

Calligraphy Workshop Report

5 November 2022

"Learning to write with clarity, legibility and elegance is, as much as anything, a matter of good manners" (Alfred Fairbanks when launching The Society for Italic Handwriting). Eleven enthusiastic would-be calligraphers met at the Guide HQ, with our u3a Chairman Annie joking that she had come along as she anticipated writing modern day Lindisfarne Gospels! Our very able demonstrator Tony Craig, whose writing can be seen in the Remembrance Book at Barnard Castle Methodist Church, led us through learning this skill. We first used a broad edged pencil; then his 'very technical contraption' - two pencils joined together with rubber bands; before progressing to wedge shaped felt tipped pens. We could choose either to practise the upright Foundational style based on a tenth century Roman hand used in Winchester or Italic hand developed during the Renaissance, characterised by a slight slope. We were given prepared sheets to show us how to form the letters, with arrows showing the direction of the strokes, until we felt competent enough to write ourselves. So keen were we all, that coffee was taken back to our seats so we could continue. I think Annie might put her project on hold for a while, but an enjoyable morning was had by all.

