The 2020 Annual Report
of the Chicago Calligraphy Collective

cal·lig·ra·phy (kə-lig'ra-fe) n.
1. The art of beautiful writing. [French calligraphie, from Greek kalligraphia : CALLI- + -GRAPHY.]
The 2020 Annual Report of the Chicago Calligraphy Collective

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Calligraphy is a beautiful art in continuous transformation, and therefore new eyes are always needed to interpret it with respect.”

~ Ernesto Murrau

Our Mission

The Chicago Calligraphy Collective is organized for the charitable and educational purposes of promoting the study, practice, and appreciation of calligraphy—the art of beautiful writing—in all its historical and present-day applications. By offering educational opportunities, the Collective enhances public awareness and interest in the calligraphic lettering arts.

Board of Officers and Directors 2020–2021

President ...................................................Karen Brooks
Vice President ...........................................Barbara Dorr
Treasurer ....................................................Patricia Kutz
Corresponding Secretary .........................Lisa Kivland
Recording Secretary .................................Mary Zabrin
Exhibits Director ....................................Julie Wildman
Membership Director ..............................Amy Neubauer
Special Events Director .........................Pamela Rodey
Workshops Director .................................Karen Ness
Ad Hoc Director ......................................Position Open
President’s Message

The year 2020 marked the Chicago Calligraphy Collective’s 44th year as an organization. We continue to focus on our mission to promote the study, practice and appreciation of calligraphy in all its many forms.

The year 2020 was a challenging year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Chicago Calligraphy Collective continued to grow and be active in the calligraphic community.

Earlier this year the guild purchased a Zoom account. The Zoom account has allowed the guild to create an outreach to members in the following ways: monthly workshops have been conducted, allowing for study with local, national and international instructors; two All Members’ Meetings with calligraphic demonstrations and games have been held, with larger attendance than our in-person member meetings; and our four study groups—Northside, Northwest, Westside and South/Indiana—are back to meeting almost monthly. Study groups allow members to share and critique projects they are working on, classes taken, articles of interest, new tools, supplies and crafts related to calligraphy.

The CCC continued to publish a bi-monthly newsletter and bi-monthly NibNotes. The Newsletter keeps members informed of calligraphic news and activities. NibNotes highlights current events through emails,

Caedmon’s Song by Karen Brooks was featured in our 2020 All Members’ Show, held virtually on our website.

Facebook and Instagram. An All Members’ Show was held virtually on our website beginning in October.

The Chicago Calligraphy Collective’s Board members are President, Karen Brooks; Vice President, Barbara Dorr; Treasurer, Patricia Kutz; Recording Secretary, Mary Zabrin; Corresponding Secretary, Lisa Kivland; Membership Director, Amy Neubauer; Workshops Director, Karen Ness; Special Events Director, Pamela Rodey; Exhibits Director and Newsletter Editor, Julie Wildman. Extra support staff are Webmaster, Christine Shaw and Proofreader, Linda Hancock. Team Board members worked very hard this year. We had excellent leadership from Karen Ness, attaining Zoom skills and sharing with other team members. The Board held monthly meetings through the Zoom account allowing business to be conducted as usual. The Board and support teams continue to work together to keep calligraphy alive and well in the Chicago area.

Karen Brooks
President
The State of the Chicago Calligraphy Collective

This Annual Report is more than a documentation of the year’s accomplishments and activities of the Chicago Calligraphy Collective. It is intended to reflect and celebrate the organization’s creative spirit and values, as well as its service to its mission to inspire, challenge and instruct its membership and interested public through workshops, exhibitions and programs. It is fundamentally about its identity, about how the organization defines itself and strives to impact the calligraphic community. It is an enduring commitment to build on its extraordinary legacy and a framework for sustaining great traditions while engaging in new adventures.

Vice President’s Report | Barbara Dorr

An article was submitted for the CCC newsletter to generate interest in submissions for grants from the Inklings Fund.

A summary report was received from Amy Neubauer for the Inklings program she presented to a group of school children. That report will appear in a future newsletter as well as in this Annual Report under Inklings Grant Program 2020.

I have agreed to help Karen Brooks, President, with the formation and execution of a learning grant program.

CCC member, Julie Wildman, held a class in early March, 2020 at the Schaumburg Public Library. Supplies were funded with a grant from our Inklings program.
Corresponding Secretary | Lisa Kivland

In 2020, the CCC streamlined communication with its membership by delivering the bi-monthly e-newsletter, *NibNotes*, via MailChimp. By initiating use of this free email marketing platform, our e-news is presented in a standardized format, with colorful images and active web links in a format easily accessible to members. MailChimp also allows simple updating of our email directory, various member/marketing categories for targeted campaigns, as well as informative analytics, which provide metrics on the success of our mailings.

The CCC also continues to engage the calligraphic community via its Facebook and Instagram social media platforms. As of December 31, 2020, the CCC Facebook page boasts 2,980 followers, while our Instagram following is 1,796 in number. To remain actively engaged with both platforms, a Social Media Team was formed. Several Board members and two CCC members share responsibilities for posting and responding to posts. Maintaining a schedule of topics and team communication allows the team to create systematic and regular posts and to provide timely responses on both social media accounts.

The Card-making Challenge announced in April resulted in eight members who participated by providing handmade greeting cards for use by the CCC Board throughout the year. A number of these cards have been sent to members and families of members as of this writing.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Irish American Heritage Center (IAHC) was closed, limiting the amount of mail directed to their address. However, a substantial amount of email inquiries was received via the ‘Contact Us’ link on our website. Members, as well as community members, are successfully reaching out to us. In addition, due to the closure of the IAHC, the offering of community calligraphy classes there has been suspended until gathering restrictions are lifted. We look forward to the time when this outreach initiative can begin in earnest.
Exhibits | Julie Wildman

What can I say? COVID-19 happened!!!

All Members’ Show
This year’s All Members’ Show was held virtually via our website due to the pandemic. The title of the exhibit was “Just Add Color” and had 27 artists represented, with a total of 60 pieces. The show may be viewed on our website at www.chicagocalligraphy.org/justadd-color2020

Exploration 2020
Exploration 2020 did not happen due to the pandemic.

I had found a great venue at the Bridgeport Art Center in Chicago and was in the process of negotiating the fees when the pandemic hit.

I am hoping we can try again sometime in the future but, for now, we are planning a virtual exhibit for 2021. 🌸

Sunshine by Roberta Grosland was featured in our 2020 All Members’ Show, held virtually on our website.

Hold My Hand by Pamela Paulsrud was also featured in our All Members’ Show.
Membership | Amy Neubauer

Our CCC membership stayed steady with the previous number of members in 2019 even with the COVID-19 pandemic engulfing our nation (see graph below.) Our total membership as of December 31, 2020 was 249 including six affiliates members and eight honorary members. The CCC added 98 members throughout the year. Since I took over the Membership Director position in June 2020, we welcomed 18 new members from our Get-A-Member-Get-A-Gift Program with Blick Art $5 e-cards sent out for member referrals. We lost two of our longtime beloved members, Rosie Kelly and Peter Fraterdeus, this year. Unfortunately, 48 CCC members did not renew their membership.

Thirty-five members paid for a CCC Business website listing. By the end of the year, 19 members subscribed to the hard copy newsletter which was mailed to their homes.

A majority of the membership—155 people—reside in Illinois and Indiana, but we have 72 members across 27 states and 8 international members from Austria, Canada, and Puerto Rico.

Annual membership dues renewal email reminders were sent out the first week of February 2020 by the former Membership Director, Joanna Zdzienicka. In June, non-renewal members received a called to check on former members with the help of Workshop Director, Karen Ness.

In 2020, the Board established and funded—through personal donations—the CCC COVID-19 Membership Relief Fund. The purpose of this fund is to pay the membership dues for current members who inform us that—because of extreme financial hardship—they are unable to renew their memberships. Members are welcome to donate to this fund. Two members had their 2020 dues and business listing paid from the Relief Fund.
This year has proved that the CCC is an incredibly strong organization dedicated to connecting the members of our wide calligraphic community even when faced with challenges. Our annual 12th Night Meeting and gift exchange game at the IAHC in January was, as usual, a rousing success. Little did we know that the March 7th Members’ Meeting would be our last in person meeting for the year.

The theme for our March meeting was “You Want Me to Write on What?” and featured demonstrations of how to deal with various challenging surfaces:

Lisa Kivland - glass engraving
Joanna Zdzienicka - stamping on metal
Mary Zabrin - ribbons, rocks, & fabric
Mike Kecseg - wood
Christy Toney - mirrors

giving her October 3rd Fall Meeting demonstration of various GOLDEN products via Zoom. Because of her Zoom teaching experience, and Lisa Kivland’s technical skills, the meeting was a success, with a record 54 people attending. GOLDEN provided 12 generous raffle prizes so Lisa set up a MailChimp meeting registration to provide me with names for the raffle drawing. Since this was a bit cumbersome, we decided to figure out another method for awarding raffle prizes in the future.

Sandy demonstrated the use of several grounds to be used in many ways, which was new information to most of us attending as demonstrated by the many questions Sandy fielded during the demo. Another fun meeting feature was a video of Karen Brooks and Barbara Dorr delivering a special certificate created by Linda Hancock to Mary Zabrin in recognition of her years of service as President and Exhibits Director.
2020 was an extraordinary year by any measure. Our lives were forever changed. We could no longer gather together to study side-by-side with instructors or be inspired by one another simply by walking across the room and standing next to a fellow workshop participant’s table. Yet things did not start out that way.

The year opened normally enough. In January, Chicago paper-cut artist and first time CCC instructor, Richard Shipps, taught 16 CCC members to turn our papers into three-dimensional creations. It was a new way of working for all of us as our pens were replaced by knives and our ink by very sharp blades.

Suzanne Cunningham, another first-time CCC instructor, arrived in Chicago in February. With Suzanne, we combined two of her one-day lessons into a sold-out, two-day weekend workshop: Flourishing and Elegant Envelopes.

Then COVID-19 arrived in our midst. One after the other, our workshops were postponed, rescheduled and, in a few cases, even cancelled. The only thing that was clear was that we needed a way to reach our members and continue the CCC’s strong history of workshops and learning. We purchased a Zoom account and began the work of transitioning our workshops from the classroom to each member’s home. Of course, we were, and continue to be, sad not to be physically together, not to share hugs and treats, not to stand at each other’s table and discuss our work.

But we are the CCC!

Our members looked on the bright side. We could continue our study of calligraphy. Not only were we holding workshops, but each of us had every tool in our studios at our fingertips. No packing, schlepping nor drive time required. We each had a front row seat at the instructors’ tables. We saw each other’s faces and work surfaces simultaneously. Additionally, the fees for our workshops were reduced because we had no instructor travel costs, and our sessions were recorded, available for a limited time to registrants for review.

There were technical hurdles to jump, some more challenging than others, but we did it! Our members reached out to each other, to family members, and even spent time with neighborhood tech savvy kids. We watched online tutorials and laughed as we saw ourselves spoofed on TV through the eyes of late-night comedians and SNL.
In June, we transitioned our first scheduled in-person workshop to Zoom. The virtual class with Yukimi Annand, Folded Pen, was her first full weekend Zoom workshop as well. The two days ran beautifully, were sold out, and we were emboldened to keep moving forward. So was Yukimi, who still expresses gratitude to us for helping her become comfortable teaching online.

Our August workshop was a new experiment for the CCC: A Day for Beginners. Our own Mary Zabrin taught Blackletter Lower Case in the morning and our own Lisa Kivland taught Neuland in the afternoon. The short two-and-a-half-hour sessions had over 30 students each and had students clamoring for more!

We continued to hold our scheduled and newly added workshops online in September and October. First, we studied Sketching & Kvetching with Texas artist, Sharon Zeugin. Students studied drawing techniques, lettering and so much more. Then in October, Mike Gold entered our individual studios with his Over & Over class—taking the same text and working it over and over in different styles and techniques. Both autumn workshops were sold out and were very successful.

Zoom allows us to throw in workshops at the last minute and in October, we added in a second Day for Beginners. Mary Zabrin continued with Blackletter Caps in the morning, and five different CCC members (Karen Ness, Devina Dhawan, Cheryl Dyer, Matt Wright and David Gasser) each taught their favorite envelope decorating techniques in the afternoon in a workshop entitled Captivating Correspondence. Once again, the day was well attended with students asking yet for more!

Our year closed in November with the UK’s wonderful Ewan Clayton teaching The Joy of Movement. For three days we worked lightly and with power, slowly and quickly, directly and indirectly. Together we produced hundreds of pages of exciting exercises and work.

To all the 2020 CCC workshop instructors and students, I offer boundless gratitude for your enthusiastic participation in expanding our calligraphic knowledge and technical skills. In addition to Workshop Committee members Lisa Kivland, Kathy Mandell and Mary Zabrin, my personal thanks go to our President, Karen Brooks, and the entire CCC Board of Directors. We could not be celebrating this unusual and successful workshop year without their hard work and strong group effort!

I love our calligraphic community!! 🖌️
Inklings Grant Program | Patricia Kutz

The Chicago Calligraphy Collective’s Inklings Grant Program utilizes specially earmarked funds available to members and non-members with a Collective sponsor who wish to promote calligraphy in their communities through educational programs. Those interested must submit a proposal to the Board of Directors outlining the details of the undertaking, including a project description and budget. If the outreach project meets the Collective’s guidelines for educational purpose, funds are disbursed to help defray the cost of materials and related expenses. In 2020, two applications were submitted by CCC members and approved by the Board.

On March 3, 2020 Julie Wildman instructed a 1.5-hour Modern Handwriting class for teens at the Schaumburg Library in Schaumburg, Illinois. There were fourteen students signed up and twelve in attendance. The Inklings Grant allowed Julie to provide each student with a Hiro 111 EF nib, a Speedball holder, a large dinky dip base and cup with sumi ink, lots of Canson Marker Layout paper and detailed, spiral-bound handouts. They also received a CCC card which mentioned that the guild sponsored their supplies. Julie invited them to check out our website to learn more about our workshops and the student membership fee.

They learned the basic strokes and the whole lowercase alphabet. Each student was then asked to write their name or a special word at the end of class. Students used the Canson paper because it is bleedproof AND translucent. They were able to see the letterforms and grid through the paper and had the option to trace the letters or just used the grid guidelines.

From June 15–July 16, 2020 Amy Neubauer taught a Calligraphy and Expressive Journal Class to thirteen 9th–12th grade students from the GlenOaks Therapeutic Day School. Instruction was presented online in ten 45-minute classes through Zoom and students learned how to write and design to express themselves. The Inklings Grant allowed Amy to provide each student with supplies that a calligrapher/lettering artist might use including a Blick Essential Colored Pencil Set, Tombow Dual Brush Marker, Westcott C-Thru Plastic Ruler and Micron Pen.

Students studied basic art and design skills as well as how to write in several different handwriting styles and cursive with step-by-step worksheets created by Amy. The goal was to create basic journal pages with different themes presented by the instructor. They were taught Upper Print, Architect Print, Brush lettering, Dot Print and Broadway decorative lettering in addition to Cursive Script. The Class Activity Guide included creating headings, lines, borders, banners and ribbons. Color and lettering schemes, drawing basic objects and the six elements of a visual page setup were discussed as the students created whole page journal layouts.
Treasurer’s Report | Patricia Kutz

During 2020, the Chicago Calligraphy Collective continued to show strength and perseverance, enabling it to respond to the unprecedented times brought on by the COVID-19 crisis. The challenges posed by the global pandemic cannot be overstated but the Board and support staff worked closely to conceive and implement creative solutions to mitigate our operational obstacles. Most notably, the CCC began to move toward new online initiatives ensuring that we continued to be connected and engaged with our members.

As a nonprofit organization that relies on the continual support from our members, we have a responsibility to share as much information as we can with those who sustain our activities. Our Annual Report provides a top-level view of operations and financials and outlines ways we do business, present outstanding learning opportunities and involve the public through our exhibits and social media presence. As you read this report, it is our hope you are reminded why the CCC is important to you.

For fiscal year 2020, the excess of revenue over expenses including the Tribute Fund was $8,561.30 and assets totaled $114,978.05. The Collective remains vision-focused, mindful of transparency and has met the standards for charity accountability.

In June, the CCC embarked on a new chapter at a time when the environment could hardly be more different to just a few months prior. After hosting two in-person workshops in January and February, March brought the organization to a standstill as we faced a global pandemic and, with it, extensive social distancing measures and stay home orders. Determined to help the organization through this period, the CCC purchased a Zoom account and transitioned our workshops to online learning. With the acceptance of registrants to this new platform for calligraphic education, the CCC presented three 2-day and one 3-day sold-out workshops as well as two ‘Day for Beginners’ workshops.

Sixty percent of revenues were generated by workshops, advancing the professional development of seasoned calligraphers as well as new recruits. Zoom enabled us to widen our institutional reach, bringing inspiration and innovation to more calligraphers than ever before, including our international peers. Sixty-eight percent—the bulk of the organization’s expenses—were attributable to workshops, including instructor stipends, travel expenses, postage and supplies.

Registration for a workshop opens six months earlier than the date of the class so fees were paid before the adjustment to Zoom workshop pricing. Striving for equity in all aspects of our operations, the Board re-visited and ultimately voted to refund the difference in registration fees between in-person and online workshops even for workshops already held. After receiving a refund, a well-respected member wrote, “Your attention to this detail of our “new normal” way of presenting workshops is very much appreciated. I know it takes an inordinate amount of extra time for you, but the fairness this alteration represents shows the true character of the Chicago Calligraphy Collective that gives us so much pride in the institution.”

This was a difficult time for all of us, but our membership remained steadfast and helped us get through it together. Thirty-three percent of revenues were produced through membership dues, newsletter subscriptions
and web listings. Membership remained consistent with 249 members at the end of 2020 and paid membership fees of $7,728.13. Seventeen percent of expenses were ascribed to membership and were kept to a minimum through an electronic newsletter and renewal notices as well as a password protected directory on the CCC website. In acknowledging the hardships brought about by the pandemic, the Board established and funded—through personal donations—the CCC COVID-19 Membership Relief Fund.

Offering secure, user-friendly e-commerce capabilities on the website, the CCC is able to accept payments with all major credit cards through PayPal and Stripe. 457 successful orders totaling $34,287.00 were processed through the website during 2020. Seventy-four percent of online payments tallying $25,351.00 was for workshop registrations. The balance reflected $6,336.00 for membership fees and $2,600 for Scribe Pin sales. The CCC pays reduced nonprofit processing fees with both companies.

The Tribute Fund was established as a distinctive way to acknowledge calligraphers and/or teachers who have inspired us, recognize supporters of our art and memorialize members and friends of the Collective who have supported our mission. Through the Calligra-Flea Market at the March Member meeting and bookmark sales at the 2019 IAHC Christmas Bazaar, Tribute Fund income totaled $710.89 in 2020. During the year monies from the Tribute Fund were disbursed for a presenter stipend to Sandy Bacon for her informative demonstration of GOLDEN products at the October Zoom Member meeting.

At the February Board meeting it was voted to have the Inklings Fund subsidized by the Tribute Fund beginning in 2020 which could provide more opportunities for community outreach projects. Previously, $200.00 from the organization’s Operating Account would be earmarked each year for Inklings Grants. In April, the Board passed the motion that for accounting purposes the $625.00 in the Inklings Fund would be merged into the Tribute Fund and no longer reported individually. Since additional monies would now be available for community involvement, the Board accepted the motion in May that an applicant may apply for up to four grants—at a maximum of $100.00 each—per calendar year for four separate outreach events. All applications are subject to Board approval. Guidelines for Inklings proposals remain the same and proper reporting by grant recipients is required.

The Board and support staff have risen to unparalleled hurdles and our new perspective, determination and eager excitement drive the success of the CCC. With conscientious governance and prudent fiscal management, a zero-balance budget was approved for 2021. We remain dedicated to the strategic initiatives that are re-shaping the Collective today and for the future.

With the allegiance of our members, we are poised and ready not only to help our beloved organization adapt and thrive, but to galvanize our calligraphic community to advocate for the art of beautiful lettering. Last year’s achievements—only possible because of this very same generosity—are a reminder of the incredible potential our organization has to connect people through shared experiences of all kinds while honoring and advancing the mission of the CCC. As we emerge from a year few could have prepared for, one thing is apparent: the Chicago Calligraphy Collective is resilient thereby ensuring economic sustainability and long-term viability.
The Chicago Calligraphy Collective is a public charity and has received qualification as a tax-exempt corporation under the provisions of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3).

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**  
*Fiscal Year 2020*

**ASSETS**  
Current Assets  
Checking and Savings  
US Bank Expense Account  201.52  
US Bank Money Market Account  85,140.99  
US Bank Operating Account  
CCC Tribute Fund  5,131.09  
Operating Account - Other  24,504.45  
Total US Bank Operating Account  29,635.54  
Total Checking and Savings  114,978.05  
Total Current Assets  114,978.05

**TOTAL ASSETS**  
114,978.05

**LIABILITIES AND EQUITY**  
Equity  
Opening Balance Equity  56,094.36  
Unrestricted Net Assets  50,322.39  
Net Income  8,561.30  
Total Equity  114,978.05

**TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY**  
114,978.05

**STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES**  
*Fiscal Year 2020*

**REVENUES AND SUPPORT**  
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**EXPENSES**  
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Change in Net Assets  
8,360.41  
200.89  
8,561.30

Net Assets Beginning of Year  
102,216.15  
4,200.60  
106,416.75

Inkling Fund Transferred to Tribute Fund  
-625.00  
625.00  
0.00

Net Assets End of Year  
109,951.56  
5,026.49  
114,978.05

*Love-Knot* by Beth Lee was featured in our All Members’ Show.
BUDGET OF ACTIVITIES
Fiscal Year 2021

REVENUES AND SUPPORT
Fiscal Year 2020

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EXPENSES
Fiscal Year 2020

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<td>Membership Meetings</td>
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<td>450.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>332.66</td>
<td>332.66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing/Office Supplies</td>
<td>220.00</td>
<td>220.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership</td>
<td>160.00</td>
<td>160.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL EXPENSES</strong></td>
<td><strong>22,633.56</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,500.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>24,133.56</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Change in Net Assets

0.00
Credits

Thank you to all the Officers and Directors for diligently preparing their summaries for this Report.

A very special thanks to:
Patricia Kutz and Karen Brooks for compiling the copy and images for this report; to Linda Hancock for her expert proofreading skills; to all those who supplied photos; and to Julie Wildman for the design and production of this publication.

Created on a MacBook Pro using QuarkXPress 2019 and the Adobe Creative Suite CC. Callout quote on page 2 is set in Garamond Premier Pro Medium Italic and Medium. The remainder of text is set in Helvetica.

The CCC logo was designed by Timothy Botts. The letters on the front cover were designed by: ‘L’ - Valerie Weilmuenster; ‘R’ - Rita Foltz; ‘S’ - LynnAnn Babuk; and ‘C’ - Kathy Mandell.