colleagues,

This past two months has been a busy one for the Canberra Calligraphy Society.

Three of our prominent tutors, Gemma Black, Angela Hillier, and Jill Robertson, conducted workshops at the National Library of Australia in conjunction with the NLA's Handwritten Exhibition. All workshops were a great success.... how could they be otherwise! See the reviewing articles (*backpage*).

In February members entered work in the Canberra Show and some were talented enough to win prizes. Congratulations to CCS members Ann Streeter (1st) and Jill Robertson (2nd) prizes.

I ran a workshop on Celtic Angular Capitals at the February meeting. I hope everyone enjoyed it. Celtic Caps are more a drawing exercise than calligraphy but they are an important part in the hierarchy of scripts employed in religious books such as the Book of Kells and the Lindesfarne Bible.

Then for our March workshop Gemma Black presented a workshop on Vivacious Versals. For two full-on days members slaved over traditional and modern Versals.

There is much more to come during the year and the committee is working hard on attracting international calligraphers to Australia for the 2013 calligraphic year. Lips sealed on this until all is confirmed.

Creative Calligraphy to all,

Marg

Headings in This Issue

Headings in this issue were done by Bill Kitson (this page) and Angela Hillier. Thanks for the contributions! Hope to have another set for the next issue!

I'm always looking to refresh the newsletter and would welcome contributions from anyone at any time. Send a high resolution scan of your black-ink President's Report, Library News, Miscellany, or Workshop Equipment headings to sara.rawlo@gmail.com

Thank you: to Wrap Writers Lyndell & Jill



Eckersley's **BRADDON** store offers a 10% discount to members of CCS on presentation of your current membership card.

42 Mort Street, Braddon

Phone: (02) 6257 1711 www.eckersleys.com.au

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CELTIC ANGULAR CAPITALS



article author: Angela Hillier
workshop tutor: Marg Peachey

A full house of 18 calligraphers sat down at the newly acquired (and lightweight) tables to participate in the first workshop of the year.

We were shown photographs of the Isle of Iona and Lindisfarne in the United Kingdom from where these capitals originated some from the seventh century, from the Book of Durham, which is housed in the British Museum, London. This book together with the Book of Kells hold illustrations and lettering unequalled in fine work and decoration.

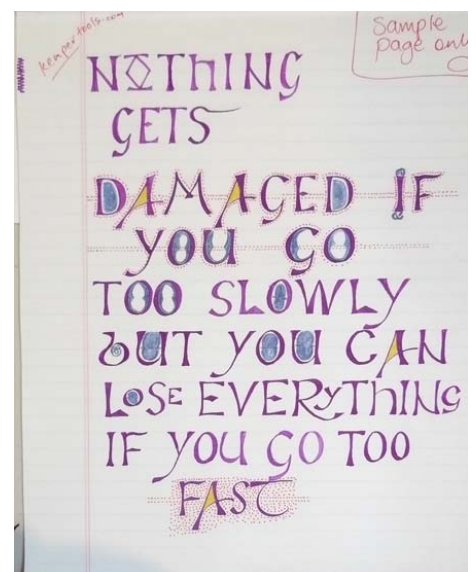
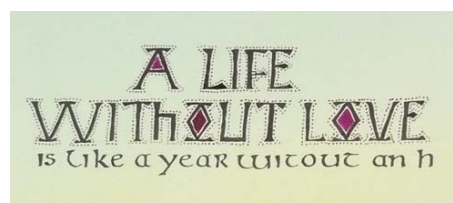
We were then asked to find the quote we had been advised to take and, looking at the supplied references of Celtic capitals worked out which of the letters we wished to use as there were several different examples of each letter and we didn't need use the same letterform all through our work.

After drawing the letter forms in pencil, we then ventured into drawing the letterforms with a thin nib and black ink.

Next the decoration.

Marg informed us that this could take many forms; indeed the illustrations provided us with a plethora of information about decoration. Dots were a dominating feature and we learnt that these can be more easily made with a Kemper tool, as well as using a toothpick and ball end nib.

Where to put the dots – around the letters, in between the letters underneath them but never inside a 'counter'!

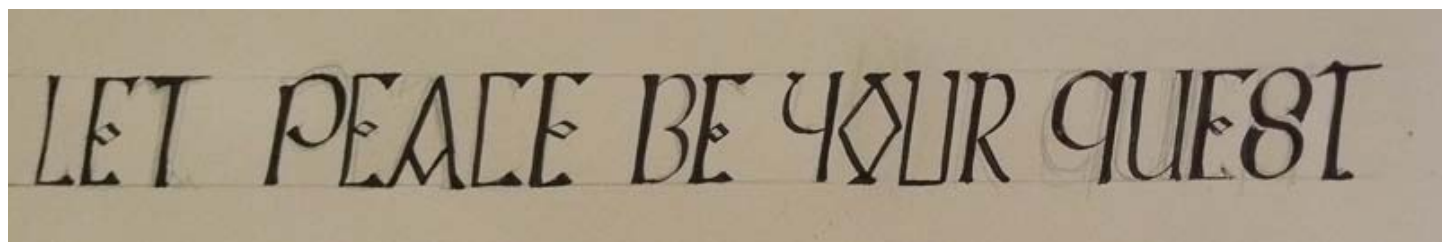
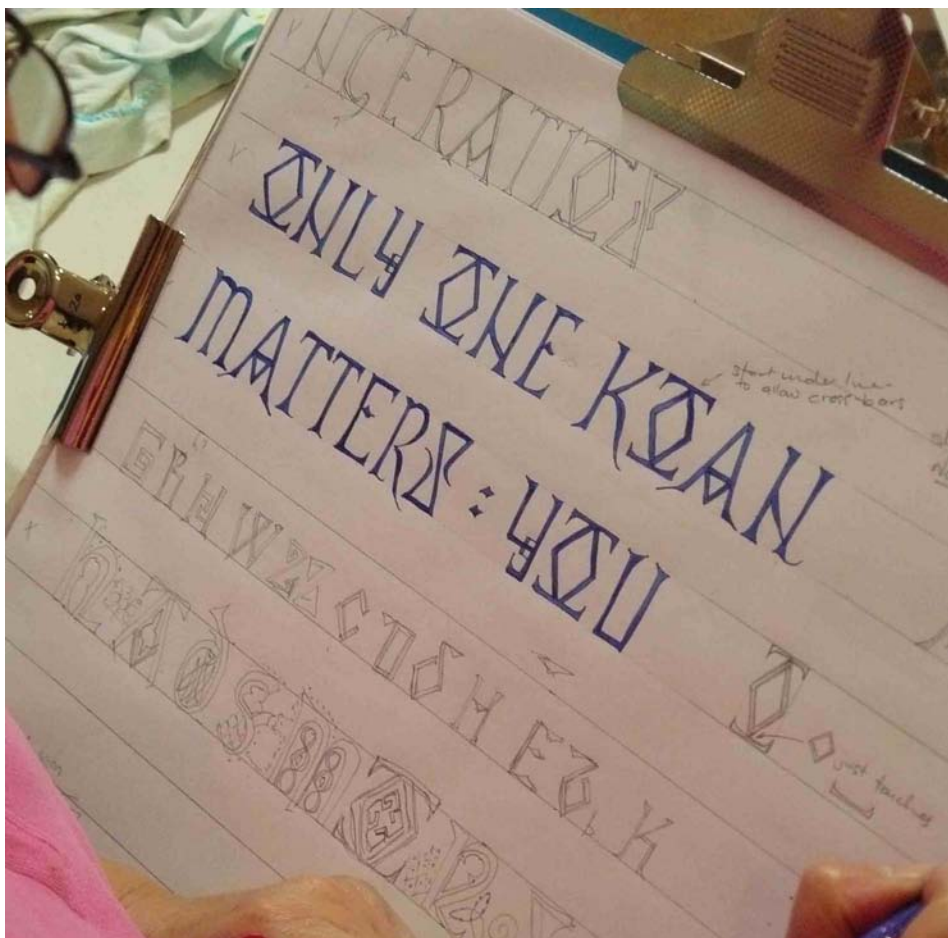


Commonly two lines of dots are used in the centre of a design and dots were used to form Celtic knots wherever they would fit. Something should happen in each letter, but not, Marg emphasised IN the counters.

Generally these housed a knot or were coloured with a single hue. Some of us were keen to race ahead and work on our quotes, sometimes breaking the 'dot' rules – thus giving an even greater variety of work.

The workshop gave us, me especially, an interesting insight into the decoration and construction of these ancient capitals.

Thank you Marg – we will all be working on a page for the Gallery next month, I'm sure.



VIVACIOUS VERSALS



article authors: Elizabeth Delaney & Jenni Cole
article heading: Marg Peachey
workshop tutor: Gemma Black

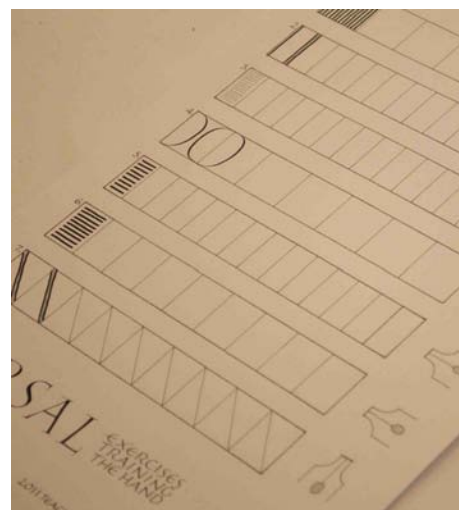
Thirteen enthusiastic calligraphers welcomed Gemma on a sunny, but cool Saturday morning. Our first task was to create our backgrounds on canvas (previously prepared with Gesso) and a watercolour board for tomorrow's work. Gemma explained how to spray the two surfaces and then colour them - tapping ink, watercolour or gouache on to the surface from an eyedropper or toothbrush and then applying gladwrap to control the look. We would be doing traditional versal work today & more lively versal work tomorrow.

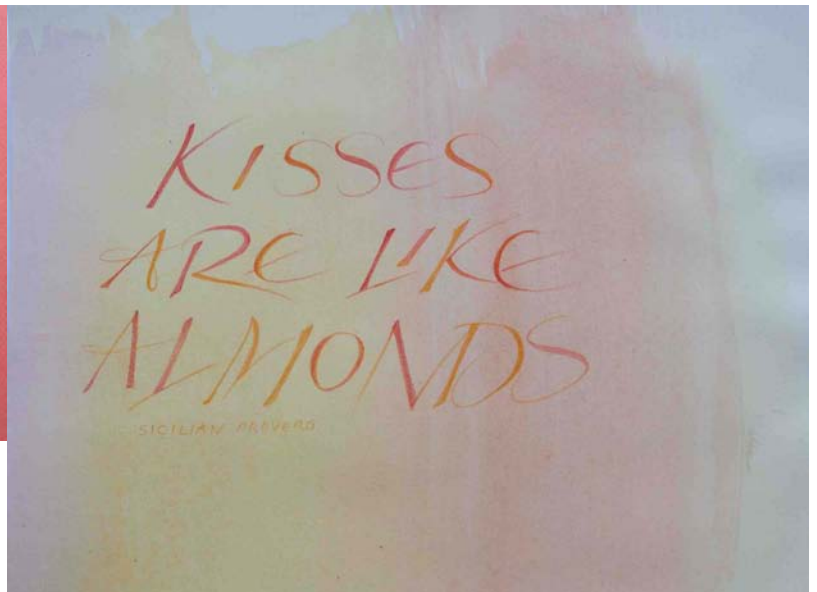
We then started building upon our versal forms. Gemma had prepared templates for us as guides - first exercise was lines - vertical, horizontal, curved & diagonal, using a 1mm nib. We were to put ourselves into the mind of drawing, not doing calligraphy. Our second exercise comprised tracing in pen & ink contemporary and traditional examples of versals which proved an extremely relaxing sheet. We were then to take one of the letters from the handout sheet & recreate. Not as relaxing!

After a quick lunch in the sun, we continued on with another skeleton roman exercise and then peeled the gladwrap from our canvas and watercolour board. The assortment of colours and effects was dazzling.

We then looked at the building of letters - the crossbars & serifs. Continuing with a few more exercises we finished for the day, all looking forward to our second day of Vivacious Versals.

From there we did a skeleton roman exercise, which proved a good refresher for me reminding me that width of letters is very important.





:::: DAY TWO ::::

We continued on Sunday, ready to face new challenges. Gemma provided several more work sheets. As on the previous day, some chose to practise on the worksheets themselves; other decided to use tracing paper – and to keep the worksheets for future use and reference.

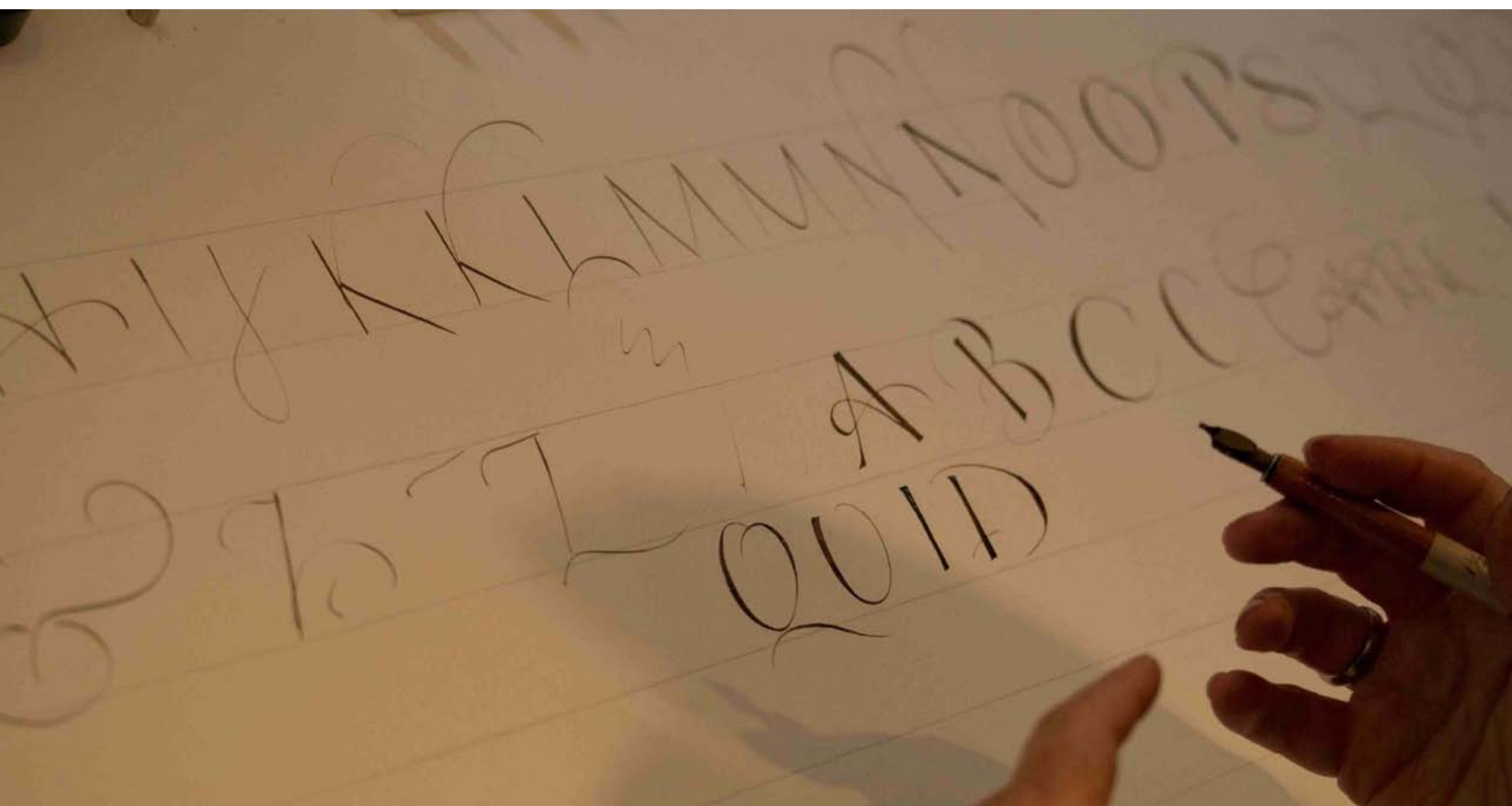
Writing the same letterforms – still a formal versal– just a little smaller and with a slight slope provided a challenge – particularly for diagonal lines. Concentrating on particular strokes in the letters proved helpful.

Then we moved on to the Vivacious part of the workshop. Gemma demonstrated vivacious versals, showing how she forms the letter with her hand – several times –before touching the pen to paper. It was as though we were training our hand and arm to form the strokes more naturally. Gemma suggested that when writing a full word or a series of words, we do all the gestural forms first and then go back and fill then all in.

We then used our quotes on the canvas or watercolour board already prepared. We wrote our short quotes

on art paper and on canvas or board, using ink, pencil and gouache. Gemma suggested that if we were using different coloured pencils, we should use no more than two colours, but if using one colour, any number of tints may be used.

For a number of us, writing on canvas was a new experience – likewise writing on a gessoed surface. Gemma had shown her canvas sampler: partly gessoed, partly treated with a clear liquid medium, partly treated with gesso applied with a credit card to achieve a sculptured look, partly treated with a matte medium.

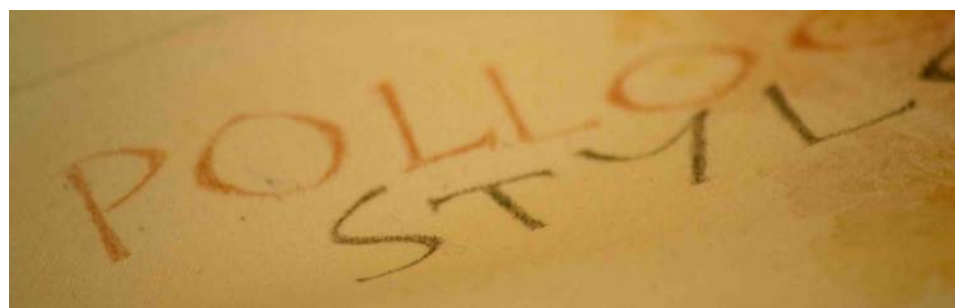
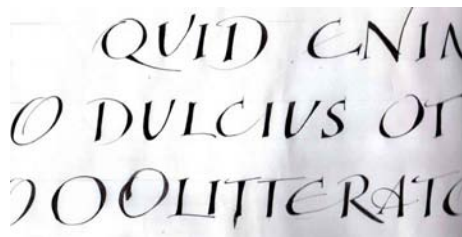


Along the way, Gemma provided helpful hints: Dr Marten's Pen White works very well on most surfaces; charcoal on cream is often a great substitute for black on white; it is not always necessary to fill in the letter completely. She also gave some pre-taste of what we might experience in a workshop on Coloured pencils!



The finished results looked great. It is always amazing to see how much variety a group of thirteen calligraphers can produce! We can't wait to see next month's gallery!

Many thanks to Gemma for her hard work as the tutor.



Library News

Please note that all this and more are available for loan. In particular, the library has quite a number of books that are good for beginners.

THE EDGE, UK EARLY SPRING '12

<http://www.clas.co.uk/>

What a fantastic publication. This edition features a number of manuscripts, all of which are absolutely fabulous. In addition to other essays and illustrations, readers will be able to see the St Cuthbert Gospel reproduced in colour for the first time. The script is angled pen uncial and an exemplar of a slightly modernised version is also included courtesy of Patricia Lovett. If you have an interest in illumination the "Genius of Illumination" article is very interesting and accompanied by superb illustrations.

Also featured is an article on Michelle Brown's new book entitled "The Book and the Transformation of the World c. 550 – 1050" and is recommended to anyone interested in literacy and the development of the book particularly in regards to Christianity. And yet another article reviews "Bibles. An illustrated History from Papyrus to Print". Accompanying this article are a number of illustrations including one of Thomas Becket's Bible and a strangely modern looking illustration including the 'hierarchy' of scripts we have learnt about in previous workshops.

CAPITAL LETTERS, OTTAWA SPRING '12

<http://cso.ncf.ca>

Contains a great article entitled "Commission Work (or how much do I charge for that?)". It offers advice on putting a dollar value on your time and talent. Capital Letters have published a list of pangrams. All of them are excellent but my favourite is: The Morse Code – Here come dots.

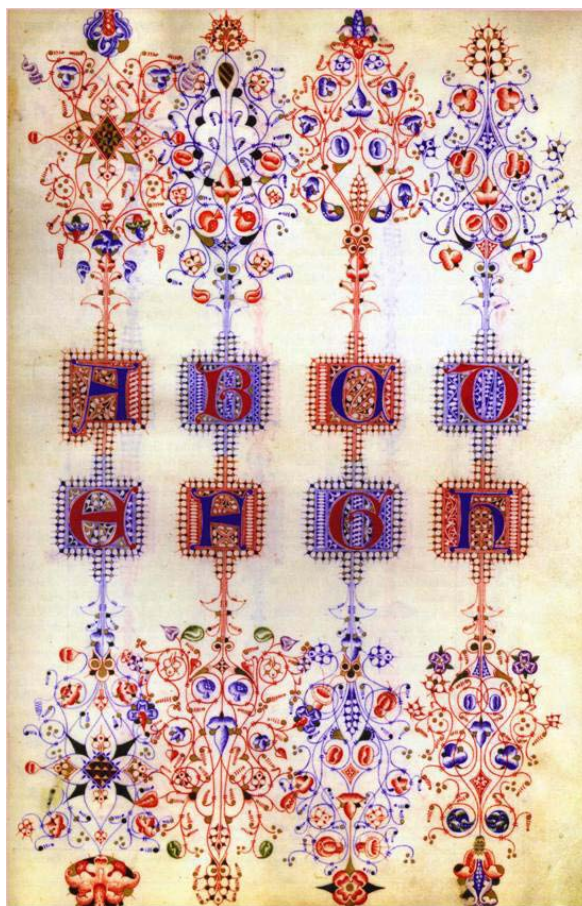
CALLIGRAPHY SOCIETY OF NZ SPRING '12

It was nice to hear from the Calligraphy Society of New Zealand after the earthquakes. Our thoughts have been with all in Christchurch and in particular our fellow calligraphers. It is lovely to see that their society is continuing and looking to the future.

POSTSCRIPT, VIC FEB-MAR '12

www.calligraphysocietyvictoria.org.au

Postscript's editor reported on a forthcoming event at the State Library of Victoria. This exhibition 'Love and Devotion: from Persia and Beyond' is on a rare illustrated Persian manuscripts from the Bodleian Libraries of the Oxford University. This exhibition runs from March 9 to July 1. The Canberra Calligraphy Society is having our own little taste of this type of script in an upcoming workshop called Abu Dhabi script run by Christine in June. This edition also features work by Vernon Cole as well as some pretty outstanding examples of paper cutting inspired by the workshop run by Carl Rohrs.



Workshop Equipment



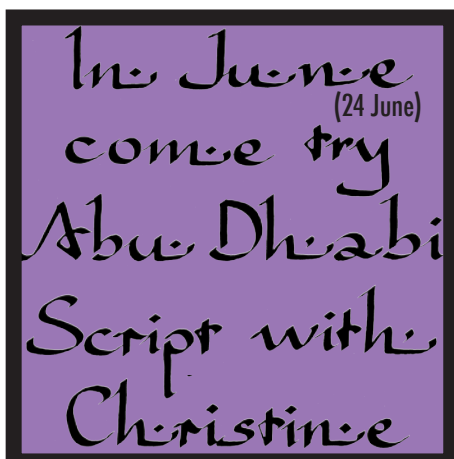
Pop-up Cards:

- Computer paper A4 size – 10 or so pages
- Tracing paper
- Light weight Red card
- Assorted medium weight card that can be folded as a card
- Assorted paper - patterned
- Bone folder
- Pencils
- Scissors
- Cutting knife
- Glue and brush
- Glue stick
- Glue dots (not essential)
- Cutting mat
- Metal ruler
- Double sided tape

bring this

The Usual Calligraphy Gear:

- pad of A3 bond paper
- few pieces of good quality paper (A4) for the finished work
- several broad edged dip nibs & holders
- 2B pencil and eraser
- 40-50cm ruler (clear and metal)
- bottle non-waterproof black ink
- several colours of gouache or watercolor paint + palette or mixing containers
- medium size glass jar
- old rags or towels (for making a mess!)
- old toothbrush (for cleaning the nibs!)
- masking tape or blu-tak
- drawing board just bigger than A3



Miscellany

Imagine comfortable accommodation overlooking a lake, clear mountain air, wonderful food and a group of like-minded people all gathering together for a weekend of calligraphy (and walks and talks). Whether it be to gaze at the waters of Lake Jindabyne, contemplate your next calligraphy piece, seek advice, discuss work, finish a project or just try out new ideas - this is the place to be! Put **5-6 October** in your diary and be sure to book early for this popular event. The cost is \$73 per person for 10 people maximum (cost may vary if less than 10 people book). There will be a volunteer chef, but bring your own work supplies. If you would like to book your space, please contact our Workshop Coordinator at cm.wilde@bigpond.net.au.

Jindabyne retreat

wrap writing parties

are being held for each newsletter. Any CCS member is welcome. It takes only 2 hrs for three people and is a fun way to meet your fellow calligraphers! If interested, please contact your Newsletter Lady sara.rawlo@gmail.com

handwritten, handbound

Canberra Calligraphy Society will have their Annual Exhibition at the [Belconnen Arts Centre](#) this year, in conjunction with the [Canberra Craft Bookbinders Guild](#). The exhibition will run from mid-Oct to mid-Nov, so it's time to start thinking about your submission piece(s) already! Detailed information in June.

holiday sales at market

Some members are pooling together to have a stall at the Sunday [Old Bus Depot Markets](#) around November. It's a great place to sell small crafty items and might be good for publicity for CSS. If you want to join the efforts, contact Sara sara.rawlo@gmail.com or Angela antnange@grapevine.com.au

website facelift

The CCS website will slowly undergo a facelift. Please send your favourite calligraphy images (of your own work) to our webmaster. Also, if you want to be listed on the Calligraphers For Hire site, please let him know as well. You can contact James at jameshislop@internode.on.net

Q:

What do you do if you stumble on several boxes of old nibs?

A:

Make a necklace!

(Thanks Angela!)



workshops at the NLA

CCS in conjunction with the National Library of Australia (NLA) ran three workshops allied to the Handwritten exhibition featuring works from the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin. Gemma Black gave a workshop on Illuminated Letters, Jill Robertson on Calligraphy for Young Calligraphers, and Angela Hillier on Generative Gothic.



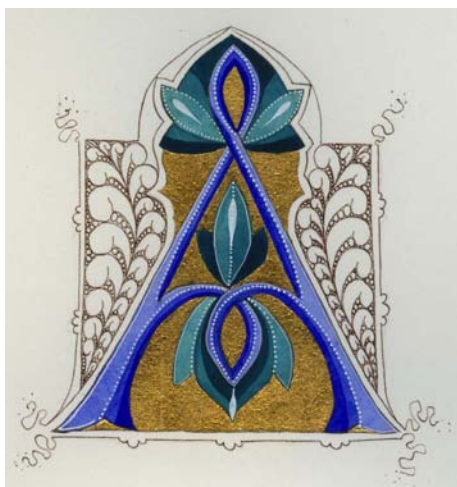
Illuminated Letters

with Gemma Black

Sunday February 19, 2012 was a thunderous and rainy day.

Eighteen eager participants gathered to create illuminations with gouache, gold leaf, gilding size, pencils, pens & brushes. The day was busy with heads down most of the day, each working on their own chosen illuminated letter. Our time was full and frenetic, I hardly drew breath, resulting in some stunning small masterpieces.

Thanks to my assistant Pamela and my helper Brendan from the National Library on a job well done!



Young Calligraphers

with Jill Robertson

I used the oldest manuscript from the Handwritten exhibition as my exemplar for the day for the 11 enthusiastic girls enrolled in the workshop, and this was the Virgil manuscript written in Carolingian around the year 850CE.

We started off using balsa wood and 3 different coloured inks to make wonderful letter patterns. These were left to dry while we worked with Carolingian. After looking at how the letters were formed, the girls all traced my exemplar and then tried it on their own. Finally they copied a saying onto good paper and decorated it with some of their patterned paper. It was amazing what we did in just two and a half hours!

Generative Gothic

with Angela Hillier

The students were shown many examples of 'Gothic' type script including the script in the Book of Hours, and their differences highlighted. We looked at the construction of the letters, bearing in mind the nib angle.

A left handed student who had been told the 'she wouldn't be able to do calligraphy' made a good start on the script using a copperplate holder AND a left/hand nib. She was pleased!

Capitals letters, tools, including the fact that sparrow quills were used for very fine work, cut and paste, etc. brought questions and all too soon it was time to close.

