

Printing History News

The Newsletter of the National Printing Heritage Trust,
Printing Historical Society and Friends of St Bride Library

Number 10 † Spring 2006

CONFERENCES

Newspaper design

A one-day conference to be held at St Bride on 19 May 2006. Speakers include Alan Rusbridger, Paul Barnes and Mark Porter. Tickets cost £50.00 (£35.00 for students). For further details please ring 020 7353 3331 or see www.stbride.org.

Jobbing printing: the stuff of life

The Printing Historical Society's conference will be held at Reading University on Monday 3 and Tuesday 4 July 2006, in conjunction with the Ephemera Society. Registration is now open, and those interested should contact the Chairman, Peggy Smith, at m.m.smith@rdg.ac.uk. Details of the programme and events can be found at www.printinghistoricalsociety.org.uk.

Fast type, slow type

The 2006 Typevents conference, *Fast type, slow type*, will be held on 16–18 October 2006 at the Custard Factory in Birmingham (for details of the venue see www.custardfactory.com). The event has been timed to co-incide with celebrations at Birmingham for the tercentenary of the birth of John Baskerville. Details of the conference, speakers and activities will be posted at www.typevents.com.

St Bride Events

The distaff side: women as printers from the fifteenth century to the present day. This exhibition will run until 27 April at the St Bride Library, Bride Lane, Fleet St, London EC4Y 8EQ. Open Tuesday–Thursday, 12.30–5.00 p.m. (9.00 p.m. on Wednesday). Admission free.

Jan Tschichold at Penguin Books: a resurgence of classical book design. A lecture by Richard B. Doubleday, to be held in the Bridewell Hall on Tuesday 6 June 2006 at 7:00 p.m.

Oral History of Printing: Help Needed

John Handford

The oral history archive at the Department of Typography and Graphic Communication at the University of Reading, which already holds over 100 recordings of voices from the industry, has recently benefited from a grant from the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning which will enable it to spread its net wider in collecting new recordings, to become more accessible by improving the listening equipment available, and to reach a wider audience through the Department's website.

Among the most urgent needs is to find men and women who worked on the shop floor in the 1920s and 1930s using skills which are now largely lost. These people can contribute recollections and anecdotes of their workplace, their colleagues and the machines they operated, which are in danger of being lost to posterity. Long ago retired, they can be difficult to trace.

Readers of *Printing History News* may wish to have their voices recorded, or they may know someone who would make an ideal interviewee. Perhaps there are pension schemes through which potential interviewees might, with proper protection of privacy, be approached. It has proved best for the initial approach to be made by someone who is known, and then, given a favourable response, an interviewer can step in. As far as possible, all interviews take place in the interviewee's home.

Contacts are:
Martin Andrews, Curator of Collections: m.j.andrews@reading.ac.uk.
John Handford, freelance interviewer: johnandsally@fairmead.wanadoo.co.uk.
Peter White, freelance interviewer: whitepj@btconnect.com.

Please get in touch if you have ideas, preferably before you approach a prospective interviewee – soon it may be too late!

Stanhope Press comes to Ditchling Museum

Janet Cragg

The tradition of hand-printing is to be revived at the Museum, re-establishing Ditchling's place in twentieth-century printing history. In 1916 traffic in the High Street was brought to a standstill by the delivery of a half-ton Stanhope press to the stable behind 'Sopers', the house where Eric Gill had lived from 1907 to 1913. It was here that Gill's friend, the printer Hilary Pepler, with the assistance of calligrapher Edward Johnston, first set up the Stanhope Press and printed the opening words of St John's Gospel "In principio erat Verbum – in the beginning was the Word." So began the art of hand-printing in Ditchling. The Stanhope Press was subsequently transported to workshops on Ditchling Common where it served the St Dominic's Press for twenty-one years, printing books, pamphlets, posters, magazines, bill-heads and notepaper. The printing works later moved back to the village to premises at the crossroads and was renamed the Ditchling Press. Hilary Pepler had by now retired and the Press was run first by his son Mark and then by his grandson Lawrence.

Lawrence Pepler, who died last year, was a Trustee of the Museum and had always hoped that the Stanhope Press would one day be returned to Ditchling as a working museum exhibit. It had been in the ownership of Justin Howes, and when he also sadly died last year, the Press, along with type and other equipment, was bequeathed to Ditchling. An enthusiastic supporter of the Museum, after meeting its founder Hilary Bourne while he was researching Edward Johnston, Justin had a special interest in its collections, including many items printed on the Stanhope.

Ninety years after it first arrived in the village, the Press was once again carried through the High Street on its way to the Museum. The cost of its installation has been met by a generous donation from the organisers of

last year's summer ball held in memory of Lawrence Pepler, and practical local help has been given by Phil Baines, Ian Clayton, Ron Hawketts and Jack Worth. The Stanhope will be used for workshops and practical demonstrations of the craft of hand-printing. The press was first seen by the public at Ditchling on Saturday 11 March, when the Museum opened for the season.

The Museum would like to hear from printers and others in the field who could offer practical demonstrations or printing workshops. If you can help please contact the Director, Hilary Williams, on 01273 844744 or info@ditchling-museum.co.uk.

The John Jarrold Printing Museum

Desmond Field

Herbert John Jarrold, CBE, MA, FIOP, JP (1906–1979), the son of Herbert and Mabel Jarrold, was born on 16 February 1906. After gaining an honours degree in Natural Sciences at Cambridge and spending a year at Fikentscher Gross Buchbinder, Leipzig, he joined the family business in 1928, becoming Chairman in 1937.

Under the guidance of his son Peter, who succeeded him as Chairman, the Museum was first set up in 1982 as a fitting memorial to a man proud to be described, simply, as Printer. The Museum was originally housed in a crypt dating back to the thirteenth century. Some early iron hand-presses, platens and a stop-cylinder letterpress machine with a working composing room and hand-bindery formed the basis of the early Museum collection.

At that time the majority of printing, particularly in the UK, was carried on by the letterpress process with Jarrolds, an exception at this period, printing by all three of the major processes – letterpress, lithography and gravure.

The Museum brought together a small group of enthusiasts which, from the beginning, included members from local companies and the printing school. Its aims from the beginning were:

To preserve the machines and equipment that made printing possible ... To practise the ancient crafts of printing ... To produce good work ... To pass on the skills of the craftsmen to others ...

As skilled and knowledgeable people retired from active employment, the Museum was able to take advantage of



Interior of the John Jarrold Printing Museum (photograph by D. Field)

a wider expertise among its members. In 2001, with new business strategy affecting the use of the Jarrold site in Whitefriars, the Museum was moved to a new site beside the River Wensum, occupying part of the old Jarrold bindery. Today there is a membership of some fifty supporters. An enthusiastic group of fifteen or more working members gather every week to practise their crafts, and pass on to others who wish to learn the knowledge and skills of the printer and bookbinder. Students from the Norwich City College of Art and Design have made use of the Museum in their project work, and group visits to the Museum are encouraged and much appreciated.

The Museum has recently published a website listing its holdings. This is thought to be the only collection of printing artefacts in the UK to be described in full on the internet. See www.johnjarroldprintingmuseum.org.uk.

The 'Caseroom' at Glasgow School of Art

Edwin Pickstone

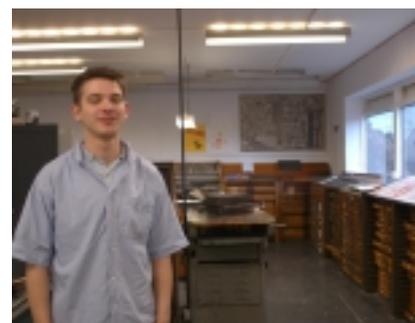
Having recently graduated from the Glasgow School of Art, where I utilized the much undervalued letterpress printing facility, I was invited by the school to take up a position as artist in residence for the current year. The purpose of this post is to allow me to continue my personal work in the caseroom, to encourage interest in the large and fully functional facility and to gain technical experience.

The process of letterpress printing is a physical one and the basic concept of

my research is to explore and try to define what this physicality gives to the printed image that other processes cannot. This I have achieved through exploring the variables inherent within the process, such as inks and pressures, to create books logging the expression of these variables. I also work on large and small-scale single prints that explore the shapes, relationships and basic physicality of the component parts of the process.

The post is timely, as I receive training from the technician Fraser Ross, who retires in March 2006, taking with him a lifetime's experience and an encyclopaedic knowledge of the process and print industry. This opportunity to work alongside a trained compositor, gaining invaluable expertise in using and maintaining machinery and materials, is now something quite rare.

Funding from the NPHT has helped to allow me to focus on learning about the machines within the art school and their capabilities, this training in turn informing my own personal work.



Edwin Pickstone in the caseroom at Glasgow



Interior of L'Atelier d'un Journal, Louhans

FEATURE

L'Atelier d'un Journal

Geoff Barlow

Anyone with an interest in printing history visiting Burgundy will enjoy the small French town of Louhans. Lying roughly equidistant between Dijon and Macon, the town is famous for its weekly agricultural market and white Bresse chickens, but will be of greater interest as the site of *L'Atelier d'un Journal*. This museum, an annexe of the *Ecomusée de la Bresse Bourguignonne*, consists of the former premises of one of the region's newspapers, *L'Indépendant*.

The paper was founded in 1878, and found a home in the town in 1880 as the 'radical socialist paper of Louhans'. Almost from the beginning the paper was unusual in being published three times a week, on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. By 1910 the print run stood at 300 copies, but in that year ownership passed to the Faisy family, who were in charge for the next 65 years until 1975. Under their stewardship the paper continued to grow, passing the 3,000-copy mark by 1919, the year in which Linotypes were introduced. The next technical innovation came in 1922, with the installation of a Buhler flatbed rotary duplex machine with integrated folder, and by this time the print run of *L'Indépendant*, by now the sole survivor of an original four local papers, had passed 8,000 copies. Further growth followed, so that by the end of the Second World War the paper had

increased sales to 17,000 copies. Changes of ownership and reorganisations marked the latter half of the twentieth century, and in 1982 the decision was taken to switch to photo-composition and off-site printing: the printworks closed its doors in 1984. But *L'Indépendant* survives today as part of the 'Hersant' media group, and is still published, with a print run of 7,000 copies, as a 'tri-hebdomadaire'.

The former offices and printworks of the newspaper remain, with all equipment in place – almost as if the workforce had gone home one evening and not returned the following day. The offices themselves are a fascinating reminder of commercial life before the advent of the computer, and also include a fine array of photographs of the newspaper's history and a set of guard-books containing a complete run of previous editions. Displayed in the window is a French-built 'Stanhope-type' press, still functioning, and on which I was invited to pull an impression of a facsimile of the paper's 1978 centenary edition front page.

Inside the printworks itself, which is built over the local canal, is a range of composition equipment, including four Linotypes, a Monotype keyboard and caster, and extensive cabinets of type for handsetting. Pride of place in the pressroom goes to the Buhler rotary (complete with a framed endorsement from its manufacturer extolling the advantages of duplex working and in-line folding), but other presses include a 'Perfection' stop-cylinder from 1928, a range of treadle platen presses of various makes and ages from 1869 to 1930, and an Original Heidelberg of

1960. There is also a small lithographic studio and press. Marked proofs lie on the tables, jobs under correction cover the slabs, and on the walls hang handwritten notes, instructions and even postcards sent from holidaying colleagues: this is not so much a museum as a step back into yesterday's working life. Best of all is that the printworks still functions: school and student groups not only visit as part of their historical and social education programme, but are also encouraged to use the equipment to publish their own newsletters, brochures and other jobbing work. Much of this is produced on the Heidelberg, but the Buhler is also occasionally coaxed into life. Unfortunately I was not able to see this in operation, but there is a very short sequence showing the press running in a video produced by the *Ecomusée*, which one can watch on the premises. The museum is supervised by a cheerful ex-printer volunteer, whose knowledge of the history of the newspaper and love for the museum shone through despite my rather inadequate French.

A visit to Louhans is strongly recommended. Come early for the weekly market on Monday, enjoy lunch in town and then head for *L'Atelier d'un Journal*, in the centre of town at 29, Rue des Dôdanes. Opening times vary according to the time of year, but it features in most guidebooks to the region. For those members of the party not interested in the printworks, the small (and rather idiosyncratic) local art and history museum is above the printworks, or you can visit the nearby Hôtel Dieu, a seventeenth-century charitable hospital still operating in the late twentieth century, whose pharmacy displays a superb collection of hand-blown glass vessels and Hispano-Moresque ceramics.

News from the Emery Walker Trust

The Emery Walker Trust held its first conference at the Art Workers Guild on 26 November 2005. Walker's home at 7 Hammersmith Terrace, which opened to the public for the first time in 2005, will be open again for guided tours between April and July 2006. See www.emerywalker.org.uk. Bookings can be made by ringing 0208 741 4104. The Trust publishes a regular e-mail newsletter, to which you can subscribe by sending a message to admin@emery-walker.org.uk.

Dreyfus Bequest

The donations by John Dreyfus to Cambridge University Library and Trinity College reported in *PHN* 9 were not the only examples of his generosity to Cambridge. The Fitzwilliam Museum Library also received a bequest of some 283 printed books, together with pamphlets and a collection of manuscript letters and notes. The printed books contain a high proportion of private press material. The Department of Paintings, Drawings and Prints received a few drawings and 40 prints.

WAYZGOOSE

The Oxford Guild of Printers is holding a Wayzgoose on Saturday 15 July at the Town Hall in Woodstock, Oxfordshire. This event, which it is hoped will be the first of an annual series, will be a book fair for fine and private press printers, combined with a printers' table-top sale for type and accessories, plus other attractions (to be announced). There is good parking in Woodstock, and the town is easily accessible by bus from Oxford. Admission will be free, and further details will appear on the Guild's website at www.oxfordguildofprinters.co.uk.

Printing Historical Society News

The Printing Historical Society welcomes the following new members:

From 2004:

Ms Katja Airaksinen, Leeds
 Dr Norma Aubertin-Potter, Oxford
 Ms Susan Bain, Lewes
 Mr J. M. Balley, Chesham
 Mr Keith Bassford, Odense, Denmark
 Ms Sue Boettcher, Tattershall
 Mr Rob Clayton, Wells
 Ms Sandra Cromey, Cambridge
 Mr John Edwards, Chester
 Dr Elizabeth Evenden, Cambridge
 Mr James Green, Philadelphia, USA
 Ms Candace Guite, Fenstanton
 Mr Hewitt, Bideford
 Ms Philippa Jones, London
 Dr E. S. Leedham-Green, Cambridge
 Mrs Lucy Lewis, Cambridge
 Mr Gerard Long, Dublin
 Mr Sandy Malcolm, London
 Mr Jeffrey Martin, Cleveland, USA
 Mr Leonard Pepper, Oxford
 Ms Patricia Thomas, Wairarapa, New Zealand

From 2005:

Mr Anthony Edward Adams, New Romney
 Mr Roderic Findlay, Bridport
 Mr Simon Haigh, Oxford
 Dr William Kuskin, Hattiesburg, USA
 Mr Patrick Mark, Dalkeith
 Mr Giorgio Miranda, Bergamo, Italy
 Ms Anne Pillar, Womersley
 Mr David Sheppard, Cambridge

SOME CHANGES AT NPHT

The Hon. Correspondent of the Trust, Justin Knopp, stood down from his post with effect from the last committee meeting in February. It was agreed at that meeting that his rôle would be divided between members of the committee for the time being. Paul W. Nash has agreed to take on the job of correspondent in general and Anthony Smith has taken on the rôle of correspondent dealing with printing equipment for dispersal.

If you should have knowledge of such equipment, especially of an historic or seminal nature, please contact Anthony at Little Preston Lodge, Coldharbour Lane, Aylesford, Kent ME20 7NS. Tel. 01622 710049.

Anthony aims to establish a liaison with museums and other interested parties, to find homes for some of the more crucial items, details of which will be logged in the Trust's *Directory of historic printing items* database.

Geoffrey Osborne archive

The archive of the late Geoffrey Osborne has recently been acquired by the St Bride Library. It consists chiefly of notes, photographs and printed sources (including a good deal of early ephemera) relating to his thesis on the history and design of jobbing platen presses, especially the Arab press.

SMALL ADS

Three Pieces – three previously unpublished essays by Harry Carter. Baskerville's tercentenary is an appropriate moment for this first publication of an essay by Harry Carter on the influence of Baskerville, an essay intended for *The New Fleuron* which never saw the light of day. Carter also started a second volume of his history of Oxford University Press,

but it too never reached publication; two items from that history appear here for the first time. For details visit www.theoldschoolpress.com or write to The Old School Press, The Old School, The Green, Hinton Charterhouse, Bath BA2 7TJ, UK.

Albion presses for sale, plus related equipment from a printmaker's studio. Proceeds to charity.

Hopkinson and Cope Albion Press No. 2787, of 1852, size of platen 16 x 21 inches. £5,000.00 o.n.o.

Hopkinson and Cope Albion Press No. 3072, of 1854, size of platen 9½ x 15 inches. £4,000.00 o.n.o.

Both are well maintained and were in regular use by the printmaker and teacher John Liddell (1924–2005). Contact Adam Liddell at Bourne-mouth, UK, on (01202) 526303 or adam.liddell@btinternet.com.

Adana Press (horizontal quarto), unused for seventy years and in need of restoration, with a small collection of type and accessories. Free to anyone willing to collect it from Oxford. Contact John Wing on 01865 351212.

USEFUL CONTACTS

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