



G. RUST

HAPPY BIRTHDAY
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Australia

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Guild Members

Lynette Mawer

Shortly after leaving school I enrolled in the Ticketwriting course at Bankstown TAFE. Within 3 years of Helen Warren's sound instruction I was working in Sydney — ticketwriting for a large department store. As I was often required to do large signs, I needed more skills and so completed signwriting at Sydney TAFE; this was a good combination, I could handle a variety of jobs around the store and my years there were very enjoyable.

In 1979 a full-time teaching position with TAFE gave me the opportunity to look into my favoured "Old Fashioned" side of the lettering world. It was soon discovered that "Calligraphy" was almost deceased, and yet it was quite healthy in England and very alive and kicking in the U.S.A.

Quietly, Jocelyn Maughan at Meadowbank TAFE was maintaining calligraphy as a Lettering Unit in the Art Certificate Course. Making phone calls trying to find that out at the time was funny, a lot of people didn't know what calligraphy meant; "Pardon?...oh? umm...kalegrafy? calygraphy?", and so my first serious introduction to calligraphy was finally with Fran McKirdy.

A few years with a fair bit of study and practice have passed since then. I now teach both Ticketwriting and Calligraphy; recently at Bankstown TAFE and presently at Mount Druit TAFE. I am a teacher above all else, I get a lot of satisfaction from seeing my students enjoy lettering and learning, and its so good to be part of the calligraphy network of courses all over

the suburbs these days thanks to members and friends of the Australian Society of Calligraphers.



Fran McKirdy

Fran McKirdy studied at the National Art School in Sydney. The course was 3-5 years, and although all aspects of art were studied, lettering and calligraphy were considered so important that this was taught almost every day by the renowned Eric Roberts.

Fran worked freelance, then married and had 3 sons while living in Sale in Gippsland, Victoria (a lush place for cows and oil men, but a desert for calligraphers).

Returning to Sydney, she worked as an architectural and survey draughtswoman and did lettering for art studios, printers, newspapers, universities etc.

In 1970 she enrolled at GyMEA TAFE College to see what was new. This happened to be the year that Jocelyn Maughan, a crusader for calligraphy in TAFE, was relieving principal. When Jocelyn returned to Meadowbank the following year, she asked Fran to teach there.

Fran has taught at Meadowbank ever since, as well as at three other TAFE colleges and at private art centres, while also continuing freelance work.

Her greatest satisfaction has been in teaching, and seeing Meadowbank become the centre for calligraphy where advanced students subsequently are in great demand as teachers, and hundreds of others have learnt this lovely art. The Australian Society of Calligraphers is based there; Fran was a Foundation Member and the first secretary of our Society.



Margo Snape

For someone who had assiduously planned a career of nursing and serving the needs of humanity, Margo Snape has spent a lifetime of fulfilling the requirements of a different form of survival. And that involved accepting the challenges of being creative in the harsh and frenetic world of private enterprise, where to survive these rigours, one must be totally committed; be trained in studio skills, competitive and indefatigable. It meant being thin-skinned, keeping an eye always open on ever-changing fashion fads, trends

and rapidly changing technical innovation, dealing with 'people' and being a woman.

It was totally opposite to the commitment to nurturing, caring and serving the needs of others on a clinical level. It was self-indulgent, exciting and rewarding on an aesthetic level. Margo's goal has been to produce the very best of which she is capable; to be her own relentless critic — watchful of the minutest detail. The ultimate goal was the 'product'. What came off the drawing board. Where there was a client (and there always was a client) his or her needs were paramount. It meant fitting those needs into a framework of technical excellence.

A profound love of line, colour and texture and the burden or blessing of a highly developed critical faculty resulted in the pursuit of letterform and design, inspiring the career which began at 15 and which has endured to the present.

Margo's work has embraced ticket and showcard writing, finished lettering, cinema outlet poster design, typography, fabric and textile design, illustration, graphic design, calligraphy and watercolour marbling. A partner in an 'up-market' design consultancy for 15 years, Margo has also lectured and taught on related subjects, has studied and travelled in the UK, Europe and the United States. Her marbled wrapping papers are marketed throughout Australia and original papers have been exhibited in galleries and craft shows in Australia, Sweden, France and the U.S.

Margo was recently commissioned to produce 100 papers for a Danish bookbinder in Copenhagen, and to design and supply hand made papers for 6 archival catalogues of the important exhibition — 'From

Rembrandt to Vermeer' which toured major capital cities of the Northern hemisphere.

And she still wants to be a nurse when she grows up.



Olivia Roberts

Born in China and educated in France and England.

First interested in calligraphy at Sunday School — where teacher was a calligrapher and artist.

Four years study at Cambridge School of Art for National Diploma in Design, majoring in Calligraphy, associated crafts of letter cutting and bookbinding, were followed by post graduate study in London — again calligraphy and bookbinding, with typography and graphics.

Then worked for a time with Roger Powell, the bookbinder, before taking the Art Teacher's Diploma at Reading University.

Taught design and

calligraphy at Glasgow School of Art before coming to Sydney and teaching at the National Art School here. Now based at St George College of TAFE, Kogarah, and doing lots of calligraphy.



Helen Warren

Helen's interest in lettering began when she joined the staff at Grace Bros., Broadway as a junior Showcard and Ticketwriter. This was in the fifties when such departments were large and staffed by many highly skilled craftsmen. Merchandising trends of today differ greatly to those of that era when time was not as costly.

These skilled craftsmen were a source of inspiration to Helen and she learned much from them; in particular Mick Russell, a man to whom she will be forever grateful for his guidance and instruction. During this period she attended the three year Showcard and Ticketing course at Sydney Technical College which she successfully passed in 1954.

Except for a break of 7 months enjoying a working holiday in New Zealand during the next decade, Helen gained valuable experience working in many of the major city stores.

At 25, she ventured overseas only to discover lettering work of any kind difficult to find. For some unknown reason such work was traditionally always done by males!! To keep body and soul together Helen worked in some pretty terrible jobs until she was finally accepted at Selfridges — a major department store in London. There she was privileged to work with a man who really took great pride in writing. His envelopes were sometimes Chancery Cursive, sometimes Copperplate, but always beautiful.

Helen had a break from Calligraphy when she worked at Australia House on promotions and later spent 2 years in Canada. After returning home Helen worked for the Roselands Centre as a Showcard writer and remained there for the next 6 years until she joined the staff of TAFE as a full time teacher. During

the time she has been employed by the Department she has completed her Art Certificate majoring in Print Making, and has also attained her Dip. Teach. through Sydney Teachers' College.

Helen was one of the founders of the ASC in 1980 and has been on the Committee since its inception. She has given invaluable help in screenprinting and promotional items for the Society.

As Helen says, "Unfortunately automation can replace so many skills, however it cannot replace a writer's personality. It is only through a Society such as the ASC that we can preserve such a beautiful Art."



Jocelyn Maughan

Jocelyn Maughan has been a long supporter of the art of lettering and calligraphy.

As a young student she studied lettering under Harry Burton and Mr Moore at East Sydney Technical College. She also attended the ticketwriting course where she studied under Mr Howell and Mr Shakespeare. Mr Howell had been a student of Eric Roberts. She was influenced by the letter design principals of brothers James and Alfred Cook — both outstanding teachers of art and design at East Sydney Technical College who strongly believed in the total unity of letter design so that as with any other great art work every part is related to every other part with absolute unity.

Whilst completing the 5 year full-time Diploma course in Fine Arts, Jocelyn undertook various lettering assignments. At 16 years of age, she was employed as a ticketwriter, during Xmas vacation, at Nock & Kirbys, a valuable and enjoyable experience. She was also a ticket and sign writer at the "The Hub" in Pitt Street and later with STAN BODKIN, the perfection of ticketwriters, who did very high class, quality work.

"At first Mr Bodkin would only allow me to rub out the pencil guide lines but gradually he entrusted me with some real work. He was a marvellous lettering artist and a most courteous and sincere person despite being in constant pain with a lifetime of medical problems in his legs." The wages in those days were about 8/- per hour which was considered quite good. All of this lettering work was part-time evenings and weekends as Jocelyn was continuing to complete the 5 year Diploma Course in Painting.

By the time the Diploma was completed Jocelyn was operating a successful freelance lettering business by herself with her own clients and this continued for many years until eventually she had to reduce this to allow more time for teaching, painting and family life. However she still enjoys the opportunity to do some lettering if only for TAFE notices and signs at work.

Some years ago Jocelyn was fortunate to meet Fran McKirdy who came along to a lettering class for a "brush up" at Gympie Technical College where Jocelyn was teaching at the time.

Jocelyn now realised that Fran was not a 'beginner' but had previously been a student of Eric Robert's. This was a great opportunity for both and Jocelyn quickly encouraged Fran to do some teaching work and at last had an ally in support of lettering. For some years there had been a resistance to lettering as it did not "fit in" with the growing resistance to organised and designed art forms. Artists wanted to "know without having to learn" instead of "learning in order to know". Expressionism was the order of the day, and still is, Lettering was the antithesis of this philosophy.

However with FRAN McKIRDY's help we have continued to teach lettering in TAFE and now we have at last achieved success with plans for CERTIFICATE in CALLIGRAPHYY — 2 years course, part time. It is however with some misgivings that the art of classical lettering is still not sufficiently appreciated with its beautifully balanced spaces and shapes and it seems that the popular art of Calligraphy will have to be wary of the desire to 'decorate' instead of 'design'. The appeal of frills, scrolls and gold leaf seems to be more attractive than the classical lines of the

TRAJAN COLUMN.

If Calligraphy is to retain a recognition for design, attention must be given to careful balance of letter groupings, texture and space and be particularly careful of associated drawings and other art work so that it is intergrated with the total design.

