

## OCTOBER *meeting* HIGHLIGHTS

At the October program, Colleagues members were treated to a lively and interesting program presented by Gary Berosik. He began by introducing himself as an early member of the Colleagues of Calligraphy. After several years as an active member, a job transfer took him to Texas for a few years. He returned to St Paul, where he works for the University of St Thomas. He is happy to be back with the Colleagues, not only as a member, but also as Vice President.

Gary's fascination with the Carolingian minuscule was apparent as he talked about the history of this script. He provided handouts with examples from manuscripts showing the varieties of this style that developed over time. He put us to work creating our own timeline showing the era this style was used in Europe – from the 8th century to the 13th century, later revived by Edward Johnston in the early 20th century when he developed the Foundational Hand. Gary put this all in context by discussing various world events that occurred in this time period.

A pen angle of 30–35 degrees and a letter height of three nib widths was recommended, giving the **o** a flattened, round shape. The high ascenders and club serifs give this script a distinctive look. Gary skillfully demonstrated the Carolingian alphabet giving us pointers - the **m** and **n** are a rounder form, the **g** is a challenging letter, the **r** is his favorite. There are two



*From top to bottom: a very focused class; Gary instructing students; Gary demonstrating at the wall; more students concentrating on Carolingian.*

versions of **s**: the long **s** which is the historical model but less readable, the modern **s** which is an updated version used for its legibility. Besides the individual features of this style, Gary especially likes the massed look of lines of text.

His favorite exemplars are found in *Written Letters* by Jaki Svarin and *The Lettering and Calligraphy Workbook* edited by the Diagram Group, which were on display. He also had a copy of Sheila Waters' masterpiece, *Under Milkwood* by Dylan Thomas, showing her elegant interpretation of this hand.

Gary challenged the group to continue working on this at home and bring a piece of their work to the next meeting to show and share.

Note: thanks to Sheila Waters for pointing out my misspelling of the term "minuscule" in the September Signet article, incorrectly spelled "miniscule." Although the Random House Dictionary and even the Oxford English Dictionary say that the two spellings can be used interchangeably in this context, I am informed by Professor Oliver Nicholson of the Classics Department at the University of Minnesota that scholars prefer the spelling "minuscule" in reference to historical manuscripts. Nevertheless, to simplify things, I would respectfully like to suggest a new spelling altogether - "Minnescale", in honor of my home state of Minnesota.

*- Article & Photos by Louise Rogers*