



THIRTY YEARS OF CALLIGRAPHY IN THE SOUTHEAST

A special Anniversary history of our calligraphy group



Written by Steve Eades

Introduction

To celebrate 30 years of Cinque Ports Scribes, it was suggested that we write a definitive history of the Group.

It's quite a story and I wonder how many of the original founders of the group in 1992 would have imagined that 30 years later, CPS would continue to go from strength to strength?

Members have been very kind in contributing material, photographs, and documentation, so much so that I have felt overwhelmed at times. Fortunately, I have much of the early paperwork which enables us to tell the story from the very start. All in all, it's a fascinating tale our group can tell.

From those early roots we have become one of the foremost and progressive calligraphy groups in the UK. Inevitably, all groups go through hard times when membership declines, and calligraphy falls out of fashion, but through it all we have managed to survive and to thrive, with constantly good level of membership.

We are, and always have been financially secure, have a majority of members who have been part of the group for at least ten years, and have a hard core of top-class calligraphers, whose prowess and skills have been recognised nationally.

We are never afraid to pit ourselves forward for a challenge, and are, I believe, the only Calligraphy group who has hosted two CLAS Regional days, one in Folkestone and one in Canterbury.

We have exhibited all around the southeast over the duration of the groups existence and continue to do so with this year's exhibitions planned in Rye and Sevenoaks.

As I said at the start, I have been besieged by information and it is simply not possible to present it all. Therefore, I have done what I always do, my best!

Looking through all this historical data, what struck me most were...

a) how little things have changed in 30 years; in fact, you would say that the earlier incarnation was more proactive than we are now.

b) how many long serving members we have, many of whom have held committee positions

c) how much wonderful work has been produced by members through the years

I hope you enjoy my version of events.

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How it started

How was the idea of a local calligraphy group conceived and started?

Fortunately, three of the Founder members are still Life Members of CPS, Sue Gray, Marlene Gray and Brian Down.

Therefore, to start the story I asked the co-founders Marlene Gray and Sue Gray for their recollections

MARLENE GRAY

I first met Sue Gray (no relation) in an SSI workshop at Roehampton in 1991. I hadn't been long in the UK, having moved from the US to Canterbury in September 1990 to be with my future husband. I had been doing calligraphy for some years in the US, having first learned as a teenager in high school. I never did it professionally, and it was a hobby up to this point in my late 20's. The SSI was my first introduction to a wonderful array of skills and calligraphers, and I was keen to learn and join workshops.



This is how Sue and I met – I think at an Ann Hechle workshop, but she may remember best. Since we both came from Kent, we started a friendship and then began wondering about starting a local group.

Many local groups around the UK were being formed in the late 80's and early 90's, as so many people were taking up calligraphy through adult education.

Sue was an experienced teacher with many students eager to form a local group. We started meeting in Sue's lovely farmhouse, around kitchen tables and the like, which soon developed into a need for some administrative structure. This was all evolving in 1992 and thus we were formally born.

I remember soup and bread lunches in Sue's kitchen while we talked and planned, and some of our earliest members were a delight. In 1993, I became pregnant, and so I stepped back a bit in terms of a formal role, but I was active until we moved out of Kent (to Durham)

Marlene Gray (Founder and Life Member)

SUE GRAY



I met Marlene in 1991 at an SSI gothic workshop in London. Not only were both our surnames “Gray” but we lived within 15 miles of each other.

Marlene had first come to the UK in 1987 to do a master’s degree in management and had there met Andrew. She returned to Los Angeles to work as the main artist in a small party planning company, calligraphy being one of the main tasks and which she had learnt at High School. She. Also studied with Nancy (Ouchida Howells) who had a studio in LA. In 1990 she moved to England to be with Andrew and joined the SSI continuing her calligraphic interest through their workshops.

I had studied calligraphy at Folkstone Art School in 1959 but it was not until 1985, post travel, marriage and children, that I joined the SSI and started to attend their monthly workshops. A wonderful week on mediaeval gilding with Sam Somerville was the highlight of that time. I returned home and immediately gilded the weathervane on top of our ancient church. I sent a photo to Sam who thought I had gilded it “in situ”. As it was 60’ up and I suffer from vertigo I had to confess it had fallen off in the 1987 hurricane!

Marlene and I both felt there was very little support for calligraphy in East Kent, so we decided to start a group. 18 of us met on Saturday mornings in the freezing farmhouse of one of the members, who became Treasurer and then emigrated to Australia with our cheque book. Undaunted we continued to meet, launched our first exhibition in the Chapter House of Canterbury Cathedral in and hosted the CLAS Regional Day in 2005.

We called ourselves the Cinque Ports Scribes since many of our members at that time came from the area of the “Invasion Shore” of Kent and East Sussex covering the 5 ports of Hastings, Romney, Hythe, Dover and Sandwich and later including Winchelsea and Rye. Members now come from the north coast, Rochester and Sittingbourne and as far west as Maidstone and Sevenoaks and our numbers have grown.

Sue Gray (Co-founder and life member)

The first meeting

On 21st October 1992, Marlene and Sue wrote to number of potential members inviting them to a meeting to gauge the level of interest in forming a calligraphy group.

So, on 31st October 1992, a meeting took place at a friend's house (Geraldine Knowles) in Stelling Minnis, near Canterbury. The meeting had an encouraging number of attendees; hence a local calligraphy group was founded.

21 October 1992

Dear Geoff:

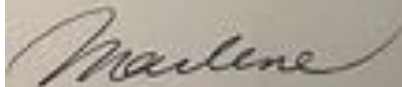
At long last, a date has been set for our first local calligraphy group meeting! It will be held on Saturday 31 October at 11am at Geraldine Knowles lovely home (address & directions below).

Those interested persons who attend this meeting will be the founding members, so please try to come as we'll only be able to judge the degree of interest in a local group by who shows up! Among the items we will need to discuss at this first meeting will be 1) the name of our group, 2) how often, what time and where our regular meetings shall be held, 3) finance, 4) forming a working committee (eg. Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, etc), 5) the purpose of our group and what we want to accomplish...and whatever else we can think of. By lunchtime, we should be finished.

I think this is all quite exciting to establish a new group of people whose one common interest is calligraphy - and once we get to know each other, surely many more common interests will be shared.

Hoping to see you on the 31st, but if you are unable to attend the meeting and are still interested in membership, please phone me so I can note your name. If you have a transportation problem, please phone me and I'll see what I can arrange.

Yours sincerely,



Marlene Gray
(0227) 761808

These are the very first minutes for the Inaugural CPS meeting

MINUTES
Cinque Ports Scribes
31 October 1992
11am at Geraldine Knowles house

Attended by: David Barber, Joan Bodger, Geoff Brown, Edna Colyer, Brian Down, Peter Ford, Sarah Foreman, Marlene Gray, Sue Gray, Ena Higgins, Geraldine Knowles, Ken and Mary Nightingale, Sharon Park, Gerry Raffe, Alan Russ, Anna Watkins

Apologies by John Green, Ray Woods

Marlene Gray started off the meeting and introductions were made all around. We were pleased with the turnout of interested people!

Several decisions had to be made and the discussion of these was informal. After considerable suggestion, we settled on our name to be CINQUE PORTS SCRIBES. It seemed distinctive and encompassing of the area we are drawing members from.

The venue for meetings will stay at Geraldine's large and comfortable home. It is big enough to accommodate a large meeting as well as any workshops/lectures/slide presentations. It is also central for most people.

Saturdays were chosen as the best day for meetings and we thought the first Saturday of every month would be easily remembered. Our next meeting therefore will be 5 December, and the one after that will be 2 January. Meetings will in future be held at 10:30am.

For the temporary future (ie. no more than 6 months), Sue Gray will act as Chairman, Marlene Gray as Secretary, and Geoff Brown as Treasurer. After people get to know each other more etc., a more permanent committee will be formed. The "contact" will be Marlene Gray, mainly for SSI's master list of local groups.

A subscription fee had to be determined and we settled on £5 per year - starting now. This fee will cover basics such as extra postage, printing, and funds for speakers, outings, etc. Most people gave their £5 to Geoff at the end of the meeting.

Marlene will take minutes of every meeting and then will send those to each member within two weeks. To pay the cost of this postage we decided that everyone should bring in a few SAE's to the next meeting. Marlene will collect those and use for the monthly minutes. Don't forget to bring them in on 5 December!

A master address list will also be sent to everyone.

A limit of 50 members was decided. We won't advertise ourselves just yet until we have got off the ground.

As you can see several decisions were made including, setting the membership fee at £5, Sue Gray would be Chairman for the first six months and most importantly, the group would be known as **CINQUE PORTS SCRIBES**.

From small acorns, a proactive group of enthusiastic calligraphers evolved, and the group started 1993 with their first programme of activities.

Our first project must be a letterhead! This will be for our stationery which will be A4 size. Anyone wanting to submit a design should bring it/them to the 5 December meeting. We'll make a selection then. All it should say is CINQUE PORTS SCRIBES -no address or phone, just our name. Be creative - it could be placed on the top, bottom, or side as long as our name is clear. Please calligraph it black on white paper - ready for the printer.

Lots of ideas were tossed about as to what our monthly meetings should be about, how often to hold workshops and on what aspects, etc. Heraldry, gesso-making, and quill-using were a few ideas. Marlene will endeavor to get a speaker from either SSI or another relatively nearby well-established local group to talk to us on 5 December about what sort of meetings, workshops, etc. groups can do.

Geraldine volunteered to act as "librarian". Anyone who has interesting books on aspects of calligraphy and is willing to loan them out to other group members should give Geraldine a list of those books. She will compile a master list and will circulate that to everybody, and will eventually keep track of who has which book.

The meeting was wound up with everyone contributing a few pence to "coffee money" and deciding that someone should bring biscuits or goodies each month. Joan Bodger volunteered for next meeting.

Thanks to Geraldine for providing a lovely venue and the coffee!

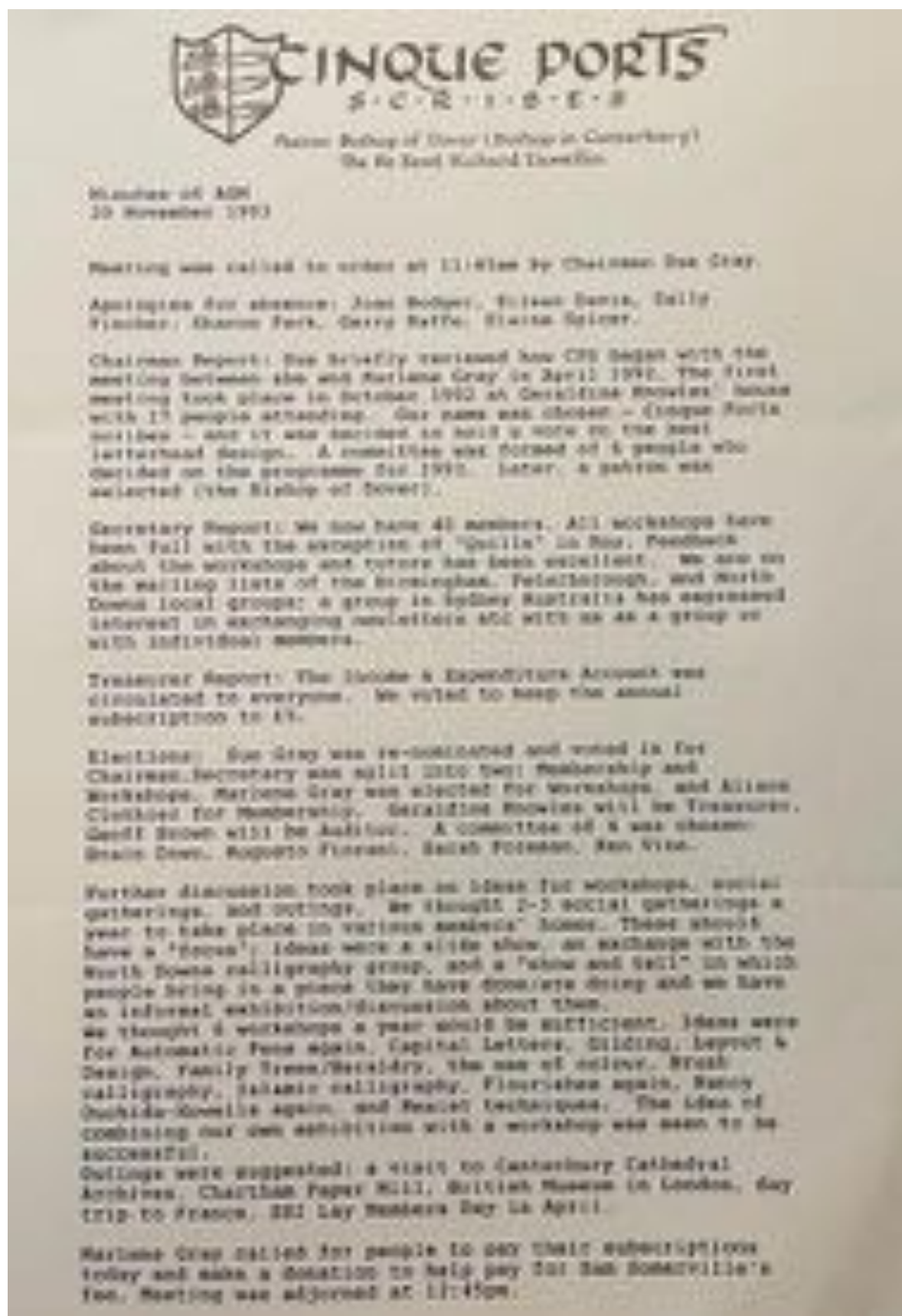
See you next month. Don't forget your SAE's, letterhead design, book list for Geraldine, and your subscription fee if you haven't paid already.

The first year

Within the first 12 months of its existence, remarkably the group had...

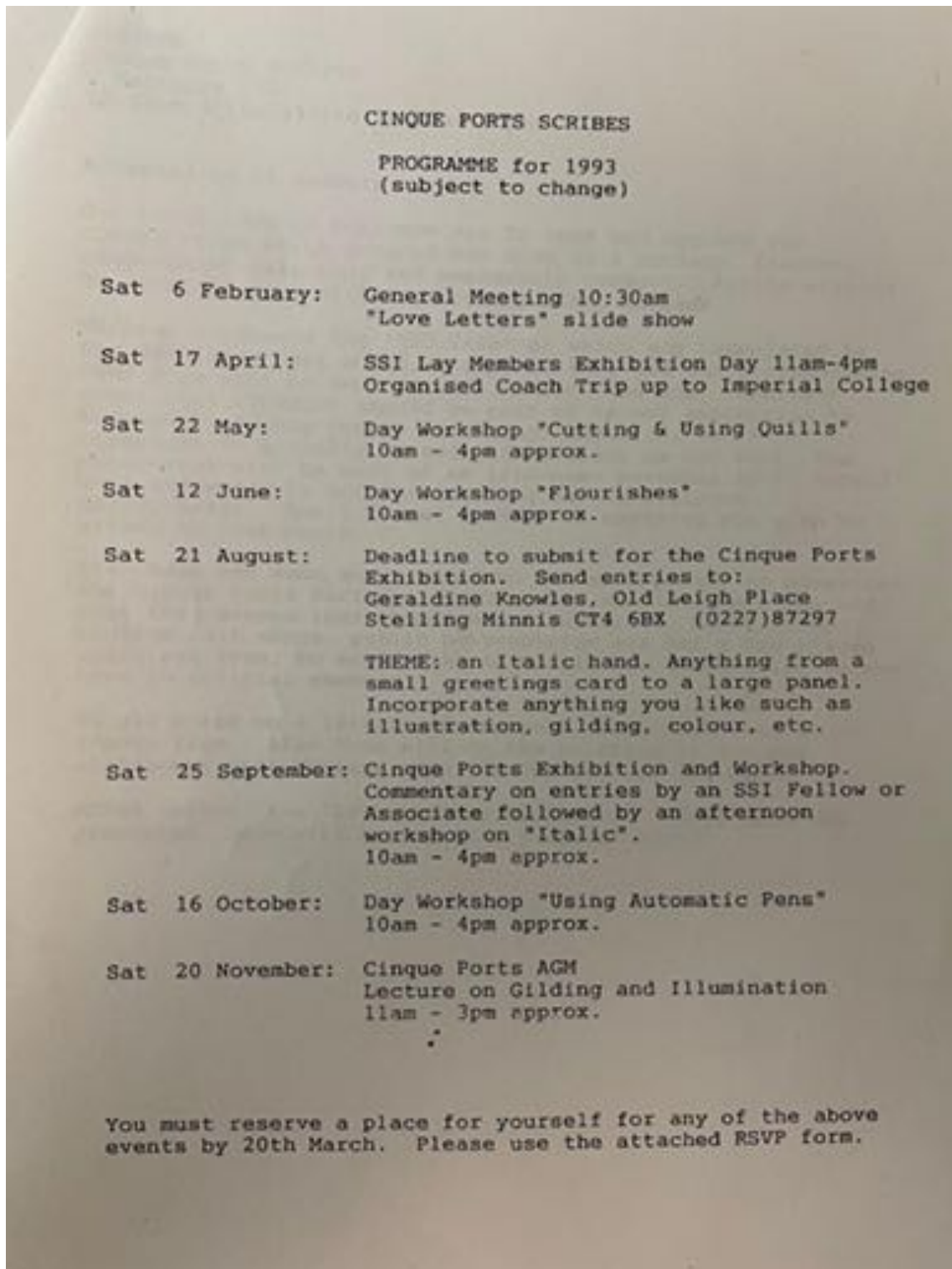
- a) a name – Cinque Ports Scribes
- b) elected a committee
- c) agreed the Rules of the group
- d) set up a Workshop schedule for 1993
- e) developed a Letterhead
- f) set the annual subscription at £5
- g) set up a Library
- h) grown the group to 40 members
- i) organised social events such as coffee mornings
- j) arranged trips to SSI lay Members Day and places like Ditchling Museum
- k) recruited a Patron – Bishop of Dover, the Right Reverend Richard Llewellyn

The first AGM – November 1993



Minutes of the first AGM – 1993

1993 saw the first formal programme of workshops for the group, which now form the backbone of our year's events. It appears the earlier programmes were diverse, including workshops, social gatherings, visits, and trips, etc.



The first Workshop Programme in 1993



An early CPS Committee - 1994

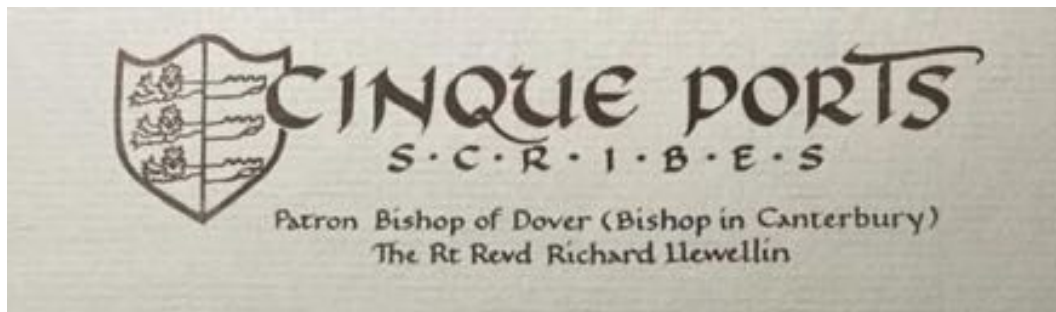
THE 21 CLUB

Whilst reading through the information received, I came across a membership list for 2001. Incredibly, the following thirteen CPS Members have been CPS members for at least 21 years, some of whom for even longer. What a remarkable feat of longevity?

Sue Gray (Life Member)
Marlene Gray (Life Member)
Brian Down (Life Member)
Peter Jordan (Life Member)
Margaret Khan (Life Member)
Julia Baxter
Michael Rust
Ole Selvaer
Sue Smith
Diane Sutton
Els Van Den Steen
Alison Trelfer
Jan Turner

Our Patron

Early on, the group decided it would be worthwhile to have a CPS Patron and managed to secure the patronage of the Bishop of Dover, the Right Reverend Llewelin. He remained as Patron until his move to Lambeth in 1998.



CPS – A 30 YEAR TIMELINE

DATE	EVENT	DATE	EVENT
1992	CPS Founded	2009	Exhibition at Hythe
1992	Sue Gray appointed Chairman	2010	Further donation to Parker Library
1994	SSI lay Members Day – Imperial College	2010	Celtic Summer School, Ashford
1994	Coach trip to British Library and lecture on medieval manuscripts	2011	Exhibition Romney Marsh craft Gallery, Lydd
1995	Augusto Fiorani appointed as Chairman	2011	Romney Marsh Summer School
1995	First CPS Magazine produced	2011	Exhibition, Hythe Library
1995	Trip to Ditchling Museum	2011	Triennial Project, St Mary in Marsh
1995	First CPS Magazine	2012	CPS 20 th Anniversary
1996	Visit to Holburne Museum, Bath	2012	Gothic Summer School
1996	Coach trip to British Museum	2012	Frances Liddiard appointed as Chairman
1996	Coach trip to SSI 75 th Exhibition – Holland Park	2012	CPS - Regional Group – SSI Lay Members' Day
1997	Coach trip to Fitzwilliam Museum Cambridge to view manuscripts.	2013	CPS entries for Letters from Lindisfarne Exhibition at Durham Cathedral
1998	Julia Baxter appointed as Chairman	2013	Exhibitions, Folkestone AND Deal
1998	Trip to Ditchling Museum	2014	Folkestone Triennial
1998	Art of the Alphabet Exhibition – Canterbury Cathedral Chapter House	2014	Inspired by V&A visit.
1999	Visit to British Library	2014	Cranbrook Library Exhibition
1999	Trip to Winchester Museum	2015	CPS Edition of CLAS The EDGE
2000	Canterbury Cathedral Archives visit	2015	Exhibition at Eastbridge Hospital, Canterbury
2000	Sue Smith appointed as Chairman	2015	Regional Group at CLAS Regional day at Chichester
2002	CPS Open day at Hastingleigh	2015	Exhibition at Xcross-Polynation gallery at Maidstone
2002	Ten Project – CPS 10 th Anniversary at Dover Library	2017	Steve Eades appointed as Chairman
2003	Jan Turner and Alison Trelfer appointed as Joint Chairman	2017	25 th Anniversary
2003	Exhibition at Dover	2017	Host of CLAS Regional day at Canterbury
2005	CLAS Regional Day at Folkestone	2018	Julia Baxter appointed as a CLAS Fellow
2006	Exhibitions at Dover, Folkestone and Ashford	2018	Crowne of Sonnets Project at Penshurst Place
2006	Exhibition Kings School, Canterbury	2019	Residential Gilding weekend at Aylesford Priory with Toni Watts
2006	Passing of Augusto Fiorani	2019	Regional Group attending SSI lay Members Day in London
2006	Alison Trelfer appointed as Chairman	2019	Cranbrook Library Exhibition
2006	Ashford Library Exhibition	2020-2022	Covid Crisis
2007	Shirley Davison appointed as Chairman	2022	30 years Anniversary
2007	Peter Jordan starts Envelope Exchange	2022	Exhibition - Rye
2008	CPS makes donation to Parker Library, Cambridge	2022	Exhibition - Sevenoaks
2009	Exhibition at Maidstone Library	2023	Who Knows?

MEMBERS GALLERY

MASSIVE APOLOGIES IF I HAVE MISSED ANYONE OUT – BUT AS USUAL I HAVE DONE MY BEST



Augusto Fiorani



Meg Chapman and Linda Lawlor



Sue Smith



Peter Jordan, Edna Colyer and Sue Gray



Jan Turner and Ally Trelfer - 2005



Brian Down and Ally Trefler



Colin Lumsden



Sue McGowan



Tony Woodhams





Rosie Griggs



Jeni King



Carole Thomann



Lisa Fausboll



Margaret Khan receiving her Life Membership



Frances Liddiard



Rosie Griggs,



Rosie Griggs,, Jeni King



Alison Jane Millin

WORKSHOPS

Over the last 30 years, I estimate that CPS has hosted in the region of 300 workshops covering every conceivable subject. There are too many to list here, but here's a selection of photographs from random workshops.



BLACK AND WHITE – JAN PICKETT - 2013



IN HOUSE WORKSHOP



LARGE ITALICS - RACHEL YALLOP



TUNNEL BOOKS - JAN PICKETT



CELTIC DECORATED CAPITALS – JULIA BAXTER - 2014



BATARDE – ELS VAN DEN STEEN – 2014



JAPANESE BRUSH CALLIGRAPHY - 2015



COPPERPLATE – JOY DANIELS



ADOLF BERND - 2016



SPENCERIAN – 2016



EMPHASIS AND CONTRAST – MARY NOBLE - 2016



ISLAMIC PATTERNS



ISLAMIC ILLUMINATION – TIM NOAD



HALF UNCIALS - MARION MCKENZIE



SYLVIE GOKULSING



RETRO DECO – Gemma Black

EXHIBITIONS



ART ATTACK – MAIDSTONE

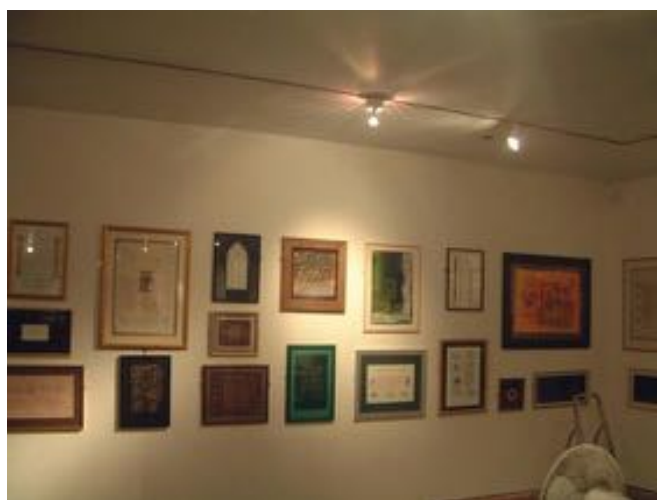


Ally Trelfer



Meg and Ally

10th ANNIVERSARY EXHIBITION – 2002 DOVER



EASTBRIDGE HOSPITAL, CANTERBURY 2015



2006 – KINGS LIBRARY



Opening night



Works in display case



Artwork and windows

VARIOUS EXHIBITIONS



MAIDSTONE



LYDD



DOVER



FOLKESTONE



HYTHE



CRANBROOK

CRANBROOK LIBRARY EXHIBITION – SEPTEMBER 2019



"Another brilliant display. So glad I made the effort to drop by."

"I have really enjoyed visiting and re-visiting this wonderful exhibition. Beautiful thoughtful work."

"One skill! But so many skills. Beautiful work."

"Very impressive. It makes one appreciate the thought put into each piece of work."

"A very talented group. What a wonderful and eclectic mixture of work. Congratulations!"



"The artwork on display is beautiful. Wonderful calligraphy."

"What a beautiful exhibition – and how talented you all are. So lovely to have the opportunity to see the work."

"What wonderful handwriting – I am very impressed. Well done to all the calligraphers."

"Jan Turner – you never disappoint. What a treat to see your work again."

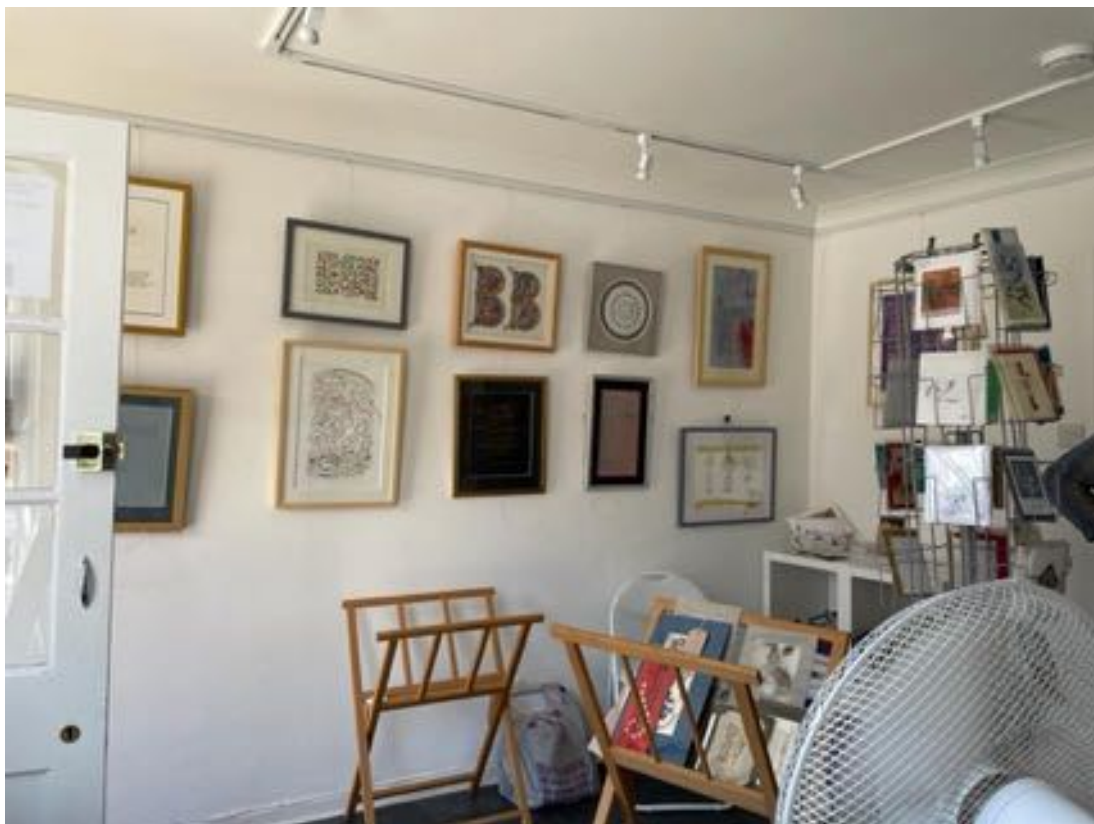
The Exhibition team: - Clive Turner, Jan Turner, Els Van Den Steen and Steve Eades

In September, CPS held an exhibition of members work at Cranbrook Library in Kent. The exhibition was very well received by those who visited, the Library staff and Kent Council – so much so they have asked us to exhibit next year. I include a selection of comments from the visitor book.

Thanks to all those who contributed work to the exhibition, and special thanks to Jan and Clive Turner and Els Van Den Steen for helping erect and dismantle the exhibition.

Steve Eades

OUR LATEST EXHIBITION – 30 YEARS OF CPS – RYE 2022



2022 – RED DOOR GALLERY - RYE

PUBLICATIONS



Magazines through the years

Over the years CPS have produced circa 100 magazines.

The first magazine was published in 1995 and edited by Michael Rust who continued until 2000 when he handed over to Jan Turner.

Jan's tenure as Editor lasted until 2013, when she handed over to Naoko Mari Bain who stayed in place until 2017 when I became Editor.

As you can see the magazine has undergone numerous transitions over the years, but I am sure all the previous Editors would agree that the quality of the publication is directly proportional to the information received by members.

I think that they would also agree that it is hard work cajoling members for their input.



Patron: Bishop of Dover (Bishop in Canterbury)
The Rt Revd Richard Howkins

NEWSLETTER

Number One

Winter 1995

PEN TO PAPER

Our group, the Cinque Ports Scribes, is now two years old and covers a large area of Kent. The initial response from tribulationist calligraphers has been extremely encouraging and the committee thought it time to start this Newsletter to keep you informed of the activities of the group and other matters relating to calligraphy.

The aim of the group is to draw together, throughout our part of Kent, all those who derive a particular pleasure from calligraphy as an art. The field of application of this art has no limits, but to achieve higher and higher levels of expression we have to increase our knowledge and skill. A number of methods are available to us to achieve this: the lonely pursuit, I suppose very familiar to many of us, buying odd books on the subject, which, without a previous solid foundation, can present some pitfalls; attending evening classes, a very commendable resolution. Joining a major calligraphy society can play some role, but often it remains remote and it is not always easy to make use of the workshops offered.

So, in order to create a constructive atmosphere for the appreciation of beautiful letters, various local calligraphy groups have sprung up. An important activity, through which our group plans to help the members is

Our very first magazine published in Winter 2005

Editor - Michael Rust

1995 - 2000

[illegible]

While it has been a tough few months, A-Club's owners insist: when we find the opportunity to build with photographers and agents from around the world, we are working for the day before the ACP is meeting so things can get started in earnest and gradually roll into the main.

We are planning to hold a Week of Progress at Oxford colleges in November and December. Subsequent January and March 1987. If you would like to contribute to this, please contact Chris Eames.

hilly area of our members have joined any or the last few months. They show up August-October. They are a great way to the highway south in Kato. They are planning to indicate a future vision of the Northwest in August.

Since I have returned from my job in San Clemente, I will be able to visit almost the entire Great North Woods and visit the New York Public Library and see a famous addition of Japanese literature. Perhaps I will, upon returning, find out a park in the North Woods.

Hopefully, we will not start at the time of yesterday's anniversary (we only have another 30 minutes).
(Missing: Carls to make and those who are making don't have a Marcella Christmas and a poster-making trip)

Love, Ann

Thank you very much for all your letters and photos - in fact, I haven't had much of an idea I was missing out on!

A large part of the address is given over to reports of the year's (1,100) housing activity, with half being in three, going with figures of the end of the year's work.

At All-Hands, please, it is our great sadness that we have to report the sudden and unexpected death in bed of Augustus Forster. Amongst other things, Augustus taught cartography in All-Hands Education and was Chairman of CDE and/or many workbooks for it, near the stars, it is, as demonstrated just coming in last year's (204) *September* The

His enthusiasm and hard-
working habits have
inspired his peers. His
knowledge of the craft of
tailoring and administration and
his willingness to share that
knowledge will give his
company a competitive edge.

We hope to dedicate the next edition of the Newsletter to an appreciation of him and his work. If anyone has any personal thoughts or illustrations of Rogers that they would like to share with us, please send them to us.

Copy this but all items for the
last November is 30th April
have a wonderful Christmas
B. New Year

July 4, 1999



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There are a number of reasons why the use of photographs of face coverings:

An example from Jan Turner's Editorship – Winter 2006

Editor - Jan Turner 2001 - 2013



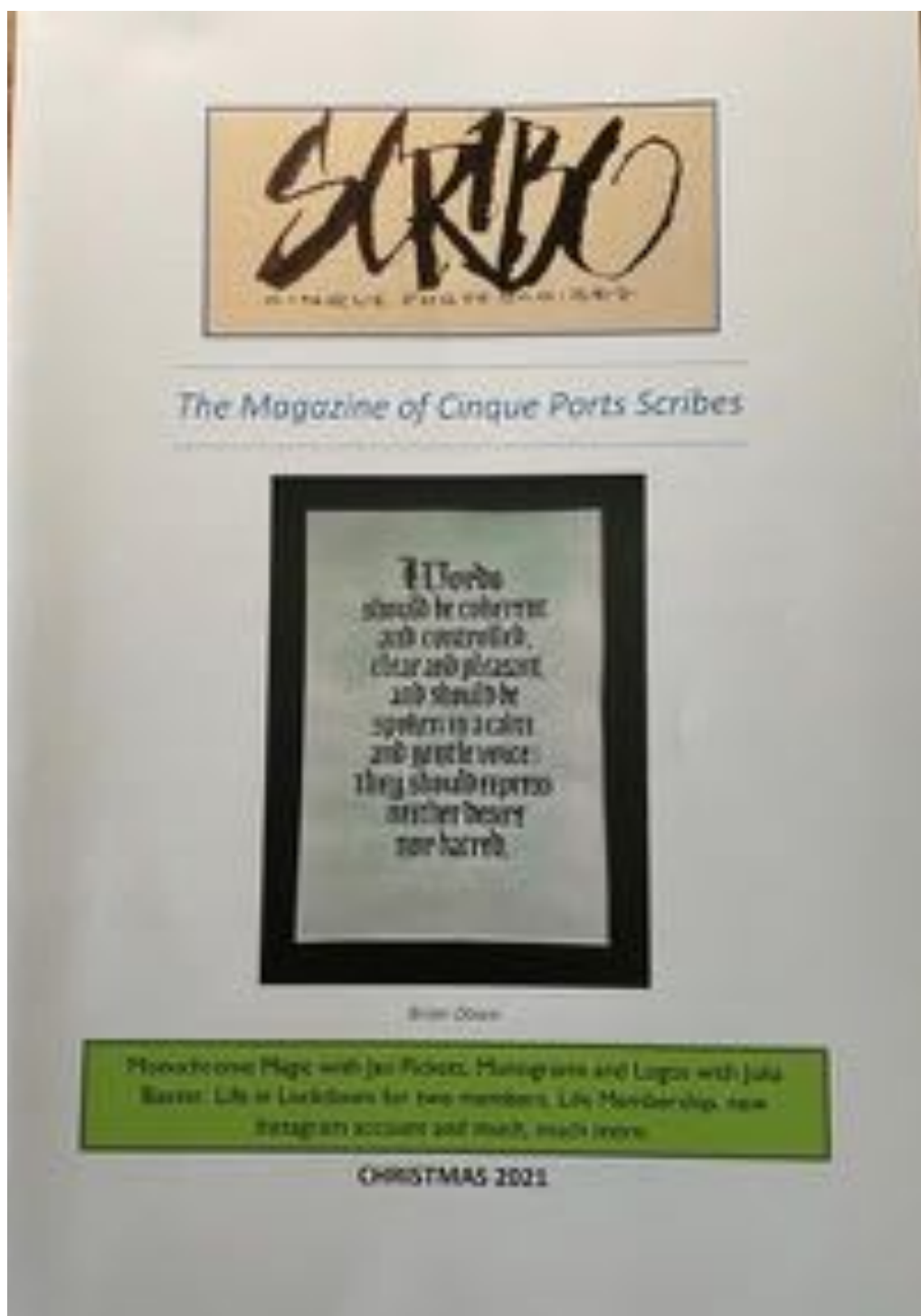
Editor - Mariko Mari Bain

2014 - 2017



Editor - Steve Eades

2017 – Present

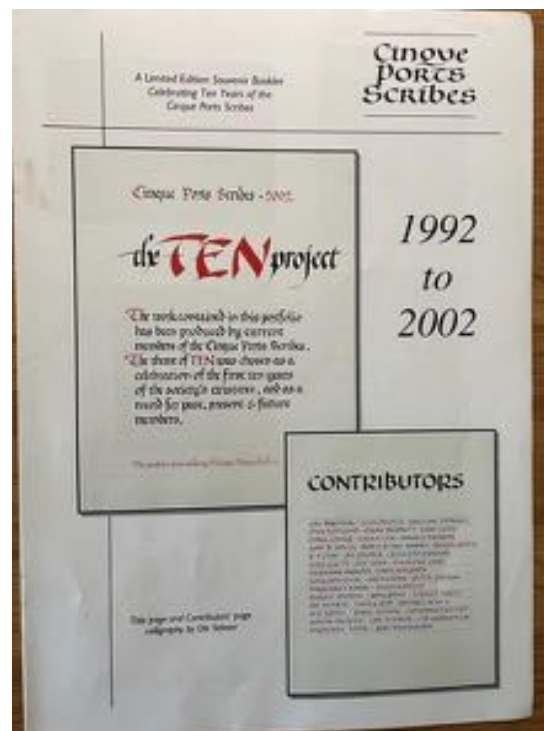


The new title for the CPS newsletter, with a new title – SCRIBO suggested by Naoko Munro

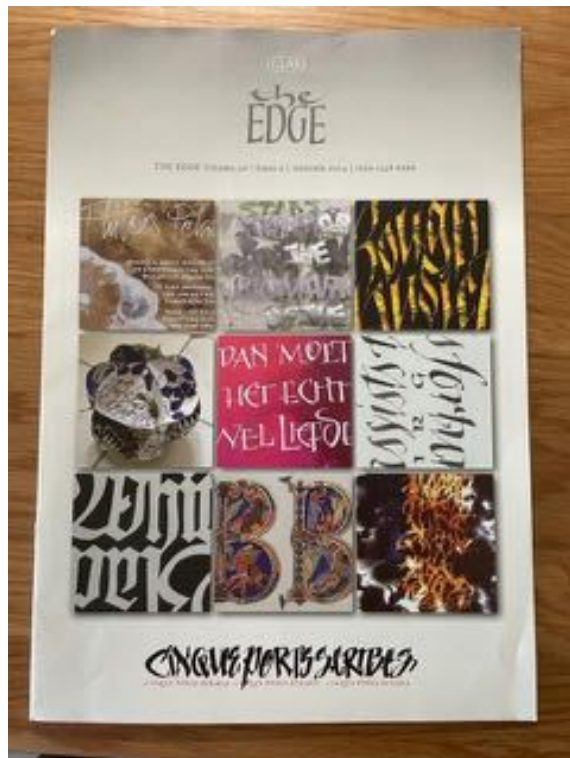
Heading designs by Meg Chapman and Carole Thomann (alternates on each edition)



Various interim newsletters have been produced over the years, this one by Peter Jordan



Left – the CLAS magazine featuring the 2017 Regional Day (for some internal reason CLAS chose not to publish the report until 18 months after the event), right – special 10th anniversary magazine



Left – the 25th Anniversary edition of the magazine, featuring our 25th hanging inspired by Sue Smith, right – the marvellous CLAS the EDGE, featuring Cinque Ports Scribes edited by Jan Turner

2021 CALENDAR – Now on Sale



Calendars £7.50 each

Post and packing for up to four calendars £3.10
(for orders of more than four copies, please email for quote)

To order – email Steve Eades at teknigraphos@btinternet.com
or write to Steve Eades, 17 Tobago, West Parade, Bexhill on Sea TN39 3YB

Payment details - Send a cheque for the required amount to address above – please write on back of cheque "2021 Calendar".

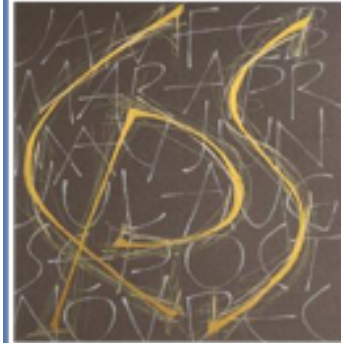
Alternatively, Pay by Bank Transfer – Sort Code – 30-90-28, Account No – 01503554.
Cinque Ports Scribes - Reference – "2021 Calendar + Name".

**MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT**

One Pound from every Calendar sold will be donated to MACMILLAN Cancer Support

Cinque Ports Scribes CALLIGRAPHY CALENDAR

2020



THE PAGES FOR THIS CALENDAR
WERE CREATED BY MEMBERS OF ALL
LEVELS OF EXPERIENCE FROM
THE CINQUE PORTS SCRIBES
CALLIGRAPHY GROUP

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME

No experience necessary.
A friendly welcome awaits
For more information see our website
www.cinqueportscribes.org.uk

An annual tradition – the Calendars – now always with a charitable donation



Poster for Regional Day – Julia Baxter

EVENTS



CLAS REGIONAL DAY - 2005



Dear Jan and Alison,

What a great day the Cinque Ports Scribes put on for us at the weekend!

Lovely weather, lovely venue and such a lot to see and do. So many demonstrators, the 'Tear a Letter' display (so that's what the red letters were for!), so many pieces of work to see from other groups and the wonderful lectures. It all linked in so well with Sunday's programme, whose inspired idea was that?

Everything was so well planned and having lunch provided and constant tea and coffee was a great plus. What a delightful extra the King's Swingers were. And then there was all day on Sunday seeing Romney Marsh, Derek Jarman's house and garden, Lydd's church and Museum, but best of all at the Guildhall with Irene Wellington's work.

It was a superb weekend. Many congratulations to you and your team from the CLAS Committee. I'm sure anyone who was there will long remember it and you are a hard act to follow!

Aren't CLAS lucky to have such supportive groups?

Yours sincerely,
Lorna Bambury
CLAS Chairman

CLAS REGIONAL DAY - 2005

CLAS REGIONAL DAY – CANTERBURY 2017



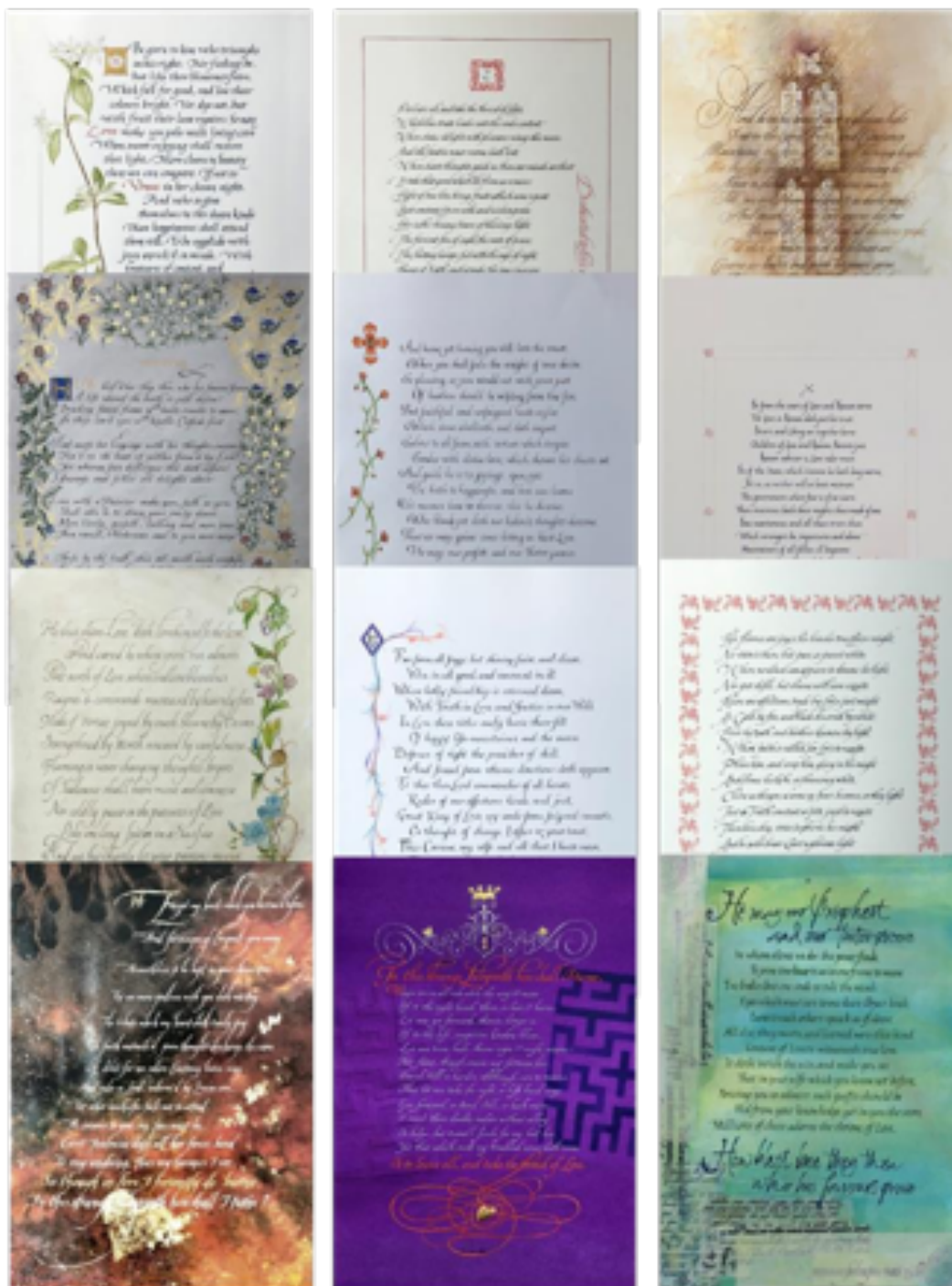


CROWNE OF SONNETS – PENSHURST PLACE 2018

CINQUE PORTS SCRIBES

CINQUE PORTS SCRIBES • CINQUE PORTS SCRIBES • CINQUE PORTS SCRIBES

CINQUE PORTS SCRIBES CHRISTMAS JOURNAL 2018





The brainchild of Els Van Den Steen, a marvellous display of poetry by our members.

SSI LAY MEMBERS DAY 2019



CLAS REGIONAL DAY – CHICHESTER



XCROSSPOLYNATION - MAIDSTONE 2015



TENTERDEN BEGINNERS' DAY



CPS BBQ - 2018



2018 AGM



CLAS FESTIVAL 2008 - WARWICK



CLAS FESTIVAL – SUNDERLAND 2009



CLAS FESTIVAL 2006

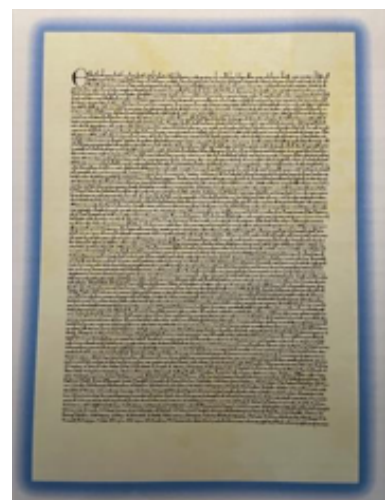


CPS TRIP TO KALLIGRAFIEMANIFESTATIE, HOLLAND



In March 2002, a group of CPS members went on their first trip abroad for a calligraphy event in Holland.

CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL ARCHIVES



A group from CPS presenting Canterbury Cathedral Archives with a facsimile of the Sandwich Magna carta by Julia Baxter

TRIP TO CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL ARCHIVES



An example of the CPS youth policy, a trip to examine the Archives at Canterbury.

BRITISH LIBRARY – ADOPT A BOOK



Over the years CPS has made many donations to libraries to help preserve medieval manuscripts, Firstly in 2008, we donated to the Parker Library in Cambridge, Jan Turner and Sue Smith went to present the cheque Dr Christopher de Hamel. The donation was used towards conservation of their collection.

RESIDENTIAL WEEKEND – AYLESFORD PRIORY



SUMMER WORKSHOPS

For many years, CPS ran summer workshops, many at Romney Marsh



Photos from a Romney Marsh workshop organised by Frances Liddiard and Ole' Selvaer

ENVELOPE EXCHANGE

For many years a CPS Envelope Exchange was run by Peter Jordan, and then latterly Rosie Griggs.

Over the years, hundreds of members exchanged letters



CPS MEMBER TESTIMONIALS

To celebrate 30 years of Cinque Ports Scribes I asked members to contribute their thoughts on what CPS has meant to them.

Thank you to all who contributed.

JAN TURNER

It's surprising how much you forget over 30 years, or to be more precise, 29 years, as that is how long I have been a member of CPS. I have been rereading all my past newsletters to remind me what I have been involved in over that time and it has made fascinating reading.

I started calligraphy attending Adult Ed classes with Nick Crook, where I also first developed an interest in gilding. When Sue Gray took over his class, she said that she couldn't teach us anything more than we already knew! How wrong she was! After a few years's break, while my children were very young, I decided to pick things up again as CLAS had just launched the Diploma and I was confident that I could do it.



Again, how wrong can you be! Having had my work decimated by Margaret Daubney and having already applied for the Diploma I joined Sue's Tenderden class and nearly gave myself a nervous breakdown as I relearnt calligraphy (properly, this time) and completed my application all within six months! I was part of the first group of CPS students to complete a CLAS Diploma and was pleased that my effort was rewarded with a distinction.

I estimate that I have attended about a hundred CPS workshops since joining and have really enjoyed the variety of subjects and teachers that this has afforded. I have also taught a handful of workshops, helped teach a beginner's class and demonstrated at several events. I was a committee member for seven years, culminating in being joint chair with Ally Trelfer when CPS hosted our first CLAS Regional Day in 2005. I have participated in all CPS exhibitions, including off-shoots like the Cranbrook Show and Beaney, Canterbury and have helped organise and hang many as well.

However, the contribution I am most proud of is having been editor of the printed CPS Newsletter for fourteen years. During that time, and with help from my husband, I learnt loads about layouts, editing (including photographs) and printing, and spent many hours sourcing and amending content to get as professional a finished product as I could. I don't know if anyone else has kept their copies, but I have found re-reading them very enjoyable and it has brought back some great memories. I also edited the special CPS edition of the CLAS House magazine, *Edge*, which brought the achievements of our group to a world-wide audience.

In the early days of CPS, we seemed to have a lot more social events and trips - maybe because we ran fewer workshops per year then? I remember three trips in particular:

- The original Ditchling Museum, housed in the old village school, was set up by sisters Hilary and Joanna Bourne, who grew up with Edward Johnston and his family. We were given a fascinating, personal guided tour by Hilary Bourne and were allowed to handle a number of exhibits – in particular, I remember Johnston's original designs and wood blocks for the London Underground.
- In Winchester Cathedral we were given a personal, close-up view of the fabulous Winchester Bible and later, a guided tour of contemporary, Winchester lettering by Michael Renton.
- In 2001, Sue Smith organised the first and, so far only, foreign CPS trip to Amsterdam for a 'Kalligrafiemanifestatie' – stalls, demonstrations, exhibitions, chocolate! A wonderful trip.

What stands out amongst all this is the wonderful group of life-long friends that I have made and continue to make through our shared love of all things calligraphic. I do hope that CPS can continue for at least another 30 years – even if we aren't all around then to see it. Thanks for the memories!

ALISON TRELFER



I have no recollection of when I joined Cinque Ports, I am not good at remembering dates, but I do recall celebrating the 10th anniversary. I can safely say that I was encouraged by Ole, who was my first calligraphy tutor at adult education, a long while back.

We had a thriving group at adult Education in Dover and firstly Ole, then Sue Smith was very encouraging and supportive. The chance to meet other likeminded artists was a draw so I joined. I don't think it was long before I joined the committee as an ordinary member, then treasurer and finally chair, for several years.

All the time, we were always an active group and committee and used to meet at Brian's house in Ashford. Many a meeting we would all leave clutching excess tomatoes or veg of some sort from his garden.

We tried hard to do different things, exciting things, including a trip to a foreign calligraphy exhibition and fair, in Belgium (I think), bring in different tutors and experiences for members. I think that is the good thing about the group, we are forward thinking in the way we try to offer challenge the members, not just the usual calligraphic scripts but pushing your work further and trying new things.

It is always good to work with such a diverse collection of people from all different walks of life and experiences that many have become true friends over the years.

JULIA BAXTER

I joined in the early 90's whilst attending AE evening classes with Sue Gray. Sue would bring in some work that she had learnt at one of the workshops. At the time I was still working full time in a 'proper job' at a printer in Ashford.

I became hooked on calligraphy from the off with Sue and as I was young, free, and single at the time, everything was an adventure. I was a reluctant Chairman the year of the exhibition in Canterbury, and you will see me, about to make the Chair's speech at the Preview evening.

Attending the workshops, I have met friends I've now known for years, so the opportunity that the



JANET ADKIN

For some time, my husband and I had looked for a leisure activity we could do together – we'd enjoyed walking, had music interests in common but wanted to look at what Adult Education had to offer us both to stretch ourselves.

Roy had been in chef in his 'previous life' with cakes and patisserie his speciality, so his fine and decorative skills pulled him toward weekly calligraphy evening classes on offer in the Borough of Bexley. I enjoyed arty things, so we signed up and went together to classes for three years –starting in about 1990.

We learned the basics of different lettering styles and focused on one script per term. We had homework each week to do but it was all a bit prescriptive and did not allow us to be creative as such. It came to the stage when we 'more experienced' folk were left to our own devices in the class and directed to copy something the tutor had done previously or from books. So, we decided we could do that at home without paying for the class – but of course we didn't 'get round to it'!

After Roy died, I decided I either had to use the materials or get rid of them and this prompted me to start on calligraphy again – on my own. I cast around for tuition but by this time calligraphy had been taken off the Adult Ed syllabus. I attended a couple of workshops at Francis Iles Art in Rochester where apparently, I had just missed the excellent tutelage of Augusto Fiori.

At about the same time also I had been asked by the then head of the new school here on St Mary's Island if I would write out the (long) prayer of dedication given by the then Bishop of Rochester, the Very Reverend Nazir Ali, at the official opening of the school. No pressure then!



Almost at the same time as this request I happened to see the Field Centre Studies course list for Flatford Mill and attended two weekend courses within the same year. Both were led by Gaynor Goff.

I took my planned school prayer layout with me, and Gaynor steered me onto the right path. She did 'comfort' me by saying the length of the prayer was a big ask and she would not have attempted it at my stage of development nor even at her own. She also recommended me to 'a calligraphy group 'somewhere in Kent'.

So eventually I found Cinque Ports Scribes and attended the Wednesday group meetings at Kingston where we did our own thing but were encouraged by other members and given input if required by Sue Smith. I guess this would have been in about 2009. I enjoyed our gentle meeting time and being with the company of skilled calligraphers and was made to feel very welcome.

Eventually all our meeting times were transferred to Hastings for workshops and then Sub Scribes group met on Saturdays at intervals in between. Again, we used these times for working on our own projects with input from our more experienced calligraphers. Occasionally we worked on group projects.

I can recollect meeting at a village hall in the Chartham /Lower Hardres area when Evington Hall was not available, and we used this enforced meeting place for consideration as a permanent venue. However, the fitted carpets were felt to be high risk and I recollect we all felt rather 'twitchy' when working there for fear of accidental spillage.

For several years summer schools at Dover over the course of three days were a real bonus as having a user-friendly primary school venue and our own Ally and Dave to meet our every need!

The Envelope exchange was introduced, and I found these a useful tool for a mini project and enjoyed the challenge of working to a theme or focus. I found this less daunting than working to a brief for exhibitions. I am not good at self - motivating as I still don't have confidence in my work but greatly admire the work of others.

At some stage (the date eludes me) I was approached by Meg and Shirley to ask if would consider becoming a committee member. This led to me being Membership Secretary quickly followed by Secretary together with Membership secretary. I remained on the committee for several years and enjoyed helping to plan and participate in events.

I have found being a member of CPS enlightening/ mind-blowing and feel so fortunate to have been part of a group of people who are talented, encouraging and generous with their ideas, materials and time. The friendship support element of the group is second to none. I found belonging to CPS opened my eyes to a freer way of expressing calligraphic ideas and there is a different 'me' inside who longs to be big and bold and yet still I produce small and rather controlled pieces of work! Were I to practice more and experiment I'm sure I would find this other 'me'!

I'll try to remember Meg's mantra as I trial things – 'it's only a piece of paper!'.

TONY WOODHAMS



"I first took up calligraphy when I moved to Sevenoaks and had a short career break. I was fortunate to have found Els taught Calligraphy at Sevenoaks Adult Education, and I think I was hooked by the end of the first lesson in September 2010. At Els' suggestion, I joined Cinque Ports Scribes shortly after, and very quickly found a home within the CPS family and made great friends. CPS have always been a very welcoming, hardworking, and productive group; whether as a newcomer or experienced calligrapher.

We have a great mix of people and classes, so that there is always something to keep you interested, progress and learn. I really enjoyed my time on the committee, as workshop organiser for a few years and webmaster for a few more, and in February 2022 I taught my first class for the group.

While I have moved abroad, I fully intend to retain my membership, keep in touch from across the channel, attend any online workshops I can make, and loved meeting up face to face at the CLAS AGM."

SUE SMITH



Sue joined CPS in the early days and remembers many stalwart members, including Sue Gray, Brian, Micheal and Marlene.

She is aware that she steered the helm for some years and spent time on the committee organising trips to calligraphy fairs in minibuses, CLAS days, at the Saga building, visits to The Parker Library and teaching workshops with the members.

When I spoke to her, she was pleased we had reached 30 years and wished us all a happy birthday. She is looking forward to returning to her own calligraphy work and has begun to make cards and some books which she is enjoying.

ANN WHITBOURN

I joined CPS sometime at the end of 2000 and the beginning of 2001. I had retired at the end of the summer term in 2000 and had planned to increase the number of Adult Education Oil Painting classes that I had attended for many years.

However, when I looked at the programme for the year 2000/2001 I discovered that my tutor, David Innes, had also retired and was no longer taking classes so I enrolled for the Calligraphy Class that Sue Smith was running in Dover instead. It was a good move, and I found her classes inspiring, challenging and most enjoyable. I first met Ally Trelfer and Shirley Davison on the course. Sue and Ally told us about CPS and encouraged Shirley and me to join, which we did. During 2001 I went to many workshops and started to get very involved.

Towards the end of 2001 Sue asked Shirley and me if we would consider joining the CPS committee, which we did, myself as Membership secretary and Shirley as General secretary. Sometime in the next ten years, I changed roles and took on the post of Treasurer which continued until 2014 when I retired from the committee.



My best memories of the 20 or so years that I have been a member of CPS, besides the many enjoyable and stimulating workshops, is the friendly, encouraging and supportive nature of CPS members. Every activity – whether a workshop or social – has been a pleasure to attend.

Probably the greatest influence on my calligraphic life has been Sue Smith as I continued with her classes for many years. I have always enjoyed the extended workshops as they give time to explore ideas and develop skills.

The Summer Schools, held by Julia Baxter and Frances Liddiard, where we explored the development of different lettering styles and types of Illumination through the medieval period, were particularly stimulating –and the barn setting was great! The chance to be taught by some of our great calligraphers has been a privilege.

Lin Kerr is one that particularly springs to mind – I found her workshops particularly inspiring – but there have been so many tutors and as a group we have been so fortunate to experience their guidance and skills

MEG CHAPMAN

Can't be absolutely accurate but it was just before the Regional Day 2005 in the SAGA building at Folkestone as I went along to that as a newbie and was most impressed, especially with the surprise choir beginning with the haunting a cappella solo which quieted the audience very quickly. Brave soul. Ole had organised it via a friend from Canterbury Cathedral — what a joy.

WHY I JOINED

I've long had an interest in art in general and letters, writing out Certificates and posters for v—vTäGs charities and events. In summer/autumn 2005 I attended a local Saturday workshop on Little Books with Els Van Den Steen and by way of introducing ourselves at the start of the day, Els asked everyone what their artistic interest was. I was the only one who said Calligraphy and Els went into rhapsodies! She introduced me to CPS at that year's AGM where I joined.

ROLES HAVE I HELD ON COMMITTEE



Long before my second the next AGM I was cornered by Marjorie Wood and 2 other lovely ladies asking me to be on the CPS Committee. I was flattered! I have always been a 'Committee person' with my other interests (Netball and Korfbal) and at the next AGM I was voted on as an Ordinary Member.

No long afterwards, I took on the role of Secretary which at that time included Membership as well as Minutes.

I was an administrator in my working life, so taking on this role was an easy decision.

Problems with work forced me to relinquish the post a few years later but after that settled down, I rejoined the Committee to become Workshop Coordinator, taking over from Tony Woodhams and here I am still. I don't ever want to be Chairman though !!!

SPECIAL MEMORIES OF CHARACTERS OR EVENTS - my influencers!

Shirley Davison — book making teacher with tireless patience. She remains one of my closest friends and confidante. Shirley did a long stint as Workshop Secretary when it was all paper and posting and when she was Chairman instigated the visit of Santa Claus at the AGM and singing carols.

Brian Down — Committee meetings at his house with biscuits and no-nonsense with Ally the then Chairman. Brian ALWAYS put out the tables and chairs for every workshop. He was never asked, he just did it and was happy to. It made a great start to the day not having to do anything but turn up. He still turns up on odd occasions for hugs and to wish people well. Such a kind man.

Marlene Gray — I met her at a CLAS Festival and introduced myself as a CPS member as she was a founder member. We were chatting and laughing and when she repeated something a bit naughty, I

couldn't conceal my surprise language that it came from this tiny, immaculate lady. Very friendly and we got on well. Fabulous work and now a CLAS Fellow.

Peter Jordan — poem writer and Envelope Exchange organiser which he put on CD for anyone to buy. The money went to the Donkey Sanctuary if I remember correctly. He was very strict with his doing the envelopes in the month they were due — I'm afraid I had a few gentle tickings off for tardiness, but I tried!

Margaret Khan — beautiful Copperplate, inventive lady and a committee member for years. She always seemed to be coming up with ideas for group projects (see below).

Colin Lumsden — my first introduction to Colin was via his entry to the CLAS Art and The Letter exhibition for which I was Administrator. He had made a wonderful 3D Watering Can in green card and the whole thing collapsed flat for posting. It was stunning. I met him some time afterwards at CPS and what a lovely man. He turned down my request for him to teach a workshop as he didn't think many people would be interested in making a watering can.

Ole Selvaer — our elf from the North. At the AGM we introduced a Secret Santa and Shirley's husband Paul stood in for the great man in red himself. Paul couldn't make it one year so Ole took on the role of Santa's Elf inviting anyone and everyone to sit on his knee — an invitation taken up by all. Saucy!

Sue Smith — whizzing through the alphabet suited my way of working. The most inspirational of teachers with endless imagination for things to do and ways to work. Also, very bossy! But the loveliest lady and fabulous calligrapher. Her wealth of knowledge was astounding, and I cannot remember a question being asked by me — or anyone else — which didn't get a fully qualified answer. Amazing! My admiration knows no bounds.

Ally Trelfer — award winning welcoming smile and wonderful BBQs at her home in Dover. Her husband Dave was the burger flipper, and we all enjoyed the spectacle of the miniature train puff puffing around the garden. Ally organised several summer workshops at her school in Dover where Sue Smith was the tutor, and we were frequently treated to Dave's masterpieces of construction of flying dragons and the like.

Ally and I got together after a CLAS Festival to give a workshop on Folded Diptych which we had learnt with Lin Kerr. (Where I say 'teaching' I mean Ally did 95%, I just bobbed around a bit.)

We walked in singing, made attendees do warm up exercises — like you see the huge groups of Chinese workers doing — and changed t-shirts after lunch to see if people noticed. There was a lot of laughter during that workshop and not only by us.

Jan Turner — Newsletter editor for years and years, Jan is a force to be reckoned with. Where she gets her energy from I don't know. She was joint Chair with Ally at the 2005 Regional Day which was superb in its attention to detail. My first such event and never forgotten.

Jan has delivered workshops for CPS on the Neuland hand which I loved and she is always one of the first to help with exhibitions.

Most recently, she asked me, my husband Richard, Sue Smith and her husband Tony to help her and her husband Clive set up a CLAS exhibition in Snape Maltings, Suffolk. We shared a house over the weekend, worked hard erecting the exhibition. It was a fair division of labour: Sue directed the men - Richard up the ladder obeying her every whim with Jan's husband Clive and Tony running around handing him hammers, nails, pliers, tape etc); Jan and I unpacked what was going where and made the tea! We topped it all off with a massive Chinese takeaway. Great time. Great people.

Els Van Den Steen — my first contact with CPS and stalwart member, teaching and helping at every opportunity. She lives near me and we often travel together to workshops or other calligraphic events. Technically brilliant in her letter forms, Els has my utmost admiration for her abilities and support. She deserves more recognition for her superb teaching.

I could probably name all the members in some way or other as they have all had an impact on my calligraphic life but there are limits to the amount of space in this magazine!

GROUP ACTIVITIES

My first memory of a joint activity was a Tea Towel. The ever-inventive Margaret Khan asked for volunteers to write a short phrase in any script, and we selected the phrases she had written out and the shape she wanted it written in. Margaret then patched all the pieces together to create a tea towel. Mine had become a bit tatty after so many years' uses and I have just thrown it out although I saved my bit of it for posterity! Then a couple of days ago I also found my original work on paper so when Steve asked for my memories, I was pleased to have something tangible.

Margaret Khan again, this time it was a shower curtain of individual letters in rainbow colours. She made up the words which would fill the curtain and gave us the letters she wanted; we could draw/write/illuminate them in any way we liked if it was in the designated colour — it could be any shade of that colour too. And yet again, Margaret and a curtain but this time it's of white-on-white letters. Mostly folded letters, she laughed at one of mine where I used Polo mints— well they're white!

She was also instrumental in organising the first CPS mug of Joined Up Writing.

The 25th anniversary saw Sue Smith in charge of a cut-out letter hanging in glorious black, white and red. Once I got into my stride, I couldn't stop but my fingers felt bruised after all that cutting. I am the proud guardian of the curtains!

Thereafter I have made so many firm friends with the many lovely, warm, friendly members of levels of experience from absolute beginners, triers, players, more experienced all the way up to fantastic, generous tutors.

MY PERSONAL VIEW OF THE GROUP

Shortly after I joined, I was still very nervous but was encouraged to go to workshops. As you may know, the hall where we meet is way out in the sticks and it was long before Satnav and my mobile phone so – inevitably I got lost in the wilds of the Kentish hills, taking waaayyy over the expected travel time. Luckily, I always doubled the estimated travel time estimated by my route-savvy husband and just made it in time to my first workshop with August Fiorani,

I had already met Els of course, but couldn't remember many other faces from the AGM, After a spectacular equipment malfunction, and the tutor Augusto's Italian swearing (I assumed) Ally Trelfer had a fit of the giggles and included me in the glance and I was totally hooked.

Thereafter, I have made so many firm friends with the many lovely, warm, friendly members of levels of experience from absolute beginners, triers, players, the more experienced all the way up to our fantastic and generous tutors.

DIANE SUTTON

I started calligraphy classes in 1990 with Augusto Fiorani in Gillingham. In 1992 I moved to East Kent and started classes with Sue Gray in Ashford the following year. During 1994 Sue persuaded me to join the Cinque Ports Scribes to help develop my calligraphy further.

I quickly became involved with CPS, joined the committee, and was secretary from 1996 to 2004 (I think). As well as several workshops a year the committee organised social events and outings - In

those days there was very little email, everything had to be printed and posted. Sue invited Augusto along to one of the social events and I was delighted to meet him again, he became very involved with CPS, serving as chairman and leading many workshops. I particularly remember his classes on quill cutting and him telling me on more than one occasion "There is no such thing as too much gold". Later, Els joined CPS, she had sat next to me at our first class with Augusto in 1990! The most memorable outing I arranged was a coach trip to Winchester Cathedral, enjoyed by all those who went I believe.



During my time as secretary there were two big exhibitions, the first in the Chapter House at Canterbury Cathedral in 1998, the second our 10-year exhibition at Dover Museum. The first was largely organised by Ole Selvaer and Alison Clothier, the second by Sue Smith with my assistance – many trips up and down the A2 to Dover. Both were successful showcases of the talent and enthusiasm that exist within the group.

I have done little Calligraphy in recent years, I got as good as I was going to get and increasing arthritis in my hands makes it difficult, although I enjoyed completing a small piece for the 30-year competition. However, I intend to keep up my membership, even if I don't attend workshops. I am still interested in what the group are up to, I have always found it to be a friendly and very talented collection of people.

PETER JORDAN

Greetings Steve, here goes...



- a) I became a CPS calligrecruit in 1998 after
- b) Recommendation from Augusto Fiorani my tutor in my first year at the Adult Education calligraphy class in Gillingham.
- c) My best memories were attendances at various workshops to learn new skills.
- d) People who influenced me are Augusto, Jan Turner, Mystic Meg, Margaret Khan plus many others.
- e) Role held within CPS... Designing and encouraging the development of the Envelope Exchanges with stunning results from my Prisoners of Sender, even international participants, over a successful 10 year period from 2006 to 2015.
- f) other thoughts...How about these?

* My Peglegacy for my CPS friends... from days gone by...

* The word that is heard, perishes, but the letter that is written abides.

* A good letter is an exercise of the ego, making a modest letter writer a contradiction in terms.
* As the Sun pulls away from the shore and our cargo of calligraphy sinks slowly in the West, it's time to say Adios...

* Yours until this rippling tide of shared laughter finally ebbs away, leaving behind a seashore glistening with countless remembered smiles.

To my Unsinkable Cinque Ports Scribes

Pegleg Pete

SHIRLEY DAVISON

Both Ann and I started Sue Smiths Adult Ed calligraphy course in Sept 2001. I'd always wanted to learn, and so took the plunge. As a good chairperson does Sue told us about the CPS and that they were always seeking new members from beginners up. She then said their next AGM was coming up in



November, and all were welcome....and new members were always sought for the committee!! Now whether we looked the kind of people who may be interested, she kindly explained that the present position of Secretary for membership and workshops was to be split between two people. I was given the impression it wasn't a very difficult task and I'd get plenty of help with finding tutors.... I was given the tutor booklet! I would need to book the hall, and then advise members what workshops they were on. Simple!

However, we were then pre-computer, so it was using snail mail or phone to try and contact tutors, some easier than others, and members, which courses they were on. Again, being new to calligraphy, finding out which tutors and courses suited our members had to be considered. I was encouraged to try and get more diversity of tutors and subjects, and as membership grew so did interest in the courses, which was great, but oversubscription usually meant drawing names out of the hat and running a subs list.

Or seeing if a tutor could do a second run of the course on a Sunday. I must admit I ended up really enjoying the role as I got to know most of the members and tutors, which was lovely.

It also happened to be the 10-year anniversary of the group, and my first ever piece for the group was for this.

So, it continued until Ally was Chair, and found that she was unable to continue the role and asked for a volunteer to run the meetings on her behalf. So, I did and subsequently got voted into that position. It was a good change from being Workshop Secretary. But have to admit I really didn't feel that confident in the role, as I hadn't been in the group for very long, compared to a fair few members, some of whom thankfully were on the committee.

We were concentrating on getting more exhibitions arranged, and also a change in workshops, organising some more complex for the more experienced members, and others for those newer to calligraphy. We were aware that Adult Ed classes were changing, and less Arts courses were being offered.

Meg and I also decided to slightly revamp the AGM after our first year in our new roles, by providing a "cabaret" for all, by dressing up and performing our version of "We three kings". I'm not sure what everyone else thought, but we thoroughly enjoyed making up the words and performing it!

The other thing we achieved was persuading Tony to join the group, and "by the way would he be interested in updating the Web Site for the group?"

My term as Chair for 4 years, was probably one of the most challenging things I have done. However, through doing it I have made some good friends, and belong to a lovely group of talented people.

However, I think the highlight for me, was visiting the Parker Library at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, at the invite of Christopher de Hamel. Arranged by Sue Smith. Seeing the Library and its contents was wonderful. The icing on the cake was when we were given the privilege of seeing and handling some of the priceless items from the Vault.

My absolute favourite was holding a letter written by Ann Boleyn to her father when she had been exiled to France. I will never forget that day.

ELS VAN DEN STEEN

I joined Cinque Ports Scribes at the AGM/Christmas Party in December 1993.

I had already started a calligraphy evening class with Augusto Fiorani in 1990 while I was a full-time primary teacher in the Medway towns, near Chatham Dockyard. Augusto's calligraphy class was fascinating.

Having had a particular interest in handwriting since my early years at primary school in Belgium, I started looking for calligraphy classes in the area where I lived in Belgium, but there were none to be found. After getting married in 1988, my husband's work brought us to England. We lived in Wiltshire for two years before moving to Kent in 1990. I was overjoyed to find that calligraphy classes were on offer at the Gillingham Adult Education centre in Medway and I signed up for the calligraphy evening class with Augusto Fiorani. Augusto's enthusiasm for calligraphy was contagious. Although my time was completely consumed by teaching, I always managed to find time to go to my calligraphy evening class. Augusto's classes rekindled my interest in handwriting and calligraphy. This is where I met Diane Sutton and Peter Jordan, two of our CPS members.

A couple of years later, Augusto mentioned that a regional calligraphy group had been set up in Kent and that everyone with an interest in calligraphy was welcome. He suggested that the AGM/Christmas Party would be a good opportunity to visit and find out more about the group. Despite Hastingleigh Village Hall being tricky to find, it was a lovely time with everyone being very welcoming. I still remember meeting Sue Gray, Marlene Gray, and Michael Rust. The variety of workshops and social events planned for the following year sounded exciting, so I decided there and then to become a member. This means that I have been a member of CPS for almost 29 years without any interruptions, even while I was pregnant with my two children.

I met Julia Baxter and Jan Turner at the workshops, and they told me that they were both taking classes with Sue Gray and preparing for the CLAS Diploma. I was also keen to give the CLAS Diploma a go and asked Sue Gray and Michael Rust, who were both encouraging their students to take part in the CLAS Diplomas, if there was a space in either of their classes. They looked at my calligraphy and decided that Sue's class for Beginners, at the Ashford Adult Education centre, would be a good place to start. I only had one term (3 months) to get my submission for the CLAS Foundation Diploma ready. Sue advised me to study Ann Camp's Foundational Hand and Italic Hand in her book 'Pen

Lettering' and to swap Ann's beak and slab serifs for rounded serifs to give my letterforms a contemporary look. Working diligently on my letterforms and calligraphy pieces, I passed the CLAS Foundation Diploma in 1997 with Distinction.



For a couple of years, before I had my children, I was the workshop secretary for CPS.

The workshops that I have enjoyed the most are:

- The paper making workshop with Vanessa Godfrey in 1995, where we had handmade papers hanging from the windowsills and all sides of the tables to let them dry.
- The quill cutting workshop with Augusto Fiorani in 1994. Who can forget the pan with hot sand to cure the quills, losing its bottom by getting too hot! Augusto used a colourful display of Italian words we couldn't understand, but his body language said it all.
- Peter Thornton's 3-day workshop in 2001 on Creative/Expressive Capitals and Layout & Design. How captivating that was!
- Calligraphic Knitting with Sue Smith, our first in person workshop after the Covid lockdown in July 2021. What an exciting workshop and how wonderful to all be working in the same space again!

Over the years, we have enjoyed a varied programme with many calligraphy tutors, catering for different levels of ability. To date I have attended just over two hundred CPS workshops, missing only a handful. Joining CPS has also introduced me to the activities, workshops, and events of CLAS & the SSI.

My enjoyment of calligraphy resulted in a career change. In 1997, I left my position as a full-time primary school teacher and dedicated myself to calligraphy. In 1999, a year before my daughter was born, I started teaching calligraphy and have done so ever since even through the Covid lockdowns.

When Augusto passed away in 2006, his wife Liz donated Augusto's entire library of calligraphy books to CPS. I have been housing and looking after the collection, taking a selection to the CPS workshops where they can be lent by our members. Now that in person workshops are resuming, it will be lovely to bring the books to the workshops again. Although some of them are a bit dated, it is interesting to see how calligraphy is continually evolving.

In the summer of 2018, I coordinated the Crown of Sonnets calligraphy project for the Penshurst Place Literary Festival, which was organised by Alison Findlay, professor of English at Lancaster University. Ten CPS members participated and contributed one or two sonnets, written in 17th century English, to form a crown of 14 sonnets.

I have run several workshops for CPS: Flemish Bastarda, 2 Embossing workshops and during the Covid lockdown, 2 online workshops: Energise your Letters & Nature's Manuscript. My next workshop scheduled for the autumn is Uncials & Bister Inks.

Being a member of CPS has given me the opportunity to have my work displayed at all the CPS exhibitions we have been running. The workshops, outings and exhibitions have all contributed to developing my calligraphy and have fuelled my interest in and love for calligraphy.

What I have particularly enjoyed is the wide range of topics, taught by many different professional calligraphers, each with their own expertise and style.

I have found it fascinating to see how unique we all are and how everyone responds differently to the topics offered in the workshops. This makes learning in group enriching and stimulating.

I have enjoyed being part of CPS for 29 years and being a part of such a friendly and supportive group. I hope that we can continue to share our enthusiasm for calligraphy for many years to come.

STEVE EADES

I have always been a devotee of nice handwriting, and whilst at College and University I prided myself on my beautifully re-written notes of lectures in italic script, blue ink with a Platinum fountain pen. It is to my eternal regret that they were eaten by my kids' rabbit, whilst supposedly safely stored in the garage. My disgust was only eased when we found the decapitated rabbit, a victim of the local fox shortly after. Serves him right!

I had joined CLAS and saw the CPS Regional Day advertised in Folkestone in 2005. I went along and was blown away by the quality of the work and the marvellous organisation and breadth of artwork on display. I picked up a membership form for CPS and immediately joined.

I went home and considered my ladder of progress in the art of calligraphy, planned to hone my basic skills and slowly work my way to becoming one of the most foremost practitioners in the country. Then, I adopted my normal stance, and thought "Sod it" – I can't be wasting time learning all this stuff and applied for the advanced diploma with CLAS. On reflection, the adjudicating body must have laughed their heads off, as my submission was truly awful and was quite rightly rejected out of hand, in fact one famous calligrapher had to lie down having seen it!

I can't remember my first workshop, or anyone I particularly met on the day, but I do remember what a friendly lot you were. I am not by nature a gregarious man, and I often shy away from social interaction, and it takes a while for me to join in. But join in I did, and look where that's gotten me?

So, seventeen years later, I have attended dozens of workshops, lots of meetings, many exhibitions, and had some great social occasions and am now, ultimately Chairman.

I've met many fine artisans and good friends and am proud of the talent we have within CPS, I strongly believe that calligraphers such as Els, Jan, Meg, Tina and Sue Smith should be Fellows of CLAS and the SSI. I hope that one day they can find their way through the plethora of red tape to obtain their rightful status in the calligraphy world.

My proudest moment was the 2017 CLAS Regional Day in Canterbury which coincided with our 25th anniversary. Despite meticulous preparations by a wonderful team, I am a pessimist by heart and on the morning of the event, I was convinced the whole day would be a disaster and go tits up!

Having stayed in Canterbury the previous evening, I managed to get lost heading for the event and was there 15 minutes late. My heart was lifted to see loads of CPS members diligently erecting their displays, and galleries and I knew then that we would have a triumph on our hands.

The wonderful demonstrations (I think of Julia and Frances in medieval garb), the wonderful gallery of our work (remember someone dashing around Canterbury to buy fishing line to hang pictures), the superb Medieval Band (courtesy of Julia and Bob) and the star turn of Janina Ramirez (whom I sweated blood over getting her to appear) – it was a fantastic day and I was so proud to be part of such a progressive group with such a "can do" attitude.

When looking for the main event of the day, I wanted it to be someone original, not the usual crowd of bores that circulate in the world of calligraphy. One night watching TV there was a programme about medieval manuscripts presented by a vibrant, knowledgeable young presenter, la Ramirez.

She's the one for us I thought and set about trying to recruit her. I contacted her agent, and there started a never-ending game of pinball tennis with emails going back and forth negotiating times, dates, fees, and travel expenses.

One day out of the blue I received an email from her agent saying, "Nina will do this". Wowzers!



I remember on the day pacing up and down the car park in Canterbury wondering if she would turn up, and I had a contingency plan to hide in the pub if she didn't. However, about 1.30pm a small Fiat drove in and out she got – thank God said Eades.

She was wonderful, down to earth and not at all pretentious and stole the show (and sold plenty of books too), and the crowd were so, so impressed with CPS obtaining a speaker of such quality. You wouldn't be able book her today!

A fantastic day and a triumph for Cinque Ports Scribes. The only downside was that despite us giving CLAS a wonderful report of the day, the CLAS mafia chose not to print it in The EDGE until a year after the event. Bastards!

My time as Chairman, sadly is concluding and I will soon join the illustrious ranks of "has beens" with past Chairman such as Sue Gray, Shirley, Julia, Ally, Sue S, Jan and Frances.

Why do we do it, it's certainly not for the glamour, or the recognition, because its bloody hard work. In all my time, I can't think of many people commenting on the magazines, and newsletters I send out. Even if someone said "its Crap" at least it would be a reaction. However, I am old enough and wise enough to know that's the way of the world, but it would be nice to get some feedback.

I shall stand down at Christmas and take a very, very back seat – in fact I may drop out for a period of time to get my mojo back.

I think I speak for the other previous Chairs when I say that we do it because it is an honour to be the custodian of such a great institution such as Cinque Ports Scribes.

Long may it prosper.

Steve

JENI KING

I always enjoyed handwriting in primary school and was introduced to lettering by my mother when I was about 12. She attended art school when Edward Johnston's revival of calligraphy placed it on the curriculum of the foundation year, so had a good understanding of the basic skills. Then followed my training as a primary school teacher where emphasis was placed on the correct formation of letters and clear lettering for display. As teacher in the pre-computer era, it often fell to me to produce posters and invitations.

When I stopped work, I attended several weekend calligraphy workshops at West Dean College with Gaynor Goffe and Cherryl Avery where I learned about SS&I. It was at the Cinque Ports Scribes exhibition at the Lay Members Day in 2019 where, impressed by the friendliness of the group, I decided to join. This was the start of my real education in calligraphy.

The workshops introduced me to completely new skills and ideas with very experienced tutors. I am rather in awe of the huge experience and talent of our group who have given me lots of ideas and tips! While I have not had the benefit of regular classes, as many of my fellow calligraphers have, I am sufficiently motivated to try and make progress with the teaching CPS offers. During covid Zoom courses were wonderful. The only problem was that in my enthusiasm I signed up to too many and may not have given the time to consolidate!



Being a member of Cinque Ports Scribes has made a real difference in my calligraphy journey and I feel fortunate to be part of such an active group. I was persuaded by Steve to take on the post of secretary in 2021 and have been rewarded by working with a lovely group of people and making new friends.

NAOKO MUNRO

When I attended a CPS workshop for the first time, I was so nervous. Mari drove the car and we went through narrow country roads. We lost our way several times and when we eventually arrived at a small village hall, I was already exhausted. I knew nobody there and I had very limited experience with calligraphy. Plus, my language barrier. Then a very friendly lady started talking to me in the kitchen. That was Meg. I still remember how I was reassured. That day was the start of my CPS journey.

My first tutor, David Nicholls recommended me to join CPS and I had no idea what a calligraphy society was. I went to see the Maidstone exhibition in 2009 and I was so impressed with the peoples' beautiful, colourful work. I thought I wish I could do this. So that year, I joined CPS.



I joined the committee in 2013 and I took over the treasurer's job from the super dedicated treasurer, Ann in 2015. I was not sure I could do the job, but members were very helpful, kind and patient. The best thing about being on the committee, I can get to know more people well in the society and sometimes outside of the society.

Without CPS, I would have never come to this point in my calligraphy life. Possibly, I would have never exhibited my work and I could not attend such a variety of workshops, and most important, I could not meet my tutors. CPS opened and expanded my calligraphy world.

When the small village hall is full of people who love calligraphy, that always makes me happy, and I hope this society will continue forever.

THE END

(Or start of another 30 years we hope)