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**NEWSLETTER**  
Northwest Calligraphers

February 2019

Issue 109

Gilded Goodbyes



WELCOME FROM YOUR EDITOR



Many of you will remember Brian Walker 1938 – 2018 whom I met once at CLAS Festival. He was known for his pencil work and Spencerian hand - carrying out many commissions in our area. It is with sadness that we say goodbye to an influential calligrapher.

Hello, and welcome back. In this issue we introduce our new committee and celebrate the lettering and museums that inspire you on your travels.

In the previous issue a picture was included of Josie Brown



which should have had a caption to the effect that she is displaying a work by Ann Hechle, apologies to Josie for the omission.

Autumn's highlights for me were our committee lunch, the British Library Anglo-Saxon exhibition and the first SSI Skills and Ideas Day in London.

The September workshop last year with coincided with the 150th anniversary year of C R Mackintosh's birth which gave us the chance to paint roses and learn more about the Glasgow Style.



*L-R Cindy Shaw, Janice McClelland, Hilary Lewis, Gordon Broadstock and Sue Robertson*

I'm looking forward to hearing from you about the lettering you find around you this year.

*Hilary*  
x



In my second workshop after graduating from Andrew's class I'd not bargained for origami in addition to calligraphy!

The workshop started with Vivien giving a clear demonstration of how to make the folds in addition to providing a handout in case we got lost.



Sarab Judic

After a bit of practice we all had colourful origami pockets ready to hold our calligraphic greetings. These could be made in different sizes and configurations and produced some really charming miniature cards.

There was a range of gorgeous examples to inspire and a variety of handouts with different designs to choose from. Having decided what I was doing I found myself completely absorbed, which has been my experience of calligraphy so far.

The greetings were varied around the class; I recognised some Rennie Mackintosh lettering from

the previous workshop whilst some people focused on the colouring around the letters. I stuck to uncials and tracing but still found getting the clean look of other people's cards difficult.

This is the real joy of going to a workshop for me, as I got advice about the ink I was using, different products to rub out pencil lines, the type of glue and thanks to Vivien's more artistic eye, it is fair to say my card was rescued. I'm delighted with the card I created, albeit with a little help from my friends.

Sarab Judic

A selection of cards made at Lower Withington and Port Sunlight



Vivien Luniss

As always, Clare's warm, encouraging nature matched her obvious knowledge and enthusiasm not only for Mackintosh's work, but also our own compositions.

Charles Rennie Mackintosh's script reflected a need to annotate his architectural drawings, often to fit limited spaces, so he developed a labelling style with some space saving quirks. In his more artistically expressive work he also adjusted letters and used shapes to fill gaps.

We started looking at the script using mono-line marker pens and quickly moved on to the pen alphabet, whilst adding our own interesting changes for example a small o, compressed m, all mostly done in capitals.

In the afternoon we looked at more decorative aspects of his work, including the well recognised rose. Merging the two was the final aim of the afternoon - with pleasing results all round. It was a lovely workshop to be part of, thank you.

Sally Hall



Above: Sally Hall's progression of work  
Left: Clare, Cindy and Hilary



Rose gardeners at Lower Withington and Port Sunlight



Linda Haynes



Joan Turner



## MACKINTOSH A Conversation

The lettering we studied with Clare Whittaker was a typeface based on Mackintosh's hand drawn draughtsman's alphabet. Many of us found the day inspiring, thank you to Denise and Gordon for sharing their thoughts on the subject.

Denise Morris' father and Gordon Broadstock both trained as draughtsmen. Denise writes that her dad, Peter Clive Crabtree (1922 - 2011) draughtsman, drummer and tap dancer loved drawing and writing and encouraged herself and her two boys do the same.

Peter Crabtree attended Manchester Grammar School, and art college but had to give it up at the start of WWI. After the war he attended Manchester School of Technology and studied Building Construction & Geometry going on to work for the Avery Blind Company as a draughtsman where he continued until he retired at 65.

His job entailed producing scale drawings and designs of the blinds for their manufacture and installation. He worked on the Liver Building, Edinburgh Botanic Gardens and for companies like AstraZeneca and Ciba Geigy.



"Dad was a great fan of Mackintosh, and I am sure that's why his writing was uppercase. He visited the Mackintosh Building and Glasgow School of Art (GSA), always bringing me a gift home like a lamp or a vase."

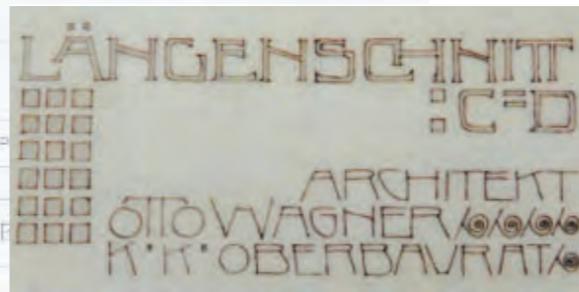
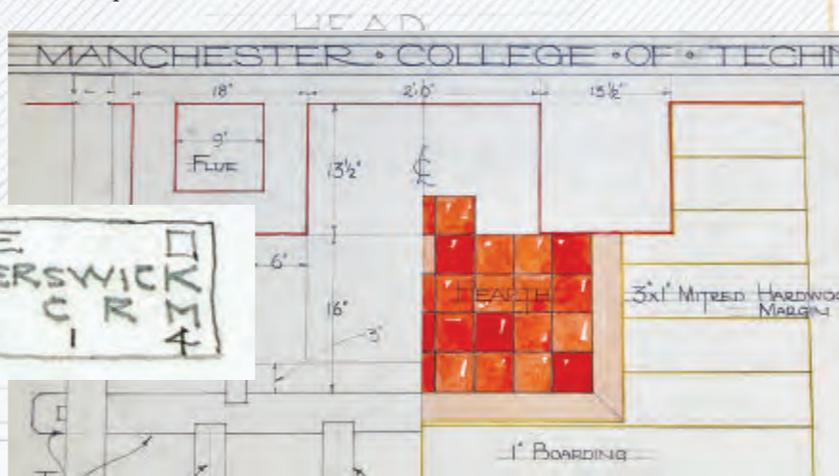


Gordon writes that with experience one can almost instantly tell whether someone has been trained in lettering as part of their draughting education. Roughly speaking capitals were done in what

might be considered Roman lettering and lower case a kind of Humanist. You can see from Denise's dad's drawings that guide lines were extensively used but these were dispensed with as skill increased - eventually writing on the base line only.

Clarity was extremely important. When you had finished your apprenticeship, you generally had the chance to become more flamboyant with your lettering and developed what became

your own signature style, note the extended descenders. Rather like learning calligraphy now, we learn the basics then break the rules. **Denise Morris and Gordon Broadstock**



Despite Glasgow being the birthplace of Art Nouveau, it was Europe that embraced the originality of

C R Mackintosh's style. In Germany and Austria he achieved acclaim for his work as a water-colourist, designer and sculptor. He contributed to the 8th Vienna Secession, a reactionary artistic movement, also known as Modernisme in Catalonia and the Glasgow Style here.



It's to Europe that we have to look to find Mackintosh's legacy as, on the whole, British artistic taste was reluctant to appreciate his naturalistic, minimal style.

Thank you to CLAS Archivist Tony Woodhams for sharing his

## A Conversation MACKINTOSH

### THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

As many of our members will be aware Mackintosh's iconic building, the Glasgow School of Art, suffered a second devastating fire in June 2018.

The CRM Society describes the loss of the building for the second time as a 'body blow'.

Cindy and Stephen Shaw emailed us "We were staying in Strathblane after a visit to the Kelvingrove Museum, and on the night of the fire, could see the glow in the sky. Several years earlier we had visited the Art School, a favourite building of mine, and the stunning library there."



photographs of his visit to the Secession Building and museums in Vienna.

More information on Mackintosh and his contemporaries can be found at [www.crmsociety.co.uk](http://www.crmsociety.co.uk)



TRAVELLER'S TALES A Calligrapher's Paradise

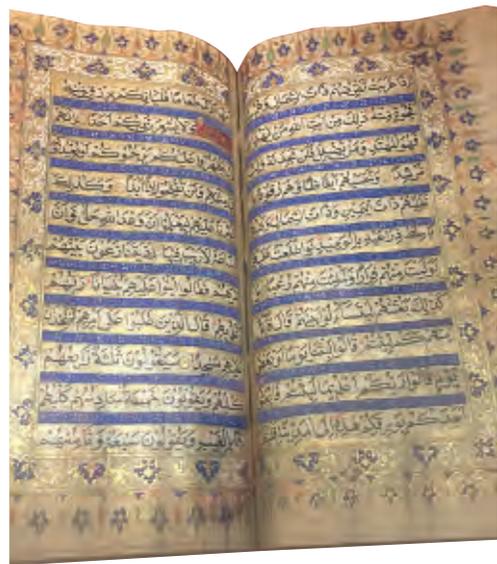


The Islamic Arts Museum in Kuala Lumpur, with its 10,000 artefacts is enough to lift the spirits of even the most jaded museum visitor. Set in a purpose built, cool, light building decorated with blue tiles and a turquoise dome are four floors of stunning art, textiles, jewellery, ceramics and calligraphy from around the Islamic world.

There are exquisite examples of the Qur'an from the earliest 8th

century Arabic Kufic script to 19th century Ottoman religious manuscripts, in Turkish, Persian and Urdu. Detailed information explains where they were written, who owned them and usually who the calligrapher was

– they were highly valued artists. Such skill and beauty, so much gold and colour, beautifully and reverently preserved, all there for me to see and enjoy! There are tiny prayer books for personal religious observance, hanging



A Calligrapher's Paradise TRAVELLER'S TALES



Chinese scrolls, heavily tooled leather and gold book covers, together with marriage contracts, miniatures and calligraphically decorated ceramics.

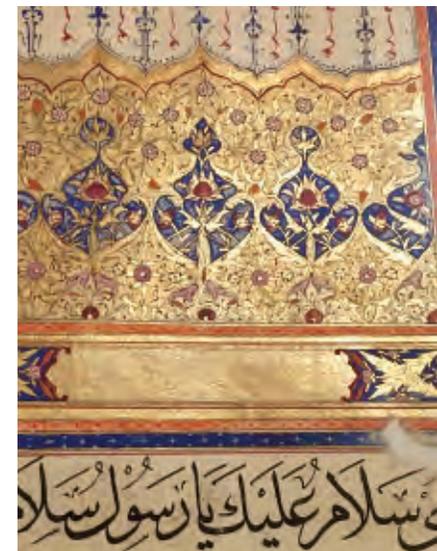
The Qu'rans and books of prayers and poems are displayed alongside the paraphernalia of the professional calligraphers who wrote and



illustrated them. Boxes and inlaid pen and paint containers allow you to imagine the scribe at work, and a gorgeous gold framed 'Calligrapher's Diploma' from 18th century Ottoman Turkey felt very personal – a link to the artist themselves.

My husband was captivated by the illustrated maps, the calligraphers tools and explanations of vellum and paper making, waiting patiently while I took photographs. If you get the chance to go, the restaurant is closed on Mondays!

**Elizabeth Rendle**



The early manuscripts are simpler, like the Blue al-Qu'ran (blue and gold pic left) but later examples are heavily ornamental like this al-Qu'ran from Kashmir (top left). The level of decoration depended on the patron like this awe inspiring 11th century example The Persian Book of Kings (centre) which took 30 years to complete.