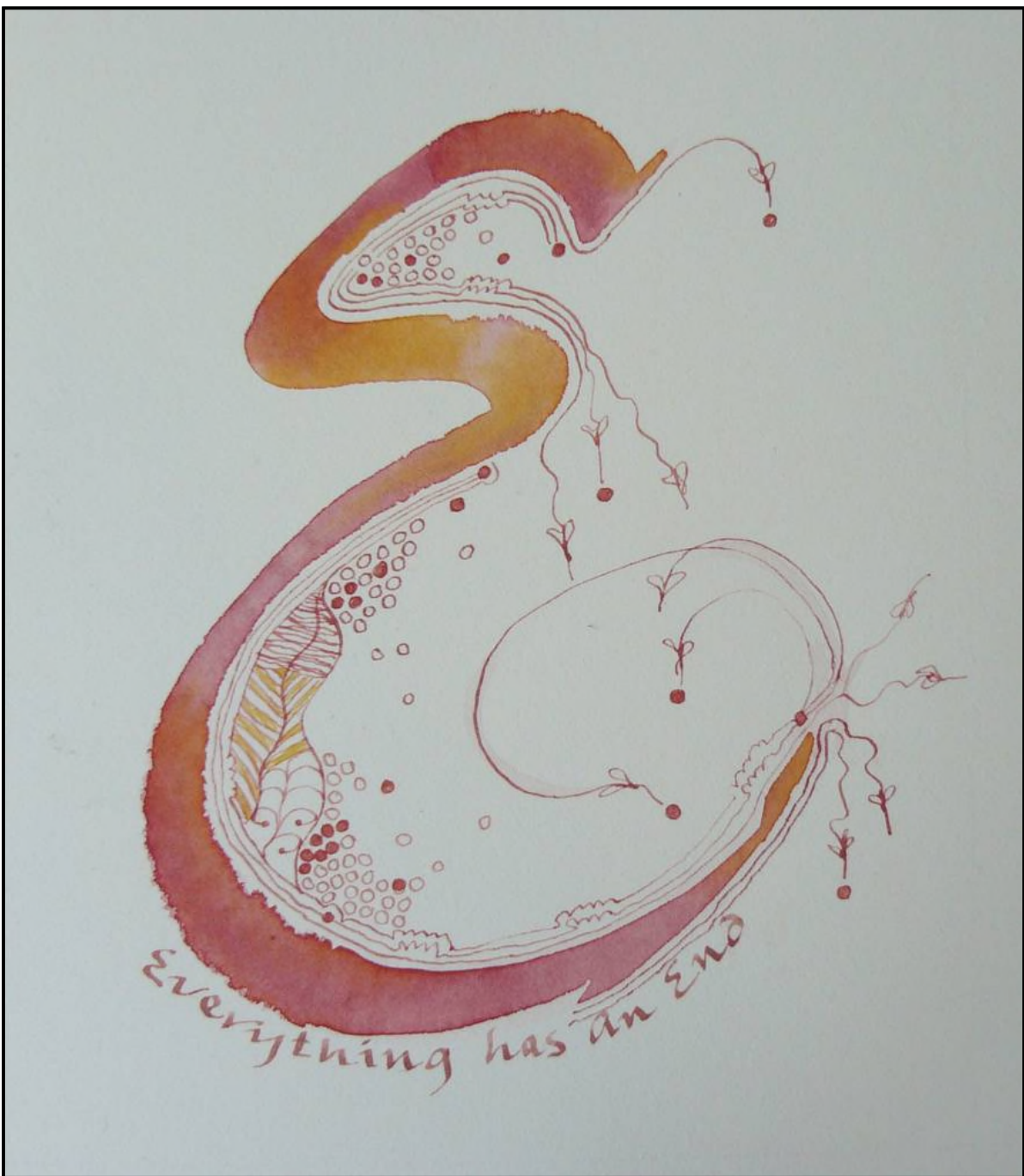


Newsletter 155 April 2008



## For your diary

**Sunday April 27**

1.30 - 4.30

**Using Paste Papers**

Tutor: Jenni Cole

**Saturday and Sunday May 24 - 25**

**Gold on Gold**

**White on White**

**Black on Black**

Tutor: Deirdre Hassed

(from Melbourne)

**Sunday June 22**

1.30 - 4.30

**Cut-out Letters**

Tutor: Christine Wilde

**Sunday July 27**

1.00 - 4.30

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Plus**

**Decorating an Envelope**

*Sunday August 24*

1.30 - 4.30

**SURPRISE! SURPRISE!**

*With Christine Wilde & Karen Woodhall*

**Saturday & Sunday September 27/28**

**Text and Texture**

**With Penny Price**

**(from UK)**

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### COVER CALLIGRAPHY

This piece is by Jeanette Berman, a letter E decorated with filigree that was done at the Sturt Summer School. More information pages 6-7

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**If you have not already renewed your membership of CCS, this will be your final newsletter. Do hope you will renew!**

*If you would like to receive this newsletter in PDF format and are not yet doing so, please email Jill Robertson, and let her know at robertsonjj@optusnet.com.au*

## President's Report



Dear Calligraphy friends,

This time I am beginning my report with my postcard from China. I have recently been there to see my daughters and their families, who are now living there for a few years - one in Hong Kong and one in Beijing. While there they took me to some wonderfully ornate temples - *proof left* - and I also had the fun and privilege of going to some Chinese calligraphy classes in Beijing. What a treat! I have written a bit more about that on page 10.

Meanwhile, a lot of calligraphy has been going on in Canberra including the annual Royal Canberra Show. Congratulations to Elizabeth Faul, Maureen Worsnop and Angela Hillier for their prize-winning pieces. Thanks to Gemma Black for being our judge this year. Some helpful comments from her about what judges look for in a piece are also in this newsletter.

Our February workshop was all about Paste Papers and I see some wonderful pieces were produced by those who went. In April Jenni Cole will be giving us ideas on how to use these papers, so book in for that one now.

Angela's workshop on Fraktur was well attended on Easter Sunday, despite our doubts when organising the dates for this year.

The two big events on our calendar for 2008 are the visits of **Deirdre Hassed from Melbourne** for the weekend of May 24th and 25th and then the visit of **Penny Price from UK** in September. You can book in for those workshops right away so get in touch with Christine any time to put your name down.

Finally a reminder that your annual subscription is now due and if you have decided not to renew, then this will be your last newsletter. Naturally we hope you will all complete the renewal form from the December newsletter and send it in to Maureen.

**Jill Robertson**

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*Paste Papers*

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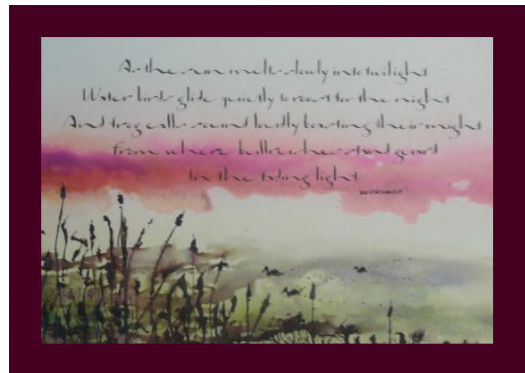
# Royal Canberra Show 2008

**Congratulations to our winners who this year are:**

1. **Elizabeth Faul**
2. **Maureen Worsnop**
3. **Angela Hillier**

**Highly commended:**

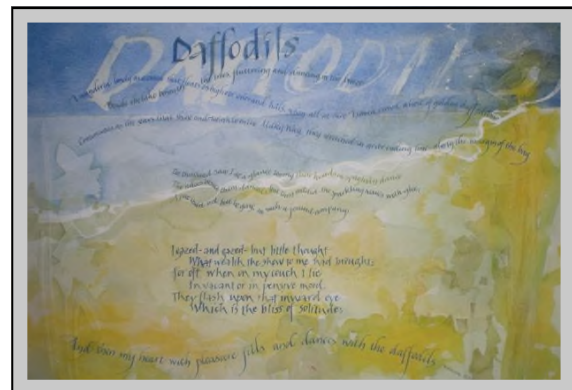
- **Debbie Kelsey**
- **Merran Hunter**



*Maureen Worsnop's piece - 2nd prize*



*Elizabeth Faul's piece - 1st Prize*



*Angela Hillier's 'Daffodils' 3rd prize*

The Royal Canberra Show was held from February 23d to 25th this year. Thank you to the people who entered their pieces - especially those who had a go for the first time.

Gemma Black was our judge this year and she has written some very helpful comments about how she goes about judging such an event. Do make sure you read that side of the page too!

There were 19 pieces entered this year - next year we hope for many more.

Thanks too, to our demonstrators: Karen Woodhall, Maureen Worsnop, Angela Hillier, Reta Gear, Chris Matthews, Merran Hunter, Penny Sohler, James Hislop, Jenni Cole and Janelle Woods, some of whom did multiple slots.

Here are some memorable quotes from their time at the table:

"Even had some budding 'would be's' have a calligraphic go with the felt tips, after which they appreciated their bookmarks in a whole different way!! Some people just preferred to stand and watch.. and appreciate" *Merran*

"Many children with unusual names/spelling were delighted to have their names on our "free bookmarks". They remarked that they couldn't buy anything with their name on it." *Janelle*

"I do enjoy demonstrating / doing names of the children .... it is pure write, write, write, no other interruptions, no phone ringing, etc." *Jenni*

"Probably our most memorable customer was a gentleman who held a family get-together every four years, on account of his family name being Leape. Chris did name cards for his granddaughters and something for the dinner table to commemorate this year's gathering of the clan, while I did name cards for his grandsons." *James and Chris*

# Judging Calligraphy



When judging calligraphy for either juried shows or exhibitions with places and highly commended awards I try to make my efforts and intentions as objective as possible. Most of what we love or dislike in the art world is subjective but in judging one needs to be more responsible and exhibit a fairness for all.

As a guild member of the Australian Society of Calligraphers the judging issue is discussed from time to time and the following criteria is used by most of us for marking fairly all the works on show.

Passing this information on to you will help *you the calligrapher* when it comes to exhibiting your work. The intention to enter work into a “show” should not necessarily be to “win” the coveted prize but rather use the show or exhibition to further improve your work and learn from your past achievements and experiments and dare I say it, failure, I have a few! If we exhibit to promote and perpetuate the art of calligraphy then the recent RCS did just that!

Firstly, I walk through each piece and read the words. Secondly, I have an overall look at the work and gauge the

works which affect me for whatever reason. Then I step up to each piece and make a thorough assessment of each piece without influence of any others hanging.

These are the criteria I and my colleagues use:

- ✦ Lettering / calligraphy quality (50%)
- ✦ Application of elements and principles of Layout/Design (25%)
- ✦ Creativity and suitability (20%)
- ✦ Presentation (5%)

The very essence of calligraphy is the in the *quality of the lettering*, but we know it is not everything.

The way various decorative elements and the lettering are juxtaposed along with strong layout and design principles come next in importance.

Taking a concept, turning it into an idea with a visual outcome (creativity, pushing the envelope, outside of the box, challenging the norm) along with the suitability of that creation with the chosen text would be next in importance when marking.

Presentation some say, is everything but in our art form the calligraphy should hold its own and stand alone. The work should not have to rely on the frame, or the framer, to come up with a distraction rather than a compliment. And if it is the “framer” then that is an element which has been bought. Therefore it rates the lower percentage.

**Gemma Black**

# Sturt Summer School

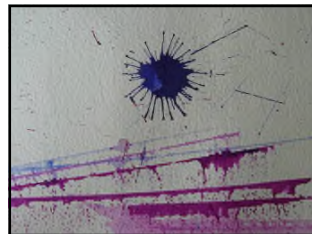
by Jeanelle Berman

I was lucky enough to indulge in five days of calligraphy in the new year, in a workshop at Mittagong led by Gemma Black. The class was made up of professional calligraphers, experienced hobbyists and brand-new calligraphers. It was truly inspiring as Gemma provided a range of activities to extend everyone. The five days residential experience was a real luxury, a creative time-out from everyday life. Thank you Gemma. Here are some of our creations.

Weathergrams were created using brown paper or used shopping bags. They are designed to be hung in the trees to weather. It took a while to get used to the idea that we could do a piece of art and enjoy seeing it deteriorate in the weather. I have placed some in the trees at home and enjoy seeing them respond to the rain and the wind and sun. I wonder how long they will last.

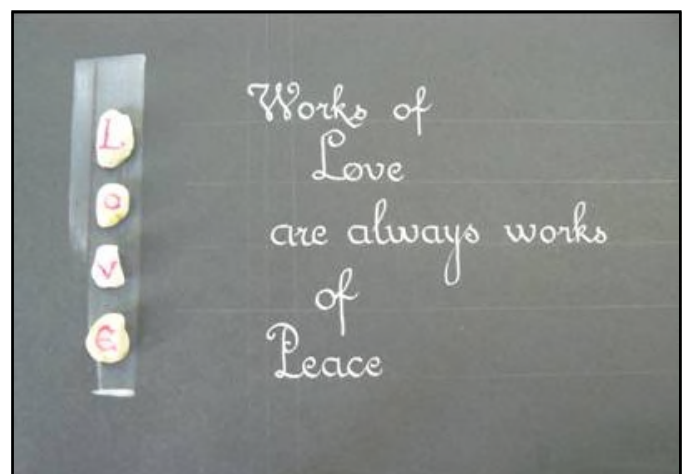


We explored textured backgrounds using splats and dragged ink lines. We made splats using ink drops and short straws to force air into the ink drop to spread it across the page. These are some of my splats and drag lines.

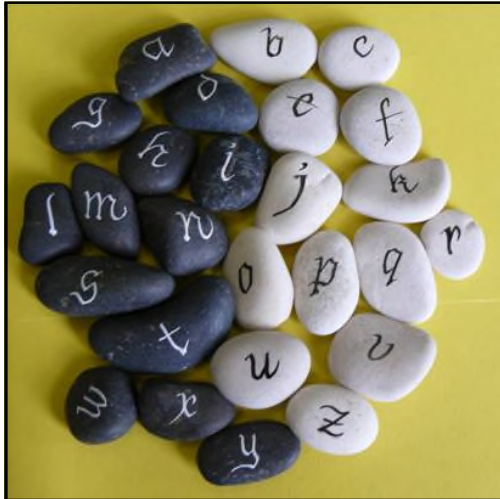


The 'splat' is from Jennifer Sellinger, from Sydney.

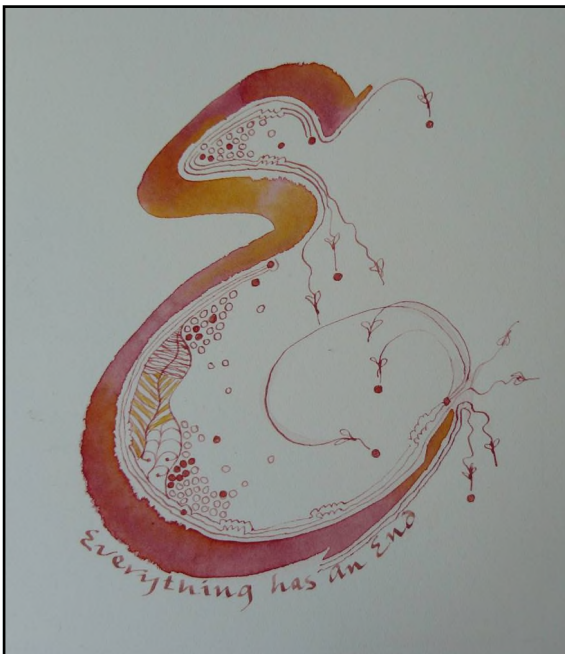
We explored a new hand, the French Ronde, illustrated here in a piece by Canberra calligrapher Kathy Brassil



We also tried writing on wood and pebbles. Tricks for how to make the surface receptive to the ink or paint were shared. Here is an alphabet on pebbles in a ying-yang configuration created by Allison Walker.



We also played with filigree decorations within letters. Here is my example of modern filigree inside a watercolour letter.



We spent time using less traditional tools. This letter C piece at the top of the next column is created using red and ochre gouache applied with a ruling pen and the black ink letter using a broad edge automatic pen.



We also had fun using gold leaf. This letter Z has gold leaf lettering up the spine. The letter was made using Quink ink and water. The water allowed the Quink to separate into its true colours.



We decorated used paper shopping bags using dragged ink lines and calligraphy. Some bags with shop logos were used to spark the creativity. The 'thank you' piece for Gemma at the end of the workshop was a bag marked by us all. Hopefully it will be useful.

# Paste Papers Workshop

**24th February**  
**Tutor Gemma Black**

Gemma started by telling us the correct terminology is Paste-Painted Papers which makes sense as paint is what creates the colourful result.

Gemma had the paste all prepared and cooked ready for us to add the acrylic paint of our choice from the large selection of colours she had. After a talk, demonstration and a three page handout of instructions we proceeded to do our own creations.

First of all by laying out paper - about 110gsm in weight - on a clean surface, lightly spray with water so that paper is just wet, be sure it is evenly wet all over by spreading with a sponge. Now you apply the paste/paint mixture using the spoon you mixed it with and drop in dobs in a vertical line across the paper then using brush and vertical strokes, spread the paint. No more than 2 or 3 colours at the most should be used on each sheet of paper. The fun started at this stage when we decorated with various tools such as combs, balsa wood, skewers, stamps and many others, the imagination can run wild here and it did - there were some great ideas.



This all looked so easy when Gemma demonstrated but we soon found out there was quite an art to it.

After decorating they were set outside to dry. Unfortunately it was a bit windy and some of our work was torn or curled over before it had dried but we still had some interesting pieces to take home and after pressing flat they looked great.

Gemma explained some more creative variations and several ideas for using the paste-painted paper.

Thank you Gemma for a well organised workshop and so much preparation and organising done by you, it was a very enjoyable afternoon and some interesting papers resulted.

The recipe we used was:  
**Gemma's Basic Recipe**

- 1 cup of plain flour (by accident we proved self-raising worked just as well)
- 6 cups of water

Cook and cool slightly before adding Acrylic tube paint.

**Reta Gear**



# Fraktur Workshop

We gathered on a peaceful Easter Sunday, for the Fraktur Workshop, tutored by Angela Hillier.

Fraktur means “broken” and the fractured effect is created by the overlapping of strokes in the letters.

It is a more shapely script than Blackletter; due to the curved terminal strokes, angular o and a bowls, and attractive loops on the g and z.

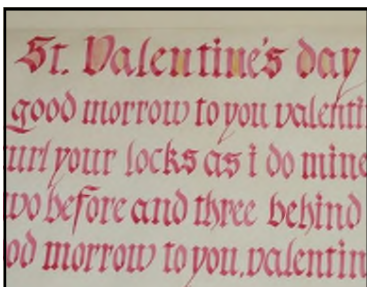
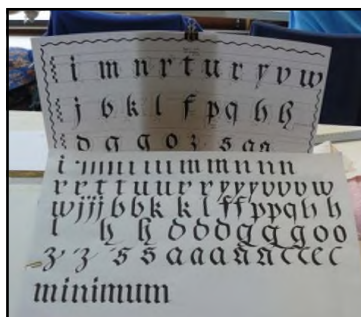
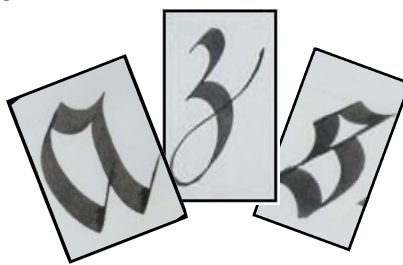
We began by examining these elegant curves, the fine hair-lines in such letters as m and n, and the spikes at the tops of some of the letters. The more pen lifts in a letter, the more spiky points are created.

Angela showed us how the calligrapher Rudolf Koch created interesting texture with his modern version of Fraktur, in his work on the “Matthias Evangelium” in 1921 (see *The Art of Calligraphy* by David Harris), also his interesting use of modern Versals as capitals, in the piece.

Our work began with a warm up exercise, and then we practiced making downstrokes with a background grid paper, and the pen held at a 45 degree angle... in order to get the correct inter-letter and between-letter spacing necessary for Fraktur. We



Angela demonstrating Fraktur



worked through the exemplar that Angela had given us, with the letters in shape order. (See back cover for exemplar)

A little extra attention was given to the plump f (with its extra pen twist), the looping tail of the g, and the ornate alternative h.

After tea and the appropriate hot cross buns, we changed pen size and attempted to write out a quote. Angela had provided short verses of poems or rhymes with a holiday theme. To further add to the interest of the piece, we were encouraged to colour in the letter spaces of the title with pencils- and this provided an interesting contrast.

We all managed to complete a piece of work in time for a quick viewing, before the afternoon was over.

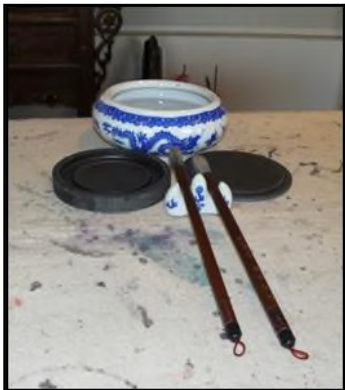
Thanks very much Angela, for an excellent workshop in an elegant script...a very worthwhile way to spend the holiday!

By way of a postscript, “Fraktur” also refers to an art form practiced by the Pennsylvania Germans from the mid 18<sup>th</sup> to the mid 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The distinctive German script was used in combination with Folk Art to decorate marriage, birth or baptismal certificates and valentine letters. For some beautiful examples see the gallery at

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

**Karen Woodhall**

# Chinese Calligraphy in Beijing



**Jill  
Robertson**

One of the treats on my recent visit to Beijing, to stay with my daughter and her family, was to go to 2 calligraphy classes at the Chinese Cultural Centre there.

Our teacher was an interesting man who was highly qualified in the business world and then gave it up to become a Buddhist monk. He had a very gentle presence which spread to the rest of the class.

So many things he said were applicable to western calligraphers as well as eastern calligraphers. He talked about our physical preparation being really important and went through some breathing exercises before we began the classes.

*"If you don't feel relaxed  
then don't make the stroke"*

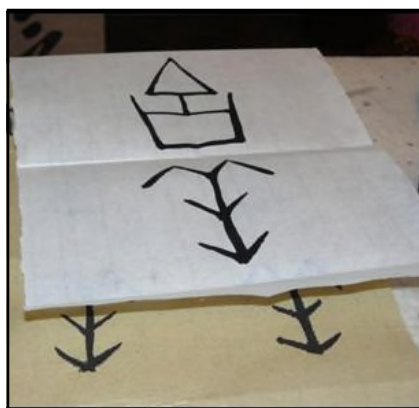
Good advice, but I am not sure how much we would get done if we really took that seriously! But it was a good reminder not to try and write if your body is twisted and your legs crossed and an elbow is on the desk etc. Does that sound familiar?

In our first lesson we learnt 2 traditional characters which I believe mean "praying for good fortune" and "auspicious" As it was Chinese New Year at the time there was a lot of hoping for good fortune.

I learnt that the order of strokes in Chinese calligraphy is that you start at the top in the middle and then work sideways and then down the character, sealing it with the final closing stroke - if there is one!

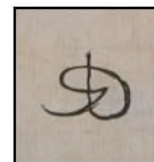


*Showing my daughter how it is done.*



*My first  
week's  
attempts*

The second week was exciting as we carved our own seals or "chops". First we designed something that was meaningful to us and then painted it back-to-front onto the stone and then carved the pattern. I decided to just do my monogram and was very pleased that it came out as well as it did as cutting the curves is bit tricky. I am sure I could do better next time!



# From the Library

## **NEWSLETTERS**

Some of the newsletters received since our last CCS newsletter contain reports of workshops held by Jan Pickett. Check in ***Colophon, Dancing pen (Tas.),*** and ***Tasmanian pen craft.***

Also included are reports on the **Book of Heroes and Champions** which we were privileged to have here briefly. Check out ***Colophon*** and the ***Newsletter of the Calligraphy Society of South Australia.***

***Capital letters (Ottawa)*** for September has an article “Some criteria for evaluating your work” which contains useful questions to ask yourself. The December issue states the Society’s **Privacy policy** – something for us to think about here.

***Colophon*** profiles Olive Bull. It also has many well produced illustrations of some beautiful pieces.

***The Edge (UK)*** is devoted to Cadels/ Cadeaux – those highly finished letters – superbly illustrated in colour. You won’t find the word in the OED yet!

Instructions for stab stitching, or Japanese binding, with diagrams, are included in the ***Newsletter of the Calligraphy Society of New Zealand.***

The ***Newsletter of New Zealand Calligraphers*** has coloured photos of the Society’s exhibition, to inspire you, as well as of some of the Decorated Envelopes display.

The ***Oxford Scribe newsletter*** has begun arriving again – the first issue received since the late 1990s!

Instructions for Concertina books or cards, for those who have not yet tried them, are in ***Postscript (Vic)*** together

with lots of photos of entries in their design-a-wine -label competition.

***Tasmanian pen craft*** has some shapes you can use for embossing. The following issue has an article on Haiku, poetry with 17 or fewer syllables, which originate d in Japan.

All these will be on display for you to see at our monthly workshops. And remember – you can borrow a folder of any newsletter, or any book for just \$1. Just see me (or a Committee Member if I am unavailable) to borrow.

That’s all for now.  
***Penny Sohler***

## Workshop Information

**The workshops for the next few months are listed on the inside of the front cover.**

All workshops are on the **fourth Sunday of the month** from **1.30pm – 4.30pm** unless otherwise stated. **Go to Urambi Village Community Hall, (Entrance B) Crozier Circuit, Kambah.**

*The cost for these workshops is \$10, with an occasional extra charge for special materials provided by a tutor or when we have a visiting tutor.*

**Bookings are to be made in advance either at a preceding workshop or by ringing Christine Wilde on 6231 9922 or by email at [cm.wilde@bigpond.net.au](mailto:cm.wilde@bigpond.net.au)**

i j m n r t u x y v w  
 Begin t with an upward stroke  
 diagonal stroke goes through letter.

k l f p q h  
 follow strokes  
 2 strokes  
 twist pen  
 hum pun  
 alternate h

o g o z s a  
 alternate a

c e  
 lower case  
 flicker  
 teaching water  
 Angela Hillier

