



NOTTINGHAM CALLIGRAPHERS

Newsletter Number 8 March 2013

From the Chairman.....

Hello All!

It's that lovely time of year when the days are getting longer and there's hope – no, really – that we might have some warm days! I've been working on a commission with the Robert Browning poem that starts "Oh to be in England, Now that April's there" and it's great to be writing words that are (nearly) right for the time of year.

I don't know about you, but it's only when I write a poem out calligraphically, that I actually pay close attention to all the words. This is usually a great pleasure, as you start to get some insight into how carefully every word has been chosen to convey the images and the mood. (I say usually, because I do sometimes write commissioned poems that are less well written – I just keep having to remind myself that a gift of calligraphy is a very thoughtful one, even if the poem isn't the best!)



I do sometimes find it hard to find great words to write – I collect interesting words whenever I find them, but now my file of quotes is stuffed full and needs a thorough clear out – which should be good because I'll no doubt find something great to write as I do so.



Speaking of finding inspiration, I've become a fan of Pinterest (www.pinterest.com). If you've not tried it, I recommend having a look (see examples on the left): it's a sharing site for photos and videos, and is full of things to inspire (and changes every time you go back). Be warned.... you might find it hard to tear yourself away ("I'll just look at ONE more image, then I'll go and do the ironing....")



A little update about Nottingham Calligraphers' committee for you : Sue Sinclair who has been contacting tutors before and after workshops, making sure everything runs smoothly, as well as helping out with finances and creating our marvellous newsletter, is stepping down from the committee. Her skills are in demand in other places too and there just wasn't time for everything! We'll miss her wise input to the running of the group, and thank her for all that she has done. The committee thanked her formally on everyone's behalf at the last meeting and gave her a gift of wine and chocolates (*).



And I am delighted to say that she has agreed to continue to publish our newsletter – we just need to make sure that the articles keep coming!



As well as finding homes for Sue's roles, the committee are on the case to put together a great programme for next year – I'll not say too much now except to hint that we're planning to increase the number of workshops, plus there will be an exhibition opportunity or two!

Once we get to the AGM in the summer we'll be seeking some more help on the committee though, including a new Chairman as I shall be stepping down from my role. (I'm planning to move house this year, and if successful will end up near the sea, which sadly means I won't be near Nottingham. But I'm determined that Nottingham Calligraphers, which is very dear to me, will be in a great state, ready for an exciting 2013/14).

Look forward to seeing you soon

Janet

(*). Delicious, thank you very much! Sue

Workshop News

Foundational Hand

Tutor **Tony Curtis**
Date **16 March**

Tony's foundational hand is probably one of the best in the world, and it will be a pleasure to welcome him back to Nottingham to teach. Whether foundational is new to you or you feel pretty familiar with it, Tony will have plenty to teach us all!

Lettering on 3D Objects

Tutor **Josie Brown**
Date **13 April**

Josie is a new tutor to us and her workshops are oversubscribed wherever she goes. Josie is going to help us to move off that flat piece of paper and write on 3D objects - just think of the possibilities!

Colour for the Terrified

Tutor **Elaine Guilding**
Date **18 May**

The most requested workshop - Elaine's skillful teaching will help us to understand how to mix exactly the colour we want - every time. Her workshops are always a pleasure - a whole day with beautiful colours!

AGM and Collaborative Project - Workshop is FREE to members!!

Tutor **Janet Smith**
Date **15 June**

This is a new idea which we hope you are going to enjoy - we will spend the day working together on pieces, having fun experimenting with new tools and materials and learning from each other. This workshop is free to members and will be preceded by a (mercifully) short AGM.

A Thing of Beauty.....



This collection of stone carvings of the letters of the Armenian alphabet, together with a statue of the alphabet's designer, the splendidly named Mesrop Mashtots, was erected in 2005 near Mount Aragats to mark the 1600th anniversary of the creation of the alphabet.

The Armenian alphabet was originally conceived so that it could be used to create a bible for the newly Christian kingdom and Mashtots structured his design around the religion - the first letter A is the first of Astvats (God) and the last K' began the word K'ristos (Christ).

Sue Sinclair

Workshop Reports II

Illuminated Lettering with Horace Staniland

We met on a mild and sunny December day at Lowdham, spending it producing an illuminated letter and picking up lots of Horace's special tips for producing exquisite medieval effects with the minimum of skill.

Horace had provided us with all the materials needed, so we quickly got down to tracing our letter - all of us chose the 'J' because we fell in love with his finished version. He showed us how to produce the charming daisy design with the aid of tools hardly ever, or even never, used by many of us - compass, 360 degree protractor and the marvellous battery-operated eraser which rubs out in tight corners! We also used circle templates, oval shapes and French curves!

When our drawing was complete we got down to gilding using various forms - including painting with bronze powder mixed with gum arabic - and applying transfer gold leaf which involved much heavy breathing and hilarity!

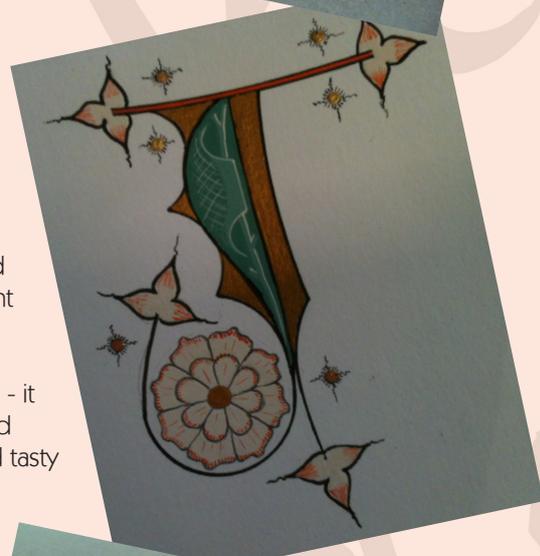
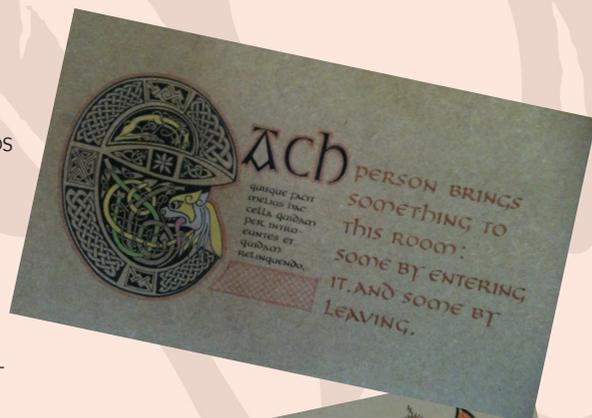
Later came the delicate gouache painting - finishing off with tiny brushes, such as 00 and 000. Tiny strokes of paint - as fine as eyelashes - were applied. This proved a lot trickier, time-consuming and more nerve-racking than one would have thought - but the finished effect was stunning.

In fact we were so absorbed that we hardly found time for our Christmas 'Fuddle' - it was almost impossible to tear ourselves away from our work. However we did find time and enjoyed mulled wine, mince pies, quiches, smoked salmon, canapes and tasty egg-and-white-bread sandwiches - the latter prepared by a discerning husband!

An extra-special treat was that Horace had brought along a selection of his work so we were able to stare in amazement at the skill and beauty of the pieces. Some of the most impressive were on MDF board which Horace had salvaged from his workplace and it proved to be an ideal surface for ink and gouache. On another piece we marvelled at the delicate dandelion effect made by scattering fungi spores on the paper in just the right place to illustrate the writing - and the spores have to be just the right age!

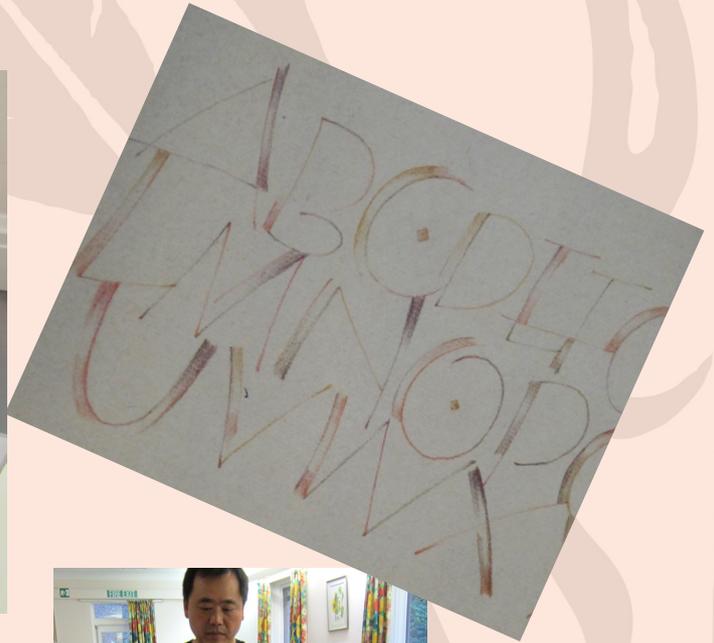
At the end of the day we went home with our finished letters - well satisfied with our day and full of enthusiasm for practising the techniques we had learned! Thank you Horace! Come back soon!

Frances Scott-Lawrence



Workshop Reports III

Unusual Layouts with Manny Ling



Latest news!

Nottingham Calligraphers will have a stand at the **Retford Heritage Day** on **Saturday 14th September**. It will be a chance to display our work and chat to the public, encouraging them to have a go.

There is no theme for the exhibition as such - the wider the variety of our work, the better we will be able to show off our craft.

More details will be in the next edition of the Newsletter, but this is SIX MONTHS notice to create something beautiful to display!

Lorraine Bousfield and Sharron Cawthorne

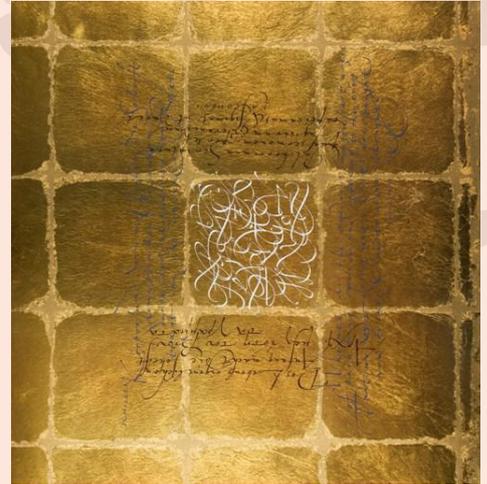
Exhibition Report

Calligraphy Today at the Fitzwilliam Museum

curated by Patricia Lovett and Dr Stella Panayotova.

On 4th February, Janet and I and two other students from her Bunny class visited the **Calligraphy Today** exhibition - the first showing of a new collection of modern calligraphy acquired by the museum in 2008. Featuring over 80 works by some of the world's foremost calligraphy artists the exhibition included pieces in stone, carved wood, glass and ceramics as well as works on paper, parchment and papyrus.

The foyer floor was adorned with a greatly enlarged copy of **Calligraphy in four languages** by Hermann Zapf (see right) which many visitors, almost reverentially, avoided walking on. Some pieces such as the two by Gudrun Zapf von Hesse were so perfect that they looked like printed type-face. Manny Ling's **Weep you no more** had amazing gold leaf work, Peter Halliday's **Star Spangled Burning Bush** was on deep red Canson Mi-Teintes pastel paper. **Listening** by Mary Noble using edged and pointed brushes on gesso-treated fabric was so delicate-looking.



It is probably unfair of me to single out particular artists as the whole exhibition was totally delightful with Denis Brown's layers of glass, Martin Wenham's carved oak, Pat Chaloner's engraved Dartington glass, Tom Perkins's cut slate, Mary White's painted porcelain, Celia Kilner's embossed letters into hand-made paper. For me, one of the most treasured pieces was the book of **Icelandic Sagas** by William Morris (1873-1874) open at The Story of Hen Thorir since Morris's studies fed into those of Edward Johnson whom many regard as the father of modern calligraphy.

After a delicious lunch at The Copper Kettle we returned to the Manuscript Room at the museum to round off a lovely day of exploring calligraphy.

Joyce Rowen

CLAS Newsletter : The Edge - Special Offer!

Each year, as part of our group's membership, Nottingham Calligraphers receives three copies of **The Edge**, the publication of the Calligraphy and Lettering Arts Society (CLAS). If you've not seen one, they're very colourful and have plenty of inspiring articles and information.

Anyone can be a member of CLAS (and receive 5 copies of **The Edge** each year) - current price is £33. If you'd like to be a member, you can join via their web site www.clas.co.uk.

But here's a bargain offer : the first 3 people to let Gwen know they're interested will be able to receive **The Edge** for one year for £10 plus the provision of 5 large Stamped Addressed Envelopes for Gwen to post them to you.

You can contact Gwen on 01636 701959 or gvine1@btinternet.com

(Postage per issue, at the time of writing, is one first class and one second class stamp - whatever that adds up to! Sue)

Shopping Opportunity!

As you may recall, we canvassed the views of members, and found that the library of books is not something that is particularly used (although big thanks to Sheila for valiantly lugging the box to many a workshop). We decided that the best thing to do was to sell the books at a great price to you, our members. There are some very good books there, and although some are a little worn, all are in good condition. All proceeds will go into Nottingham Calligraphers funds so that we can keep our subscription and workshop prices down and keep the supply of chocolate biscuits stocked up!

You'll find the list below - if there is something you'd like to buy, please let Janet know by 30th April and she will sort out getting the item(s) to you at a future workshop.

Anything that isn't sold this way will be at the AGM/workshop in June for you to peruse.

- the items were priced by looking for the cheapest price for each book on the internet, and pricing just below that. If you see it cheaper - please let me know and the price can be reduced.
- If more than one person wants the same book we'll look for a fair way to make sure everyone gets something!
- If you want to know more about any of the items, please contact Janet

LETTERING

		PRICE
Stan Knight	Historical scripts	£ 8.00
Heather Child	The Calligraphy Handbook	£ 6.00
	Calligraphy for dummies	£ 4.00
Tom Gourdie	Italic writing	£ 3.00
Tom Gourdie	Italic writing	£ 3.00
Diana Hardy Wilson	Calligraphy techniques	£ 3.00
Diana Hardy Wilson	Calligraphy techniques	£ 3.00
Ann Camp	Pen Lettering	£ 2.00
Edward Johnston	A book of sample scripts	£ 2.00
Mary Noble	Calligraphy Companion	£ 2.00
Mary Noble	Calligraphy Companion	£ 2.00
Donald Stevens	Brush Script	£ 2.00
Peter Thornton	Alphabetically speaking	£ 2.00
Mike Darton	Practical calligraphy	£ 1.00
Mike Darton	Practical calligraphy	£ 1.00
Margaret Daubney	Experimenting with Calligraphy	£ 1.00
Alfred Fairbank	Book of scripts	£ 1.00
Gaynor Goffe	Calligraphy Step by Step	£ 1.00
Gaynor Goffe	Calligraphy Step by Step	£ 1.00
John Lancaster	Basic penmanship	£ 1.00
Patricia Lovett	Calligraphy for starters	£ 1.00
Annie Moring	Calligraphy Stroke by stroke	£ 1.00
John Nash	Practical Calligraphy	£ 1.00
Mary Noble	Calligraphy techniques	£ 1.00
Satwinder Sehmi	Calligraphy - the rhythm of writing	£ 1.00
Margaret Shepherd	Learning calligraphy	£ 1.00
SSI	Words as images	£ 1.00
George Thomson	Art of calligraphy	£ 1.00
Mary White	Lettering on ceramics	£ 1.00
Nancy Winters	A simple guide to italic handwriting	£ 1.00
	Calligraphers Handbook	£ 1.00
	William Mitchell calligraphy guide	£ 1.00

Shopping Opportunity! (contd)

MANUSCRIPTS

		PRICE
Christopher De Hamel	A History of illuminated manuscripts	£ 10.00
C Donovan	The Winchester Bible	£ 5.00
George Bain	Celtic Art	£ 3.00
Michael Gullick	Calligraphy	£ 1.00

DECORATED LETTERS

Adolf Bernd	Painted Letters	£ 2.00
Margaret Morgan	Illuminated letters	£ 10.00
Adolf Bernd	Painted Letters	£ 2.00
Stefan Oliver	Paint your own illuminated letters	£ 2.00
Stefan Oliver	Paint your own illuminated letters	£ 2.00
Patricia Carter	Illuminated Alphabets	£ 1.00
Patricia Carter	Illuminated Calligraphy	£ 1.00
Marie Lynskey	Illuminated Lettering	£ 1.00
Aidan Meehan	Book of Kells painting book	£ 1.00
Henry Shaw	Alphabets and Numbers of the Middle Ages	£ 1.00

BOOKS AND PAPER

Alisa Golden	Unique Handmade books	£ 8.00
Cheryl Owen	Paper inspirations	£ 2.00
David Watson	Creative handmade paper	£ 2.00
John Plowman	Craft of handmade paper	£ 2.00
Ellaraine Lockie	The Gourmet paper maker	£ 1.00

VIDEOS

Sally Teague	Modern gilding for calligraphers	£ 2.00
	Luttrell Psalter	£ 2.00
Sally Teague	Modern gilding for calligraphers	£ 1.00
Margaret Daubney	Italic with a flourish	£ 1.00
	Bible project (St Johns?)	£ 1.00

DVD

	Gilding and italic with flourish	£ 2.00
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