



NOTTINGHAM CALLIGRAPHERS

Newsletter Number 14 September 2014

Committee News

This is a bit of a bumper edition since lots of you have responded to the plea for contributions! Thank you everyone who has taken the time to write a piece, submit some pictures or talk about a recent piece of work. It's much more interesting when many people contribute, so thank you and please keep things coming in! The deadline for the material for the next Newsletter is 15 February, so that gives you plenty of time to be creative or go on a little trip and take a few pictures!



Sue Sinclair - Chairman

Kate Hall - Secretary

Gwen Vine - Treasurer

A Thing of Beauty.....

Calligraphers' Travels

This time we have some wonderful examples of calligraphy from Gstaad and Prague, courtesy Gwen and Eve & Allan respectively. The Gstaad examples (left, top & bottom) are typical blackletter - Oh! that hotel signs in this country were so stylish! Eve and Allan's examples of lettering from Prague are just superb, especially Lékárna (which means chemist), but my favourite has got to be the bank lift grille (bottom right) - a fine example of Czech Rondocubism - as everyone, I'm sure, spotted instantly!



Workshop News

Tips and Tricks and Mince Pies

Tutor All
Date 6 December

Everything you ever wanted to know about calligraphy but were afraid to ask. A chance to share all those little tips and tricks you've learnt over the years that will make people say "I wish I'd known that before!" ALSO: Enjoy a mince pie or two to get into the Christmas mood.

2015

January: No meeting

Contemporary Illuminated Capitals

Tutor Horace Staniland
Date 21 February

February sees the return of one of our favourite tutors; Horace Staniland will step outside the more traditional and give us the usual mix of his terrible jokes and expert tuition to guide us through creating a piece of work that we will treasure. A workshop not to be missed!

Coming soon!

Jan Pickett	Monochrome Magic
Manny Ling	Informal Roman Capitals
Elaine Guilding	Foundation Hand

More Things of Beauty.....

I was bought this beautiful tin of sixty crayons for my birthday and I feel they are truly a thing of beauty. I love working with crayons and in particular water crayons. They are Faber-Castell (Albrecht Durer) water colour pencil crayons and they are a positive delight to work with. The shades are beautiful and you can achieve a subtle effect or a more vibrant effect due to the quality of the lead which is soft and very smooth. Once water is added the shading takes on yet another quality.

Kate Hall



Calligraphers Beware!

Once it becomes known that you have a talent for "fancy writing" you never know what task may land in your lap. I recently had the challenge of writing on two presentation footballs for a match between an English team, Newark FC and a German team FC Emmendingen, held a few weeks ago to commemorate the game played between English and German troops during a lull in the First World War, exactly 100 years ago.

You can imagine the difficulties – writing on a dark brown leather surface which curved in all directions and finding a writing medium that would hold on the leather, not being able to mark any guidelines, plus trying to keep the ball wedged firmly to keep it steady while I wrote.

With very little time or opportunity to do a practice piece, I finally just had to take a deep breath and go for it – results as you see!

Pat Allen

October 2014

This is just wonderful - who else would want to take on the challenge of writing on a sphere? Well done, Pat!



Workshop Reports I

Papers, Inks and Pens or..... Can You Pass the Carrot Ink?

Way back in September, after our AGM, our free workshop allowed us to experiment with some fabulous paper samples bought by the group. The enticing names such as Hahnemuhle, Canson Mi-Tientes and Arches Aquarelle were all numbered and ready for us to be set loose with inks, paints, crayons etc.

The challenge had been set for us to make and bring along different inks to try on these papers, as well as the more conventional mediums. Additionally, we were to write with different pens and writing tools. So we all set to the task given. Anyone who had just dropped in might be baffled to hear such comments in amongst the laughter as 'Can I try the beetroot?' 'The onion and soy is very intense'. 'Look what happens if you add bleach to the blueberry' All of this was such fun, but did allow us to experiment and make notes of the things we tried and shared.

People tried to write with twigs, sticks, foam strips, quills, homemade nibs and chopsticks which Jillian made into an art form! (Well done Jillian)

Kate finished off the session by showing us how to make a very simple folder to keep our samples in. I have heard since, that quite a few of these have been made at home to store anything from receipts to recipes in.

It was a really productive day with a successful AGM, some free gold and a free workshop, lots of fun and some hard work!



Kate Hall



Workshop Reports II

In Your Own Words - Sylvia Thomas

"In Your Own Words" was definitely a step into unknown territory. Enter Sylvia Thomas, the tutor for the day, and anyone who was experiencing some trepidation was immediately put at ease with her friendly and joyful attitude.

Sylvia's intention for the end of the day, was that each member of the group should have composed a poem which could then be written in a calligraphic hand.

The first step was for all the members to sit around one table. The subject was then chosen by Sylvia e.g. Seasons, with an associated word written on individual sheets of paper. These pieces of paper were then placed, face down, in front of each person and when Sylvia gave the command the paper had to be turned over and the first thought that came into your mind, within 10 seconds, had to be written down, turned over and passed on to the member next to you. Hence the reason for assembling the group around one table.

At the end of the round, there were 15 sentences/words written on the original sheet of paper which was turned into a poem by choosing your favourite four from the fifteen and arranging them into sequences of your personal choice.

The whole day was one of laughter and enjoyment but it showed you how you could write a calligraphy passage 'In Your Own Words'.

Sheila Palmer



A few other quotes from the day.....

Unexpected, but it did make you think outside the box.

Whilst we have enjoyed many very interesting and helpful workshops over the years, I think this is the first one I've attended where I can report that we had a riotous time. Poetry was produced by means of a game of consequences, and Sheila's dramatic reading of her poem, with gestures, was a never to be forgotten event.

Shakespeare it wasn't but never was so much fun had creating texts that were unique and in some cases quite profound and moving. Can't wait to see the finished pieces!

Workshop Reports III

Cards, Pop-ups, Boxes and Envelopes

November's workshop was designed to get us into the mood for Christmas with a variety of exercises to produce all the things we need to create our own cards and parcels. Four tutors - Gwen Vine, Kate Hall, Pat Allen and Sheila Palmer - vied to elicit the biggest "wow" from the audience with their beautiful creations and decorations.

Kate started us off with heart boxes and petal boxes - making what looked like a very complicated construction seem quite simple. In addition to a superb goody bag of papers and card given to each participant, Kate had brought along her fine collection of decorations, stick-ons and punches so that our boxes could be made to look beautiful as well as festive.

Gwen had worked hard to put together two really useful envelope templates, which we all made and decorated using the supplied card and paper. Whether it was by luck or design, they both happened to fit perfectly the cards we were to make later with Sheila and Pat!

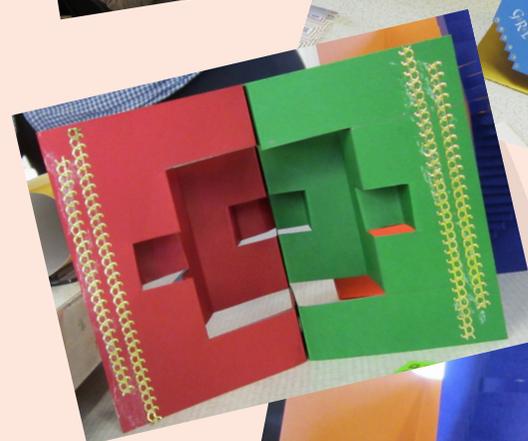
Sheila demonstrated with great enthusiasm and panache several different types of pop-up card, ranging from quite simple through to intricate and complicated! Everyone made at least one of the designs and then plundered (again!) Kate's decorations box to give them that all-important festive look.

Finally, Pat showed us how to make an octagon window card and then demonstrated how to use a traditional quilting technique to create a beautiful star design from folded paper. Again the well thought out goody bag of tissue and origami style papers gave us all we needed to create our own designs.

It was a really busy day, with lots of ideas and opportunities for us to create our own unique festive pieces. The mix of projects worked together really well so that we ended the day with a collection of cards, boxes and envelopes all of which complemented one another. The day was a hive of industry and four o'clock sneaked up on us before we knew it!

A very big thank you to all our tutors who inspired us and provided both the instructions and lovely materials for us to produce a great range of festive pieces, just in time for the Christmas season.

Sue Sinclair



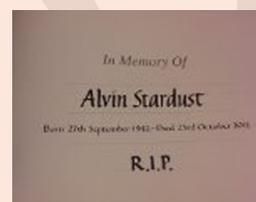
Did you know.....?

Caran d'Ache, the Geneva-based maker of fine writing and drawing instruments, takes its name from the pen name of the Russian-born French political cartoonist Emmanuel Poiré (1858-1909). The name is adapted from the Russian word for pencil - Karandash (shown in Cyrillic letters below). This in turn is derived from the Turkish "kara tash" which means black stone – the origin of graphite. This natural material found in the mountains of Switzerland gave rise to the first Swiss pencil factory – Ecridor - founded in 1915. It was this company that went on to become Caran d'Ache after it had been taken over by Arnold Schweitzer.

КАРАНДАШ карандаш

Book of Condolence for Alvin Stardust

A phone call to Nottingham Calligraphers enabled our calligraphy colleague Horace Staniland to write the title page of the special book of condolence for Alvin Stardust the musician. Alvin who died in October had lived in Mansfield for many years. He had built up a strong fan base not only locally but nationally.



This work had to be completed as a matter of urgency, so that the public could then write in their own tributes in the book at the Mansfield Museum before it was moved to Swansea where the funeral took place. Horace completed the work and the client was truly delighted with the results. Nottingham Calligraphers would like to say a very big thank you to Horace for completing this work so speedily.



Kate Hall

CLAS Regional Day at Durham High School for Girls - October 2014



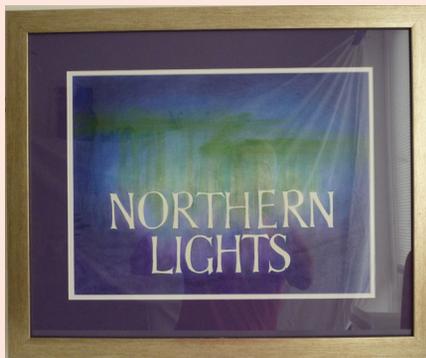
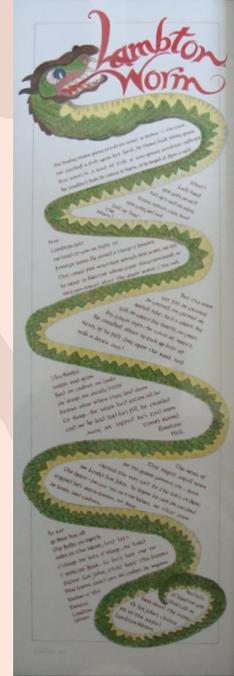
Exhibition Report

North Yorkshire Calligraphers: The Joy of the Written Word

We spent 3 nights in North Yorkshire at the beginning of November and seized the chance to go and see the North Yorkshire Calligraphers exhibition, 'The Joy of the Written Word' in Ripon Cathedral. It turned out to be the highlight of our short break.

The tone was set, as we entered the cathedral, by a framed panel on a pillar, written in a wonderfully consistent hand. It gave a very brief summary of the cathedral's history, in red capitals and then, in black lower-case, urged visitors both to remember they were in a holy place and to admire the building itself. A beautiful piece of work ... but not part of the exhibition!

That was set up in a side aisle on 3 tall, solid panels, in all about 40 exhibits. The general theme was Northern Life and the first two pieces gave us a taste of the whole exhibition. There was the colourful Lambton Worm, snaking cheerfully down the page, with the text of the song in the curves of the snake. Below, set against photos of a mine, was the moving invitation from a miner to his son to join him in the rigors of life down the pit.



The broad theme allowed for a wide range of topics: the Northern Lights: Blaydon races: fish: a local war memorial: the Angel of the North (known locally, we learned, as Rusty Rita!): the flow of time: gardening: poetry: general sayings about life: and lots more!

We loved the creativity on display everywhere in the choice of topics. 'The love of gardening is a seed that

once sown never dies' was laid out on what looked like pieces of slate, simple and spare. The diptych on the war memorial was a much more elaborate piece in different hands, appropriate to the complex story of the local men who built the memorial and those whose names were listed on it. There were a couple of pieces in a very zany, modern hand, where you had to stand in front of them and do your best to work out the text!

These North Yorkshire calligraphers are skilled in creating their own texts too! As Oxfam volunteers we were much taken by the large piece that had two ancient Sunday School prizes, with their plates, one for a girl and the other for a boy, actually stuck on in the centre. The text explained, on the left, that the two volumes were bought in the slow-moving section of a charity shop. On the right was the musing of the calligrapher. Had the two children married, spent their lives together, raised a family? Apparently there is not much on the net about Rusty Rita that is worth calligraphing, so here was an original text too. (And the frame had also come from a charity shop, with Rusty Rita and her accompanying text designed afterwards to fit that frame! (There's an idea for a competition – take this frame and design a piece to fit it!)



As calligraphy sometimes runs the risk of being very solemn, we enjoyed the touches of humour in the Lambton Worm, Rusty Rita, and Dr Who, whose northern accent, he said, could be explained by the fact



Exhibition Report: contd

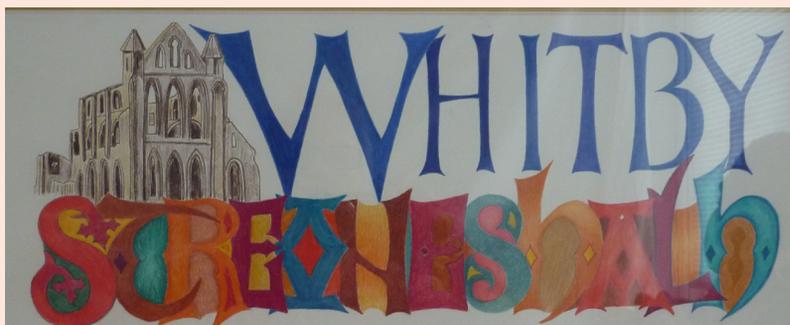
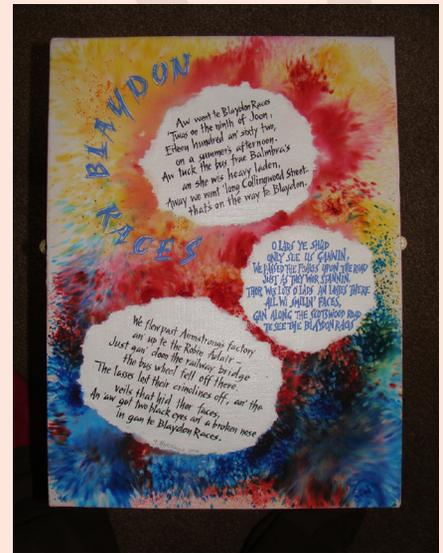
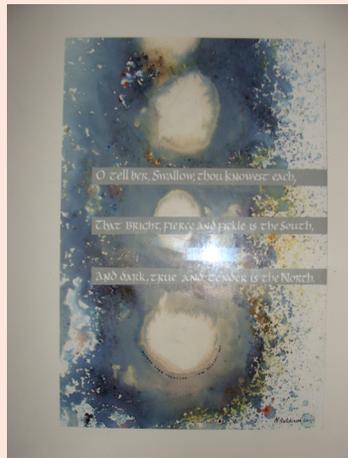
that every planet has a North! The same humour enlivened the panel showing the route of the Tour de France through North Yorkshire that had been used to make T-shirt for various members of the calligrapher's family!

Of course the quality of the lettering varied, depending on how long people had been involved (Eve reckoned she could detect the influence of the celebrated Manny Ling!) However, we appreciated the care and skill that had gone into the lay-out, decoration and the use of colour in the pieces of both experienced and less experienced calligraphers. The rich blue in 'Puddles', the blazing variety in 'Blaydon Races', the more subdued tones in 'The Flow of Time' and the backgrounds of the more straightforward pieces all contributed to our pleasure.

All this would have been enough to satisfy us. And then, three North Yorkshire calligraphers appeared! So we spent a long time talking to Megan, Grace and Marcia who had come along to look after the exhibition and do a demonstration on the spot. They added hugely to our appreciation, talking about their own work and the different members' approaches. We chatted about how they run their group. They are a bit too far north to attract some tutors so they often have members themselves running workshops. They have even had a weekend workshop. We spent so long talking and looking at the exhibition that we missed out on the folio they had brought along. Just a surfeit of good things!

As we left Ripon cathedral after two hours, we really had experienced the Joy of the Written Word! ... and the cathedral wasn't bad either!

Allan Leadbeater



Minutes of the AGM 2014

The AGM took place on 20th September at Lowdham. The following is a summary of the meeting.

Attendees

Sue Sinclair	Pat Allen
Kate Hall	Pat Adlington
Sheila King	Lesley Jackson
Jillian Naylor	Hilary Staniland

Apologies

Gwen Vine	Sheila Palmer,
Barbara Sharpe	Stefanie Hey,
Eve and Allan Leadbeater	
Karen Tomlinson	Frances Scott-Lawrence
Norman Randall	Gilroy Williams

Minutes of 2013 AGM

These had been circulated earlier and were accepted as a true and accurate record.

Main Points of Discussion

- Manny Ling's spring workshop would now take place on 2 May 2015
- Jillian won the draw for the single copy of The Edge that we now receive as part of our CLAS group membership.
- **Programme of workshops for 2014/15:** Sue to design and print copies of the workshop programme for all members with spare ones to be kept by Kate
- **Charitable Donation:** Kath Partington had asked that her fee for her August workshop should be donated to charity. It was agreed to share the money between Beaumont House in Newark and Maggie's Centre at Nottingham City Hospital. Thank you letters from the charities would be sent to Kath Partington.
- **Committee Reports:** Reports from the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer had been circulated to all members in advance and were summarised at the meeting. The following points were agreed:
- **Envelope Exchange:** Kate to send out an e-mail to see if there are enough people wanting to do envelope exchange and to add the names of two people who also wanted to join but were not members of the group.
- **Workshop & Membership Fees for 2014-15:** Given the very healthy level of reserves that were held by the group, it was agreed that we should reduce membership and workshop fees for the coming year. For the year 2014-15 fees would be as follows:
 - Membership £15 (due 1 September)
 - Workshop Fees: Members: £15, Non-members £20; Half day workshops: £15
 - Non-tutor Workshops: £3
- **Election of Committee Members**

The existing committee members were willing to serve for another year and since there were no other nominations, no vote was necessary. The committee welcomed offers from Lesley Jackson and Sheila Palmer to help with the workload on an ad hoc basis.
- **Constitution**

This has been read and accepted by the members. The revised fees (see above) would be added to the document as an amendment
- **Date of the next AGM**

It was agreed that the next AGM will take place on Saturday, 26th September 2015.

The meeting finished at 11.30 and was followed by a workshop on Papers, Inks and Pens (see page 3)

Kate Hall