

Printmakers social gathering notes from our July 11th meeting

We had a great get together for our July gathering, including some visitors from Auckland.

I had suggested a theme of artist's books, and it was great to see a wide variety of books – both beautiful and inspirational. I had asked **David Bell** to join us, as I have met him at Steve Lovett's discussion groups in Auckland, and also seen David's work at a couple of Printopia events. He has drawn on his experience in printing and publishing from his pre-retirement work as a Methodist minister to experiment with text, book binding, letter press and printmaking. After retirement he attended Browne School of Art, which also contributed to his work with making books.

David came with his wife, Jill, and with printmaker **Esther Hansen** who has taught art (including printmaking) at Pukekohe High School for the last 26 years. Esther has worked with David (and her students) on Zines, and also dipped into the world of making books.



David brought with him a collection of books he has made showing a variety of binding types, and printing techniques and subject material. He does all the components of his work himself – printing, binding, text... He uses methods such as copper plate etching, lino print, and collage. Techniques included accordion folds, perfect binding, inkjet printing, printing on silk, French link stitching... A whole new world of ideas and language!

He is interested in how things relate to theology – he described his work as theological but not aiming to convert people. He also talked about the tactile experience of handling a book – the difference between art on the wall, and art being brought down off the wall and placed beside other work... an interesting concept, I thought.

When in his first parish, the church began publishing zines as AIM Publishing using risograph. Parishioners did the perfect binding. There were two talented artists (textiles and graphics) involved, and now someone funds the work and there is a combination of talents in areas such as music, letter press and photography; and it is not necessary to be literal in the artwork. The aim is to get the artists names out into the community.

David also talked about the colophon page, and how important it is to acknowledge found materials.

David was asked where he learned about book binding techniques. He mentioned a YouTube series by Australian bookbinder DAS: <https://www.youtube.com/c/DASBookbinding>. See also <https://dasbookbinding.com/> He also mentioned a book collection of artist's books at the Auckland

Public Library that is well worth visiting – but you do need to book in for your visit. Apparently Hamilton Public Libraries also has a collection of artist's books.

When asked about how he plans a book, David mentioned that books such as his 'Logos and Mythos' series began as an idea, eventually becoming a series of nine unique books. Often he will use a poem or a quote that is in the public domain – that means for a New Zealand work the poet must have been dead for 50 years, and for a U.S. book the poet must have been dead for at least 70 years – and New Zealand is planning to move to the U.S. requirements.

There followed a brief discussion about copyright and AI, with several people present noting that they no longer put any work online because of the lack of protection. Work on Instagram being used

'Missed the mark': Meta removes AI feature on Instagram after global backlash

Story by Nik Dirga

Meta has backed down on a controversial feature that allowed people's public Instagram posts to be used by anyone for AI generation.

The Muse Image function announced earlier this week [was automatically being turned on](#) for Instagram accounts, with Meta calling it "image generation built for your world".

However, after strong negative feedback on the feature and coverage in media such as RNZ, BBC, *Wired*, *New York Times* and more, Meta and its CEO Mark Zuckerberg have done an about-face.

"We've heard the feedback that this feature missed the mark, so it's no longer available," Meta posted Saturday afternoon NZ time [on their announcement page](#).

for AI was mentioned in particular. After the meeting I was sent this link saying Instagram was changing its policy in this area, although I wonder where that leaves all the material that has already been 'hoovered up' from that platform!





Other Artist's books shared...

At the end of David's time sharing with us, there was time for several people to show us some of the books they had brought with them. **Janice** had two Ruth Davy books. One was based on a poem by Wallace Stevens, 'Thirteen ways of looking at a blackbird. It was a collaborative project by printmakers, each of whom were assigned a verse from the poem to illustrate. Marty Vreede produced the letterpress work and the work was bound and covered in harakeke paper. The second book was a collection of thirteen New Zealand poems. The letterpress was done ahead of time. The art work was printed at a PCANZ Summer School, and the books bound there as well. Yoka van Dyk designed the books.

One of the books **Maggie** bought was also a collaborative project, done in the UK after a parallel printing project. It is based on a poem by Robert Burns' poem, and is a collection of prints by the contributing printmakers, all produced over a week together, and bound together on the last day. Another of Maggie's books used a star binding, and had printed images of black and white cows... she named it 'Rotary Cowshed.'



Details from one of Maggie's collaborative books.

Sue had used a greeting card as an inspiration for some of her books. She began with tetra pack images of quail on the lid of a takeaway container, and printed them onto card that was then cut and creatively folded into a greeting card. Another folding print Sue shared was of a Kawakawa leaf and its characteristic holes.

Hilary told us of her journey into book binding beginning with classes in Te Awamutu in the late 1990s. She also attended workshops taken by Yoka van Dyk in Whanganui and Te Awamutu. She had a beautiful book of a collection of Haiku, done with stab binding. Hilary also shared a variety of travel journals, some of which recycled other books and music. Hilary makes rice paste for her books, because it can be wet again and the paper taken off.

Carril showed us further developments of her work that she shared last meeting, and told us how she had worked out that by printing her block in a light colour, she could then collage over it knowing what the overall arrangement was, before then printing over in the darker, final coloured block.



In line with the theme of the meeting, I brought along a few books that I thought might be of interest. Here are brief notes about a couple of them.

Golden, Alisa. *Making Handmade Books: 100+ Bindings, Structures & Forms*. New York: Union Square, 2010. ISBN 978160059587. Beautifully illustrated with photos and diagrams – lots of ideas.

Kyle, Hedi and Ulla Warchol. *The Art of the Fold: How to Make Innovative Books and Paper Structures*. London: Laurence King, 2018. ISBN 9781786272935. Again, beautifully illustrated with excellent photographs and diagrams.

Trebbi, Jean-Charles. *The Art of Origami Books: Origami, Kirigami, Labyrinth, Tunnel and Mini Books: By Artists from Around the World*. Barcelona, Spain: Hoake, 2022. ISBN 9788417656850.

Also mentioned in passing...

- The Woolwich Print Fair open call... <https://imprintartfair.com/>
- Ironbridge has made their selections and is exhibiting the chosen entries, but is worth keeping an eye out for next year. <https://www.ironbridgeframing.co.uk/2026-ironbridge-printmaking-competition-entries-11th-may-2026/>

New Artspost exhibition, *Aggregate*

In addition to our social gathering on the morning of the 11th, there was also a chance to look at the exhibition, 'Aggregate.' 'Aggregate' is a printmaking exhibition featuring 6 prominent Australian and 6 New Zealand printmakers. Hosted by the Waikato Society of Arts (WSA), the exhibition runs from July 9 until August 1, 2026, and is located at Artspost, 120 Victoria Street, Hamilton. Well worth the visit if you can make it, to view aspects of modern printmaking in this part of the world.

We had the pleasure of listening to Jaqueline Aust, who put the work together, facilitate a conversation about the exhibition with Dr. Carole Shepherd and Jacqui Driver. It was a wide ranging conversation, including questions and comments from those of us listening.



There were the practical aspects – what artists were asked to do for the exhibition, and the parameters (including size – not too small, but not too big – they had to fit into the travel box that had been made to transport them to other exhibition spaces). There was a freedom of topic – Carole mentioned that she took her inspiration partly from the title of the exhibition. There were also questions of processes, and papers used.

There was also mention of the contexts of some of the works, and interesting discussion about the interaction of techniques and contexts. One interesting comment made was that often when approaching a gallery, work was referred initially as 'works on paper' rather than as print... a subtle reference to the frequent comparison between painting and print works.

There were also questions about whether there is a possible revival of interest in printmaking, and the changing way that secondary and tertiary institutions handle printmaking in the teaching process and curriculum.

Overall it was a very interesting and informative presentation.

I do recommend making the effort to attend these artists' talks and presentations that WSA facilitates. They are an excellent way of expanding your knowledge and therefore informing your art practice. WSA provide classes that contribute to our skills and expand our knowledge of the different processes we can use, but also help us to see our work in the wider context of art in the world we live. Likewise, PCANZ Summer Schools, workshops and other activities are great ways to inspire, inform and expand your print practice.



A closes up from 'Light, dark and shadow play, 2026' by Jacqueline Aust. Hahnemuhle and aback paper. Collograph, monoprint and etching on abaca paper.

Book binding class

Carrying on from the book theme from our social gathering, WSA have a book binding class running for term 3. Here's a great way to add to your tool box of skills to combine with your printmaking work.

Term: 29 Jul – 16 Sep

When: 9:30am – 12:00pm

Where: Studio 1

Tutor: Monica Peters

Price: \$255.00

Spend eight enjoyable weeks exploring the art and craft of handmade books in a relaxed, supportive learning environment. Whether you're completely new to bookbinding or looking to expand your creative practice, this course will guide you through a range of techniques, materials, and creative possibilities.

Together we'll learn three different binding styles, progressing from simple structures to more developed books, while also exploring how to create covers, cases, and finishing details that give each book its own character.

Along the way, you'll discover how the form of a book can shape its content—and how content can shape the form. Stories, poetry, photographs, drawings, collected ephemera, or personal projects can all influence the way a book is designed and bound, opening up endless possibilities for creative expression.

The emphasis is on curiosity, creativity, and hands-on learning rather than perfection. You're welcome to bring along your own ideas and projects or simply arrive ready to experiment and see

where the process takes you. There will be plenty of opportunities to play with different materials, explore structure and design, and create books that reflect your own interests and style.

No previous experience is required, and no specialist skills are needed—just a willingness to learn, make, and try new things. By the end of the course, you'll have completed a collection of handmade books, each with its own cover or case, and filled them with your own content—or left them blank and ready to become journals, albums for photographs and keepsakes, collections of favourite recipes, or thoughtful gifts for someone else to enjoy.

Most importantly, you'll leave with the skills, confidence, and understanding of materials and techniques needed to continue your bookbinding journey at home.

Basic materials will be provided, but you are encouraged to bring along any papers, card, fabrics, photographs, decorative materials, or other items you would like to incorporate into your books.

Details: Age 12+

Enrol ASAP with Waikato Society of Arts: <https://wsa.org.nz/product/wednesday-an-intro-to-handmade-books-term-3/>

In the meantime... happy printmaking

Vicki Jones

PCANZ Hamilton representative and WSA Member,

vwjones@lifeworkz.co.nz, 021 031 7735