

John Sansom Memorial Competition 2026

Theme: Centenary

ABC is delighted to announce the 2026 John Sansom Memorial Competition.

This is your opportunity to partake in another exciting competition where you make the choices on the binding, whether it be book craft, traditional binding, leather binding, embossing or maybe a rebind with inspiring covers and techniques - you decide!

The committee has chosen the theme "Centenary" to commemorate the birth of Ronald John Sansom in 1926. As a founding and life member, John was an essential figure in our organisation from its inception. The inaugural ABC meeting was convened at his residence on May 22, 1988. Between 1989 and 2020 John occupied a range of roles within ABC but is most prominently recognised as the Membership and Materials Manager. He consistently demonstrated support, knowledge and encouragement, particularly to new members, frequently anticipating their needs before they recognised them.

Note: the theme can be interpreted however you wish i.e. you don't need to reference John (unless you want to, of course).

This year we are introducing a section for novice binders with the winner being drawn from any one of the three categories (see below).

For the purposes of the Competition:

A novice is defined as a non-professional craft or hobby binder who has been binding for less than five years and who has not previously entered any bookbinding competitions.

Rules and guidelines:

- You must either be:
 - a paid up ABC member for the year 2025-26 – no entry fee
 - a non-ABC binder from New Zealand or Australia – \$10.00 entry fee
- Three categories can be entered:
 - traditional binding
 - craft/modern binding
 - re-binding
- More than one entry can be submitted.
- Each category will be judged and each category will receive a prize.
- Bindings will be judged on quality of craftsmanship, appropriateness of design, use of material, originality of the project and skill level of the binder. Judges will not make a distinction between styles/types of binding.
- Participants must be willing to allow ABC to exhibit their entry/entries at the 2026 Wayzgoose in Whanganui (19-20 September)
- Participants must be willing to allow ABC to photograph their entry/entries for inclusion on the website and social media.
- Participation in the competition is at your own risk. All submitted books will be handled with the utmost care.
- **Completed books are to be delivered to Mark Elphick, 86 Kinloch Way, Bethlehem, Tauranga 3110 by 12 August, 2026.**

So put your thinking caps on and [enter now!](#)

If you have questions or need further information please do not hesitate to contact the ABC by email to: chair@abc-nz.org.nz

Looking forward to seeing your work.

ABC Committee