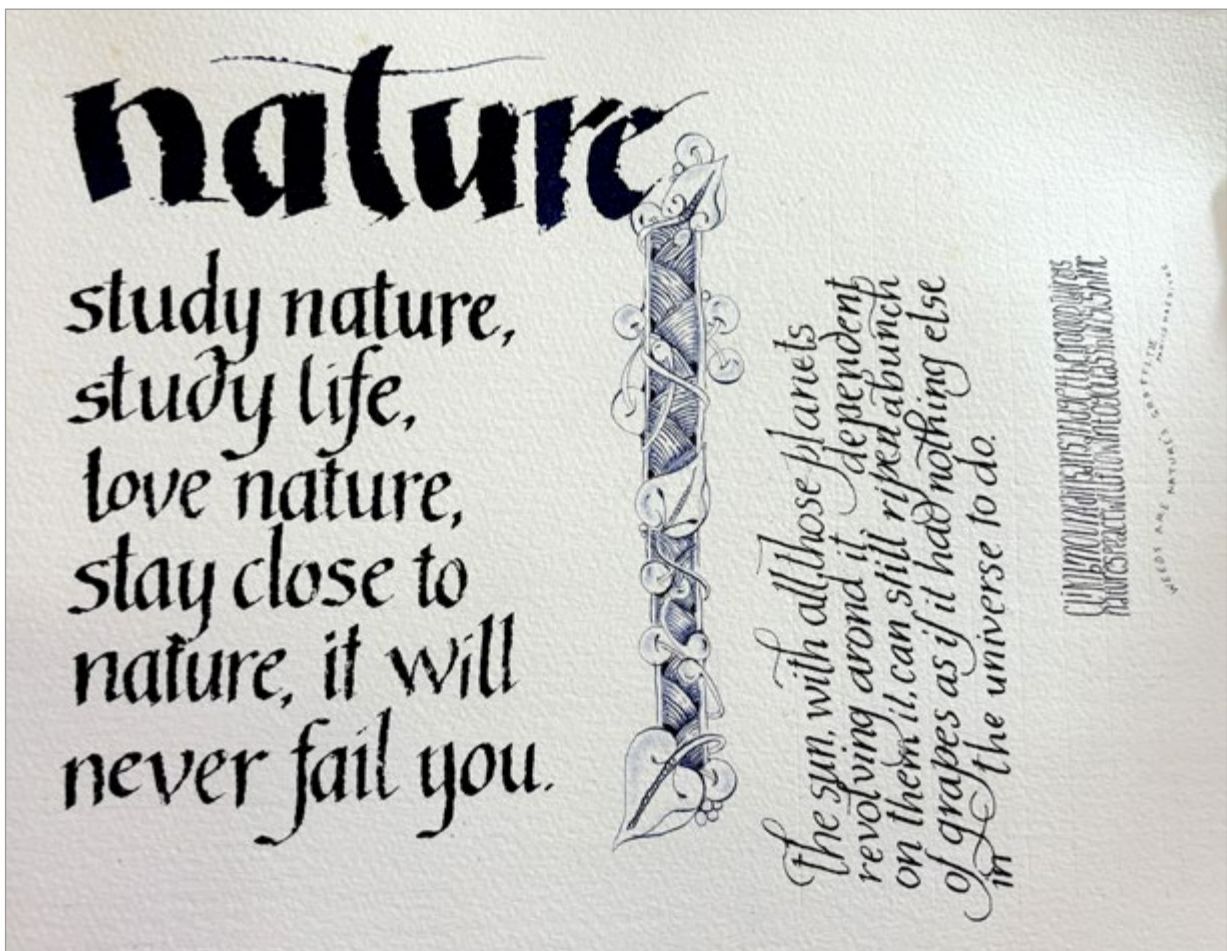


# ALPHABETICAL

## Order

NOVEMBER 2024 No 233

canberra  
CALLIGRAPHY  
society 



**Saturday December 7, 2024**

2:30 pm - 4:00 pm

## CCS Christmas Party

Annual card swap  
- bring a home-made card -  
and a plate of food or drink  
to share.

Come along and celebrate another  
great year of calligraphy!

### Thank you to our envelope and heading writers:

Janet Johnson, Narelle Jones,  
Angela Hillier, Maureen Worsnop  
and Gemma Black.

.....

If you would like to help out  
with envelope writing please email  
Gemma: blackopalgem@telstra.com  
It is likely you will only be called  
upon once a year.



### Front Cover:

Pieces from our  
*Text and Textures Workshop*  
by Judith Wood (top),  
and Janet Johnson (bottom).

### Postal Address

The Secretary CCS  
PO Box 291  
Jamison Centre ACT 2614

### Web Address

[www.canberracalligraphysociety.org.au](http://www.canberracalligraphysociety.org.au)

# COMITTEE

### President Jill Robertson

0419 928 400

[jillrobertson216@gmail.com](mailto:jillrobertson216@gmail.com)

### Vice President Sue Quayle

0412 595 863

[suequayle49@gmail.com](mailto:suequayle49@gmail.com)

### Secretary Deborah Carraro

0417 236 002

[deborahcarraro120@gmail.com](mailto:deborahcarraro120@gmail.com)

### Treasurer John Stockbridge

6254 3203 or 0418 289 424

[John@stockbridge.com.au](mailto:John@stockbridge.com.au)

### Newsletter Editor Linda Lyle

0422 227 092

[wanniassamob@gmail.com](mailto:wanniassamob@gmail.com)

### Librarian Irena Hesterman

0421 779 884 (texts only)

[eraine314@hotmail.com](mailto:eraine314@hotmail.com)

### Workshop Co-ordinator Gen Aranda

0406 518 570

[gen.ccs@icloud.com](mailto:gen.ccs@icloud.com)

### Website Administrator Anthony Mabanta

0417 893 649

[mcduff99@hotmail.com](mailto:mcduff99@hotmail.com)

### Committee Members

**Angela Hillier**

0407 488 365

[antnange@gmail.com](mailto:antnange@gmail.com)

Pam Kemp

0408 865 459

[pamelamegan@gmail.com](mailto:pamelamegan@gmail.com)

Janet Johnson

0411 051 982

[janet.johnson@tesstech.com.au](mailto:janet.johnson@tesstech.com.au)

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on our Facebook page

[www.facebook.com/canberracalligraphysociety](http://www.facebook.com/canberracalligraphysociety)



President  
Jill Robertson

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Greetings to you all.

I have now returned from a fantastic 5-week holiday in Canada, so am settling down to the business of the Calligraphy Society again.

While I was in Ottawa I took the opportunity to meet up with one of the members of the Ottawa Calligraphy Society - Pat Gregoire - a person I first met 19 years ago, when I first visited Ottawa. We had lunch together and then Pat drove me round some interesting parts of the city. However, the most important part was that we swapped our newsletters, which saved us a lot of money in postage!! It was delightful to make contact again, and both our societies seem to be in a similar situation - a lot of happy members, but still trying to attract some younger ones!

Like many of us, I am just recovering after our wonderful weekend with Deirdre Hased. So many variations on the theme of Text as Texture - I am sure you will enjoy the photos.

Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

*Jill Robertson*

The AGM was held in September, and I am really relieved and very pleased to tell you that all places on the committee are now filled. Pam Kemp has stood down as Workshop Coordinator, and Genevieve Aranda has offered to fill that position. Also, Janet Johnson has joined the committee and already has some helpful ideas to move us forward in our administration. A big welcome to them both. Also, Pam is staying on the committee but without a special responsibility. There will be no workshop in November, so our next gathering will be for our Christmas party at Urambi on Saturday December 7<sup>th</sup> from 2.30 to 4pm.



*Jill and Pat swapping newsletters in Ottawa.*



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# BOATS OF HUMANITY



August get-together  
hosted by Gemma Black.

*Reported by  
Sue Quayle*

It was a rainy, gloomy day but we were warmly welcomed into Gemma and David's lovely home. How lucky were we to be looking forward to a private viewing of Gemma's 'Boats of Humanity' exhibition pieces.

After spending a while chatting and enjoying each other's company with a welcome drink and nibbles, we lined up for our afternoon's entertainment.

To try to describe Gemma's work, is always a test as we exhaust our supply of superlatives very quickly. Not only because of her skill but also because of her dedication to calligraphy and art in all its forms.

It took quite a while for Gemma to work her way through the lovely pieces because each one deserved a separate description with a story as well. The hand drawn figures which line the bottom of these Gargantuan sized (750mm x 560mm) pieces were all designed and drawn individually by

Gemma and painted in with 'Bister' inks. The text she chose was 'Herman Kilian' in varying sizes to fit with the pieces. All these works were housed in a beautifully constructed black Solander Box, where they will stay for their trip to the United States.

We were then treated to a tour of her studio and an insight the background of this collection. For many years, Gemma had wanted to produce a collection of work based on the Boats of Humanity and the opportunity to exhibit in Tasmania was what brought this about.

From here this lovely group of work based on the Declaration of Human Rights will find its way to Stanford University in California, United States.

What a lovely way to spend an afternoon... especially as after the talk and showing of artwork we had a lunch provided by all of us bringing a plate...

The afternoon was informative, educational and so enjoyable. We're very proud of our Gemma and will always be glad to have her back in with us in Canberra.

*Editor's note:* Gemma has published a You Tube video, created by Lara van Raay Filmmaker © 2023 "Gemma Black: The Boats of Humanity - universal declaration of human rights" available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FvfbYOgKfTU>





# TEXT AS TEXTURE WORKSHOP REPORT



October Workshop  
Led by Deidre Hassed.

Reported by  
Narelle Jones

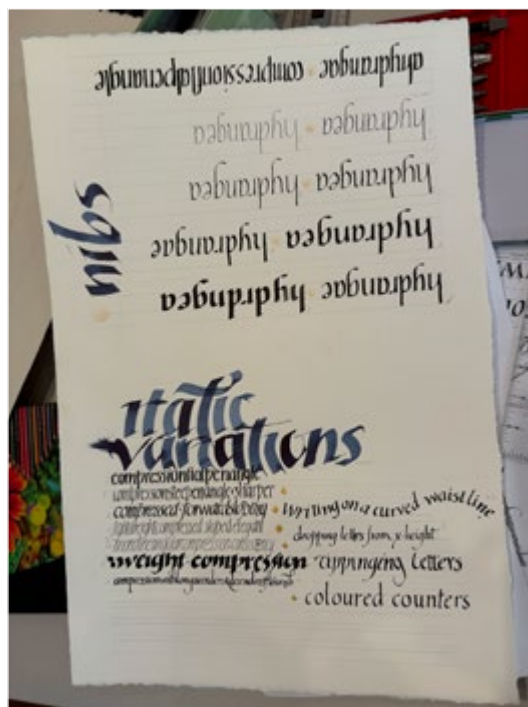
This year's weekend workshop brought much excitement with it as we welcomed back Melbourne calligrapher, Deidre Hassed, to our group. It had been 9 years since Deidre had worked with us and everyone was looking forward to what she had to offer on this occasion.

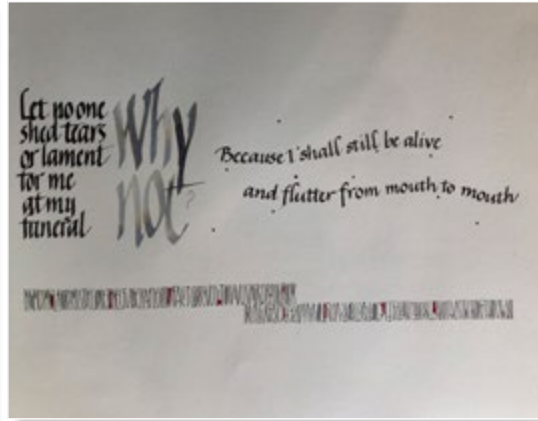
The weekend started with a welcome dinner on the Friday evening allowing those who hadn't met Deidre before to do so and for everyone to catch up on each other's news. Then on Saturday the fun began.

Fifteen excited calligraphers gathered ready to explore a new world of possibilities. The topic for the workshop was *Text as Texture* with the aim that each participant would build up their own repertoire of textures exploring how each could be used to good effect on a single page.

We started by taking a more formal approach using "Italic" as our script and, using the same word/s, we worked our way through an exercise where we used a series of pen sizes (e.g. Mitchell 0 - 5 or Speedball C series 0 - 6) but kept the "x" height and length of the word the same for each nib size. This immediately brought to light the texture created just by changing the size of your nib.

Then it was onto exercises that involved lateral compression of letters, pen manipulation, decreasing or increasing the "x" height, exaggerating or varying the slope of letters, changing the style of serifs etc. We also tried writing on curved lines and in spirals. This led to us playing with a wide variety of tools, pens and nibs to see what textures we could create. Most participants had both smooth and textured paper to work on so that added to the fun of experimenting with new ideas.





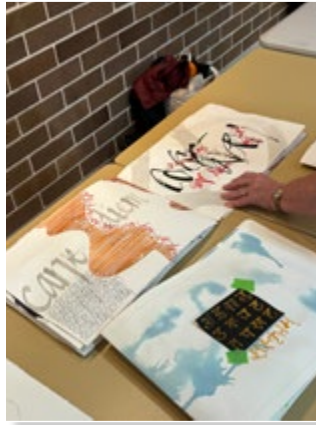
Day 2 took on an even more experimental approach where we worked with the techniques developed the day before to generate larger pieces of work. Deidre showed us how to make a grid layout with masking tape which allowed us to build up small vignettes showing the many and varied ideas and techniques we had learned which proved a great source of inspiration with ideas bouncing around the room at great speed. We even had the opportunity to play with a Sanskrit alphabet allowing us to create variety to our text and enhance the texture created on our pages.

Through Deidre's gentle guidance and inspiration, a huge amount of work was created by all participants over the 2 days. A couple of people even had time to bind their work into books. Overall, this was an immensely enjoyable and satisfying workshop with everyone able to work at their own pace and level to learn new and interesting ways of using text as texture.

Thanks go out to Pam and other committee members who facilitated this workshop and to Deidre for sharing her time and expertise with us. What a shame we only had two days!!!







## A couple of tips from Deirdre

### DIY Nib Sharpening



You need an Arkansas Stone with a drop of water on it.

Rub the nib on the watered stone at a 30 degree angle to sharpen it.

.....

Sumi ink is good for writing with a pipette. Adding a touch of PVA gives it a shine.



## Horae ad usum Parisiensem (1401-1500) ~ A collaborative artistic reproduction Part 2



Editor's note: This is the conclusion to Veronica Bryan's piece on her inspiration and techniques used in reproducing this piece.

I eventually joined the Canberra Calligraphy Society and was made aware of the work of Australian Calligrapher, Gemma Black, and attended her *Medieval Illumination Workshop* in Canberra in 2015. This was the first time I was able to observe and ask questions of someone with knowledge of the field and it was a great experience. I have such admiration for Calligraphers as I have always loved this elegant art-form, and while it is not my forte, I was relieved to learn that historically, Illuminators and Calligraphers often worked separately and therefore all was not lost for me, as collaboration was a possibility.

The COVID Lockdowns of 2020 meant that several teachers who were based overseas, now provided online lessons. I was fortunate enough to attend classes and have private lessons with UK based professional illuminator Toni Watts, who is the Manuscript Illuminator at Lincoln Cathedral. Toni's guidance was invaluable, and I will forever be grateful for her advice and patience. Toni is currently finishing a book on Illumination entitled "Contemporary Illumination for the Calligrapher and Artist: Traditional Techniques Reinterpreted" which will be published by Crowood Press later this year.

It was while attending another online class on pattern design, that I first saw the leaf of the *Horae ad usum Parisiensem* (1401-1500) [Bibliothèque nationale de France. Département des Manuscrits. Latin 1176] that inspired me to undertake its artistic reproduction. The work was completed over the course of a couple of weeks, using raised gilding, flat gilding, shell gold, ink and watercolours. It



features filigree, floral elements, birds, insects and animals in the marginalia, and the reproduction measures 18.5 x 27cm.

Part of a Medieval French Book of Hours, this particular leaf contains a Christian prayer. It is written in Latin and so any notions that I might be able to trace the lettering were quickly dispelled, and I asked my former teacher, Gemma Black, whether she would be willing to undertake the task of recreating the central panel of illumination, gilding & lettering. Traditionally, the process is undertaken the other way around with the calligraphic work done first. Fortunately for me, she agreed to perform the task, and the finished work is a testament to her extraordinary skill under pressure. It all came together well as a unified whole. With Gemma's blessing, it was gifted to my parents to mark a significant birthday.

Illuminating is not for the faint hearted. It can be expensive, time-consuming and requires a great deal of patience and good problem-solving skills, but the end result can be incredibly rewarding. This was my first full page work undertaken in collaboration with Gemma and with any luck it won't be the last.

# LIBRARY

## **ALPHABET** Vol 49. Number 4 Summer 202

- This volume features: Kristoffel Boudens' article called: "The Third Leg and Four Changes in Five Times Eight Years".
- Alexandra Childs: "An Aerial and Atmospheric Alphabet".
- Nicolas Bordes: "Mars Passe A l'Etat Direct".

## **POSTSCRIPT** Aug/Sept 2024

- Julie Chambers' class of design: Letter by Letter.
- The benefits of using egg glair: egg glair added to gouache provides resistance from moisture, is an extra binder, can be over-painted.
- Safely erasing pencil lines, and much more.
- Deirdre Hased taught a workshop to enhance handwriting, using various tools and colours.
- A session of embossing resulting in interesting effects.
- Modern pointed pen with Margaret Smith.

## **POSTSCRIPT** Oct/Nov 2024

- Julie Chambers visited The Avranches Scriptorial located at the Mont St. Michel in France.
- A workshop using The Romaniks letters at Deirdre Hased's studio with Manny Ling.
- Artist profile of Andrea Wunderlich.

## **DANCING PEN** Winter/spring 1024 Issue 143

- Reports on various workshops: An embossing workshop using dry and wet paper techniques with Speedball B nibs, in combination with Monoline script.
- Easy and versatile gelli printing, writing numerals, designing letter by letter.
- The Colour Circle Art Group held a text-based workshop.

## **KAPITIL LETTER** Issue 71 - August 2024

- The subtle art of Pen manipulation.
- Shorthand as taught in a commercial course can be considered "another script".
- Roman Capitals using a brush to paint the letters produces beautiful results.
- Maxine Livingston talks about her "Books in Boxes".

## **CAPITAL LETTERS** Volume 41 Number 1 September 2024

- Report on the June meeting, and works from this year's Annual Swap Quote.
- A review of the Exhibition at the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO), featuring beautiful works from the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> century on vellum, needlework samplers and a watercolour on parchment of a detailed natural history piece.

## **THE EDGE** Volume 29:3 August 2024

- The travelling exhibition "Letters Hand Made" has been very well received.
- How to construct your own Rose Window, adapting the geometry to draw your own mandalas or Islamic patterns.
- The creation of the Coronation Roll of King Charles III, is a tradition dating back to 1308, recording the details of the coronation ceremony of a monarch's crowning.
- The process involved a team of historians, artists and representatives of the Royal Household and government. It features 11,600 calligraphed words and hand-painted illustrations.

## **COLOPHON** September 2024 Volume 45 No 4

- A collaboration between Veronica Bryan and Gemma Black produced a beautiful facsimile of one folio from a French Book of Hours, with Veronica creating the entire border and Gemma the writing of the inner panel with matching versal illumination.
- How to recycle your dodgy paper and Lousy Ink: the brain child of Dodgy Roger who recycles all kinds of waste and junk paper, and recycles ink from inkjet printer cartridges.
- Collagraph printing, a workshop with Claire Brach, combines the effects of both relief and intaglio.



# WORKSHOPS

The CCS committee is developing a new streamlined approach to registering for our workshops.

Our fabulous new Workshop Coordinator, Gen, will email members with details in early January 2025, with plenty of time to register for the February workshop.

If you need any info before then, please email her: [gen.ccs@icloud.com](mailto:gen.ccs@icloud.com)

*As previously advised, there is no November workshop this year.*

## A preview of 2025 ...



### February

Mini tile books and a non-conventional script.

*With Angela Hillier*

### March

A Modern Copperplate Hand

*With Janet Johnson*

An introduction to a hand created by Susie Cunningham. It is a modern, forgiving play on traditional Copperplate Script.

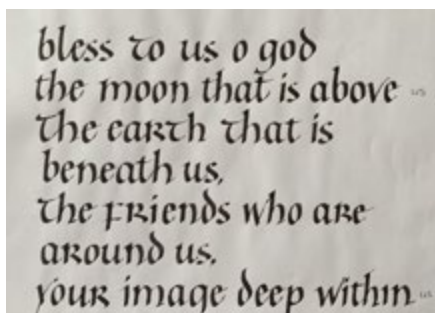


### April

*celtic italic*

*With Jill Robertson*

This workshop will be based on a Denis Brown script Jill learnt last year. It will also include some Celtic decorative work.



The 2025 membership form is included in this edition - please complete so you can enjoy another fun year!