ST BRIDE EVENTS

Glasgow 501: out of print, lecture, Tuesday 21 October, Bridewell Hall, 7:00 p.m. Steve Rigley and Edwin Pickstone will be talking about some of the extraordinary letterpress work to have emerged from the University of Glasgow’s research unit entitled ‘Out of print’ in the context of a year of celebrations of 500 years of printing in Scotland (see also page 2 below).

Letterpress: a celebration, one-day conference, Friday 7 November, 9:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m. There will be a packed programme of talks, demonstrations and displays of work from those keen to share their infectious enthusiasm for letterpress in the twenty-first century. Come and join in the debates that are sure to emerge. Speakers: Phil Abel (Hand & Eye Letterpress), Claire Bolton (Alenbric Press), Alex Cooper and Rose Grindell (London College of Communication), Alan Kitching and Celia Stothard (Typography Work), Michael Harris, Advertising in print and print in advertising around 1700; Charles Benson, ‘Mingling judiciously the grave and gay’: advertising books in early nineteenth-century Ireland; Alan Powers, ‘From protection to promotion: the uses of the book jacket’; Peter Strain, The use and effect of literary prizes in the twentieth century; Udo Goellmann, Buying and selling rare books online: yesterday and tomorrow.

Re-opening of the Library reading room, evening reception, Thursday 20 November, 6:00–8:00 p.m., hosted by the St Bride Foundation for the Friends of St Bride Library and their guests.

Systematic book design? Lecture, Thursday 27 November, Bridewell Hall, 7:00 p.m. Jost Hochuli, internationally acclaimed book-designer, will share his thoughts on the book-design process and also answer questions on aspects of typographical detailing, the subject of his latest book Detail in typography. Copies will be available for sale on the evening at a discounted rate.

For more data see www.stbride.org.

BOOK TRADE CONFERENCES

Books for sale: the advertising and promotion of print from the fifteenth century. The thirty-first annual Conference on Book Trade History will be held on Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 November 2008 at the Foundling Museum, 40 Brunswick Square, London WC1 1EZ. Speakers will include: Lotte Hellinga, Trade advertisements for books printed before 1501; Julieanne Simpson, Selling the Biblia Regia: the marketing and distribution methods for Christopher Plantin’s polyglot Bible; Michael Harris, Advertising in print and print in advertising around 1700; Charles Benson, ‘Mingling judiciously the grave and gay’: advertising books in early nineteenth-century Ireland; Alan Powers, ‘From protection to promotion: the uses of the book jacket’; Peter Strain, The use and effect of literary prizes in the twentieth century; Udo Goellmann, Buying and selling rare books online: yesterday and tomorrow.

The Conference is organized by Michael Harris, Giles Mandelbrote and Robin Myers, in association with the Antiquarian Booksellers Association. The full fee of £80.00 (one day £50.00) includes conference, lunches and access to the Foundling Museum. A limited number of reduced-rate places, sponsored by the Bibliographical Society, will be available to registered students. For a booking form, or for more information, please contact: Antiquarian Booksellers Association, Sackville House, 40 Piccadilly, London W1J 0DR. Tel: 020 7439 3118. Fax: 020 7439 3119. Email: admin@aba.org.uk. Website: www.aba.org.uk.

Advance notice. The twenty-sixth Print Networks Conference for the British Book Trade Seminar will be held between Tuesday 28 and Thursday 30 July 2009 at Trinity Hall, Cambridge. Further details will appear in a forthcoming issue of PHN.

Designer Bookbinders events

Unless otherwise noted, the following events will be held at the Art Workers Guild, 6 Queen Square, London WC1. Lectures begin at 6:30 p.m. Admission is £2.50 for students, £5.00 for members and £7.00 for non-members. Season tickets are also available for four lectures at £9.00 for students, £18.00 for members and £26.00 for non-members (or for all eight lectures in the annual series the prices are £18.00, £36.00 and £52.00 respectively). The nearest tube stations are Holborn and Russell Square. The organizers, Rachel Ward-Sale and Julia Dunnett, welcome ideas for future lectures or any suggestions for improvements to the format of the series. Please telephone 0171 486718 or e-mail lectures@designerbookbinders.org.uk.

‘Bound for higher things’: the experience of the Rampant Lions Press in designing edition bindings for fine books lecture by Sebastian Carter, Tuesday 7 October.

The invisible binder lecture by George Kirkpatrick, Tuesday 4 November. ‘Where have you been hiding all these years?’ is a frequently asked question to which George will give an answer, illuminated by slides of his binding-related work over more than forty years.
Study day, Saturday 10 January. Consists of the following events: 10:30 a.m. Ewan Clayton, The written artefact as a contemplative space. In this talk, which features a number of projects made in collaboration with Peter Jones, Ewan explores his thinking about the place hand-work has in a digital age and its importance in our lives. 12:00 noon. Jenni Grey, Design basics: adopting contemporary design tools and processes in your work and as a way of life. 2:00 p.m. Simon Brett, wood-engraver, The painful adventures of Pericles, Prince of Tyre. Simon will talk about his collaboration with Barbarian Press on an edition of Shakespeare’s Pericles, and their attempt to combine text and illustration meaningfully. 3:30 p.m. Maureen Duke, A long-life binder: experience and experiences.

Bookbinding competition exhibition at the John Rylands Library, Deansgate, Manchester from Saturday 15 November 2008 to Sunday 18 January 2009. Opening hours: Monday and Wednesday–Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Tuesday and Sunday 12:00 to 5:00 p.m. Closed between 25 December and 4 January.

500 years of printing in Scotland

The following events are being held to mark the quincentenary of the introduction of printing to Scotland.

From this place words fly: a DVD installation by Kenny Munro and Edward O’Donnell, who have created an evocative film to celebrate Scotland’s printing history, inspired by the ambitions and skills of printers and the rapid increase in printing expertise over the last century. By merging old and new technologies, they invite us to consider the future of the printed word. The project includes footage from Scottish Screen, Robert Smalls’ Printing Works at Innerleithen and from Powderhall Foundry, Edinburgh. On show at the National Museums of Scotland, Chambers Street, Edinburgh, from 20 September to 7 December 2008. Further details can be found at www.nms.ac.uk.


PHS grants in printing history for 2009

The Printing Historical Society is very pleased to continue its programme of small grants for the fifth year. Grants will be made for:

§ Research on topics relating to the history of printing

§ Publishable reports on archives relating to the history of printing

Grants are limited to historical research in printing technology, the printing and related industries, printed materials and artefacts, type and typefounding, print culture, and printing processes and design.

Applications for research funding may be for up to £1,000; applications for publishable reports on archives, up to £500. In both cases grants may be used to cover material or other expenses, including travel, subsistence, photography, etc. Applications should specify the amount requested and offer a budget for the use of funds envisaged; costs incurred before application are unlikely to be successful, as are projects that are deemed to be primarily bibliographical. Students, academics and independent researchers may apply. Some preference will be given to independent researchers.

The application should consist of:
1) a one-page covering letter, containing a brief curriculum vitae, and the name, address and e-mail of one referee (who has agreed to serve as referee), and 2) a one- or two-page description of the project and budget. The project description should state its purpose clearly, and succinctly. Please state whether your project is part of a larger one, and whether you are applying elsewhere for funding. Note that your compliance with the length instructions will form part of our evaluation of the application, so be certain not to go beyond the three pages of hard copy. Post your application to the PHS Grants & Prizes Sub-Committee, Peggy Smith, 18 Market Hill, Clare, Sudbury CO10 8NN, UK; e-mail can be used for questions, but not for submitting the application: m.m.smith@reading.ac.uk. Application deadline: 1 January 2009. Awards will be announced at the PHS AGM in March, for disbursement in April.

A tempting invitation?

Caroline Archer

Design a type-tart card. You are invited to have some graphic fun and at the same time help support the St Bride Library. We would like you to design a ‘tart card’ either for a typeface or a letter of the alphabet (‘tart cards’ are the means by which London printers advertise their services – step into any central London phone-box and you can contemplate up to eighty such cards, with their singular artwork and language). Sabon might invite you to caress its counters, or Palatino advertise its ‘Mega Serifs’. Perhaps you see something seductive in the curves of the ‘S’, or submissive in the eye of the ‘e’. The specification is as follows: A6 (105 × 148 mm) landscape or portrait; typographic, illustrative, photographic or a combination of techniques of your choosing; hand- or machine-made paper or card; single- or full-colour; one side should bear image and text, the other the signature of the designer and the date; hard copy only, please, electronic versions will not be accepted. Closing date 30 October 2008 (15 December for university students). Entries will be exhibited at the Plus International Design Festival at Birmingham, 5–8 November (www.youpplusus.net), and at the St Bride Library in early 2009; the collection will be auctioned and proceeds donated to St Bride. Prizes will be awarded for the top three entries. Please send entries to Type LLP, 1st Floor, The Toll House, The Bond, 180–182 Fazeley St, Birmingham B3 5JE. Tel: 0121 766 7948. E-mail: caroline@uktype.com.

Speaking of tarts (or tarts anyway), to find out how that depicted above relates to printing history, you can visit James Mosley’s typographical blog at www.typefoundry.blogspot.com.
Donald Milham Archive: a reminder
Rob Clayton

With the delivery of the Donald Milham Archive to the St Bride Library in June, and with the matching archive completed for the Department of Typography and Graphic Communication at the University of Reading, the first year of the Award project is complete.

The second year of the project is now under way, and the closing date for entries is 5th November 2008. PHN readers are invited to submit entries, providing they were in or associated with the British printing industry. For information on the Award and its background, see the piece in PHN 15. For an entry form and further details please send a stamped addressed envelope to In The Print, PO Box 4719, Wells, Somerset BA5 2UF, or contact me, the co-ordinator of the project, by e-mail on frobson@mbzonline.net.

Museum closure
Jeremy Winkworth

It is with enormous regret that the Printing House Museum in Cocker-mouth has now closed due to the passing of the owner/curator David Winkworth.

We have given the museum six months to tick along and have found that, due to decreasing visitor numbers and revenue, the business and museum are no longer viable. My other family members have never been involved in the Museum and so the responsibility for the Museum and its contents lies solely with me. We have several ideas to try to preserve the collection but realize that as a whole this would be impossible.

What we initially propose is to try to house a nucleus inventory entitled ‘The David Winkworth Collection’, which would consist of the primary pieces of the museum and a small collection of relevant artefacts.

Secondly we would donate or sell pieces to collectors or enthusiasts that meet the criteria of the Museum.

Thirdly we would have an open sale/auction for all the other equipment, and lastly the scrap and junk man would be called.

I would welcome comments, feedback and suggestions from any interested parties. Particularly difficult is the large collection of Linotype and Ludlow comprising six machines and innumerable mats. As people will understand this is a fairly herculean task and I would welcome any advice. Please e-mail jeznactastic@hotmail.com.

PRINTING-RELATED WEBSITES
Tony Smith

At the last meeting of the National Printing Heritage Trust in March, I gave a brief presentation of the printing-related websites that I had been reviewing on behalf of the Trust. The original remit was to look at the websites of some ten or twelve of the museums contributing to the Trust’s Directory of historic printing items held by museums in the United Kingdom and Ireland. As it transpired, printing was so poorly represented as to be non-existent on most museum websites, and I ended up reviewing all 143 museums on the Trust’s database without real satisfaction. As a result of this review it is evident that the NPHT is still the best source of information regarding the printing artefacts held by museums throughout the country.

The review initially had a two-fold purpose. The first was to assimilate best practice in the presentation of printing from the reviewed websites for incorporation into the Trust’s own website and for this to then serve as a model for others, much as its Directory has become. The secondary purpose was to create links via the Trust website to the better print-related museum sites. The Trust has yet to realize these ambitious and is somewhat less-than-inspired by the overall poor representation of printing by museums online. It will need to continue to press for better acknowledgement of the subject, not only in actual museum displays but now alongside other featured subjects on museum website pages.

Of all the websites reviewed from the Trust database, only the following displayed at the time any real reference to printing:

www.anchorpress.org.uk
www.johnjarroldprintingmuseum.org.uk
(this site has recently been updated, with a revised list of holdings)
www.ditchlingmuseum.com
www.amberleymuseum.co.uk
www.mkmuseum.org.uk/exhibit/printshop.htm
www.eastanglianlife.org.uk/printing.html

Most of these museums have, as you would expect, a strong presence on printing through their direct connection with the craft or many of the major personalities within it. I would highly recommend a visit to any of these sites which have all succeeded to some degree in placing printing and its historical background in context, and would even suggest a follow-up e-mail to encourage yet greater representation of the subject, online if not in reality. As the Trust knows only too well, printing needs all the help it can get.

The following quotation is taken at length from The industrial heritage of Britain by Brian Bailey (1982) and serves admirably here to sum up the motivations and the frustrations which the NPHT experiences in its quest to gain wider recognition for the industry that civilised the world. He writes:

‘Now the invention of printing from moveable types, like prehistoric progress into the Iron Age, had far greater consequences for mankind than the so-called Industrial Revolution in Britain. Not only that, but it has long been way ahead of most other industries in the degree of its automation. This was not because printing engineers were more ingenious men than railway engineers or the inventors of agricultural machinery. It was because the industry had a much greater impetus from universal literacy and the demand for knowledge. Civilization advances printing as war advances weaponry, and paradoxically, printing advances civilization as weaponry advances war. Now would you not expect printing, which goes back five hundred years in Europe, to be of some interest to the industrial archaeologist? Yet it rarely earns a mention, except for passing reference in connection with paper-making. Surely this is further evidence, if any were needed, that the ‘science’ of industrial archaeology is really too narrow.

‘The man who operates a printing machine, though he may sometimes be disparagingly called a ‘machine-minder’, has a very long tradition of pride in his craft behind him. He has been a more important agent of civilisation than the coal-miner or the steel-worker. Every town in Britain has its printing works, large or small, where men use machines to spread information. If the men did not exist, none of the modern industries discussed in this book would be as advanced as they are.’

I hope that this will be read and taken to heart by curators nationwide, and that they join the Trust in its endeavours by promoting their own
printing artefacts to a place of prominence not only in their museums but also on their websites.

ANN MUIR

The paper-marbler Ann Muir died on 21 July 2008, at a hospice at Salisbury. Most readers will know something of Ann’s work and the remarkable papers she produced over more than thirty years. Many of the world’s private presses used her designs for wrappers and board-papers for their books, and she made a speciality of matching historical examples of marbled papers for conservators and bookbinders, and supplying new designs and colour-combinations to order for artists, printers and designers. She could also work on a huge scale when necessary, producing thousands of sheets of paper for the quarter-bindings of certain Folio Society books since 1978.

Ann also practiced the ancient art of ‘ebru’, drawing with marbling techniques to produce unique images.

Ann’s marbling business was sold earlier in the year to Chivers, and they have decided to retain the premises at Froune in Somerset and to employ Julie Spencer, who worked with Ann for the last twenty-five years, to continue the business and train a new marbler. All the patterns and colours created by Ann will remain available, as will the ability to match or copy any historical paper or produce something new and specific to order. For further details of the firm see www.ammarbling.com. A full obituary will appear in a future issue of Parenthesis, the journal of the Fine Press Book Association.

‘Ideal’ paper sizes

John Trevitt

I have before me a book, Early British trackways by Alfred Watkins, published by the Watkins Meter Company of Hereford in 1922. It was printed by the Hereford Times. A kind of colophon states that ‘This page is King 8vo in the Ideal series of paper sizes, wherein octavo and quarto have the same proportion, and three master sizes give a full series of uniform shape.’ The trimmed size of the book is 8⅛ x 5⅞ inches (215 x 150 mm). What more can be said about the ‘Ideal’ series? Is it related to DIN sizes? If you can throw any light on the subject, please contact me at Rose Cottage, Church Road, Wreobley, Hereford HR4 8SD. E-mail: jj@trevitt.freeserve.co.uk.

SMALL ADS

Presses and equipment available

As part of a rationalisation of Bristol Museums, Galleries and Archives printing collections, the following items are available for free transfer to registered museums. Recipient to provide transport.

- Sheeting machine, made by Knowlton & Beech, Rochester, N.Y., USA, ca. 1930
- Paper sheet jogging table to work with the foregoing, made by Autoknuckps Co., Reading, ca. 1930
- Heavy duty folding machine made by Cundall Folding Machine Co., Luton
- Albion printing press made by Harrild and Sons, London, 1881 (platen 16½ x 11½ inches)
- Albion printing press made by Hopkinson and Cope, London, 1900 (platen 34 x 23 inches)
- Two-striker pen ruling machine made by John Shaw and Co. Ltd, Honley, Huddersfield, 1956

Interested parties should contact Andy King, preferably by e-mail at andy.king@bristol.gov.uk, or at the Museum of Bristol Project, Former Industrial Museum, Wapping Road Bristol BS1 4RN. Tel: 0117 9031569.

Printing Historical Society publications for sale

All the publications of PHS, including both series of the Journal, Newsletters, Bulletins (these last two bound into volumes) and the various books and pamphlets. To be sold as a complete set £200.00. Please contact Chris Hicks, 64 Merewood Avenue, Sandhills, Oxford OX3 8EF. Tel: 01865 769346. E-mail: chris.hicksbookbinder@btinternet.com.

BOOKS BOUGHT

John Trevitt is still seeking books about books (typography, printing, publishing history and illustration). Contact John Trevitt, Rose Cottage, Church Road, Wreobley, Hereford HR4 8SD. Tel: 01544 318388. E-mail: jj@trevitt.freeserve.co.uk.

Greg guillotine available

Seeking a good home, a ‘Conqueror’ guillotine (in good working condition) made by J. Greg and Sons in 1900, with a 42-inch blade. Current location: Meath, Ireland. Interested, please contact John McDonnell, McDonnell’s Printing and Used Office Equipment, Dromone, Oldcastle, Meath, Ireland. E-mail: mcdonnellprint@eircom.net. Tel: (044) 9666350 or (087) 207 3217. McDonnell’s can advise on transportation, and can also provide a fork-lift truck for use in loading at their premises.

USEFUL CONTACTS

National Printing Heritage Trust
www.nphr.org.uk
Chair: Michael Twyman
litho@electraise.co.uk

Printing Historical Society
www.printinghistoricalsociety.org.uk
Chair: Peggy Smith
m.m.smith@reading.ac.uk

Friends of St Bride Library
www.stbride.org
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Please pass spare copies of Printing History News on to an interested friend.