

Printing History News

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

Number 28 † Autumn 2010

EVENTS

ST BRIDE EVENTS

Letterpress conference

Forward thinking. A one-day letterpress conference will be held on Friday 19 November 2010. Tickets cost £75 (£60 for Friends of St Bride), concessions at £30 (£25 for Friends). The day will be packed with talks, demonstrations and discussion, celebrating new ideas and practice in handset typography.

Letterpress, we were once told, was a thing of the past. Yet, now it is very clearly the focus of renewed enthusiasm. Interest in setting types by hand continues to grow, with an increase in letterpress activity further fuelled by an ongoing concern with visual authenticity. For many, letterpress offers something beyond straightforward graphic reproduction. It offers the means to create hand-made objects of worth. But to what extent are we still looking backwards rather than forwards? Much contemporary practice certainly seems to have settled into something of a retro-groove. In the midst of all the nostalgia, there are people who offer alternatives to this potential dead-end, reinventing their practices and working in more exploratory ways.

Speakers will share their excitement at the possibilities before us, and include: Dafi Kühne, a Swiss graphic designer and letterpress printmaker who, as well as being an intern at the legendary Hatch Show Print poster shop in 2008, explored the experimental boundaries of 'Woodtype Now!', the title of his graduate dissertation; Edwin Pickstone, a young designer based in Glasgow whose graduate work, seen in *Eye* 57 back in 2005, embodied a potential new direction for letterpress that he has followed through in more recent projects; JMG, Typoretum and Patrick Randle who have followed individual paths into garages, sheds and outhouses in the pursuit of a love of letterpress printing and who together comprise

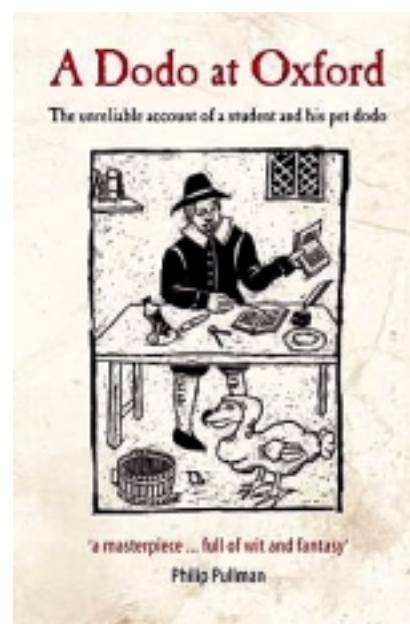
the creative collective of the Occasional Print Club; and Catherine Dixon, a designer and teacher from London who will tell something of the so-far so-good survival story of Grafica Fidalga, the only remaining typographic 'lambe-lambe' printshop in São Paulo, Brazil. For further details, and booking, please see the website at www.stbride.org.

Beatrice Warde Memorial Lecture

Researching Excoffon and the Fonderie Olive: type as document by Sébastien Morlighem. St Bride Library, Tuesday 26 October, 7:00 p.m. This year marks the centenary of the birth of Roger Excoffon, arguably the most famous and innovative French type-designer of the twentieth century. For the 2010 Beatrice Warde Memorial Lecture, Sébastien Morlighem will share his research on Excoffon as an introduction to the forthcoming book *Roger Excoffon et la Fonderie Olive* (Bibliothèque typographique). The lecture will be an opportunity to see many previously unknown documents and discuss aspects of his work. Admission is free, but please book in advance online at www.stbride.org/events or by telephone on 020 7353 3331.

OXFORD DODO

Paul Luna, Head of the Department of Typography & Graphic Communication at the University of Reading will speak as part of a panel discussion at Blackwell's bookshop, 48-51 Broad Street, Oxford, on Wednesday 13 October at 7:00 p.m. The subject will be *A bird considered* (1695), a book apparently describing the last surviving specimen of the dodo, written in the form of a diary by an Oxford student and printed at the University Press shortly after its revival by Bishop Fell (and apparently set in the 'Fell types'). The only known copy of the book is said to have been found in the Oxfam bookshop in St Giles in 2008, and bought for a paltry sum. The book has been re-published in facsimile, with



Front cover of *A dodo at Oxford*

annotations, by Michael Johnson, as *A dodo at Oxford*. Copies will be available after the panel discussion (which will also feature David Shirt, ornithologist and lexicographer, Clive Hurst of the Bodleian Library, and the book's editor, Michael Johnson). The facsimile edition also includes a history of the book, describing how it was 'printed, made, unmade, forgotten, and ultimately revived', and the panel discussion will no doubt provide further illumination. Can the book be genuine? If it is a modern spoof, is it well done, from a typographical point of view? Where is the last dodo to be found – between the pages of this book, on the panel, or in the audience?

Tickets cost £2 and can be obtained from the Customer Service Department, Second Floor, Blackwell's Bookshop, Oxford. Telephone 01865 333623.

Designer Bookbinders lecture series

The following events will be held at the Art Workers Guild, 6 Queen Square, London WC1. Admission is £2.50 for

students, £5.00 for members and £7.00 for non-members. Season tickets are also available for four Saturday lectures at £9.00 for students, £18.00 for members and £26.00 for non-members. The nearest tube stations are Holborn and Russell Square. The organizers, Rachel Ward-Sale and Julia Dummett, welcome ideas for future lectures or for improvements to the format of the series. Please telephone 01273 486718 or e-mail lectures@designerbookbinders.org.uk.

Two lectures on bookbinding design: *Play along the lines of ...* by Annette Friedrich, and *The space between the lines: adding to design by subtracting*, by Derek Hood. Tuesday 5 October 2010, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday series, 30 October 2010

The legacy of calligrapher Edward Johnston: the work of the Edward Johnston Foundation in maintaining the link with Johnston's work and the significance of his legacy in the digital age, by Gerald Fleuss. 10:30 a.m.

Extreme bookbinding again: a second voyage to Ethiopia, this time to repair vellum fans and a short retelling of my visit there in 2006 to preserve the sixth-century Gospels at the monastery of Abuna Garima, by Lester Capon. 12:00 noon.

The Cockerell Bindery: two DB Fellows relate their experiences of working with Sandy Cockerell, by Angela James and James Brockman. 2:00 p.m.

'Everything in the world exists to end up in a book': an illustrated talk on the difficult problem of leaving things out, by Sue Doggett. 3:30 p.m.

Bound to do good: how a passion for books has been used to unite authors and artists around the world to help children made vulnerable by HIV/Aids, by Bruce Howard of Oak Tree Fine Press. Tuesday 30 November 2010, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday series, 8 January 2011

Balancing acts: one artist's books, and how words, images and bindings influence each other in the making of the complete book, by Susan Allix. 10:30 a.m.

25 and still counting: a short review of 25 years of running a provincial craft bindery, by Stephen Conway, 12:00 noon.

Contemporary letter carving in stone: a personal view, by Tom Perkins. 2:00 p.m.

Paper-engineered books: an explanation of paper engineering and how it has been used in the field of book publication, by Rosemary Temperley. 3:30 p.m.

The Middleton Lecture: Conservation and preservation in the Parker Library at Cambridge University: past, present and future, by Melvin Jefferson. Tuesday 1 February 2011, 6:30 p.m.

Equivalents – approaches to making: how can we create our best work?, by Jen Lindsay. Tuesday 1 March 2011, 6:30 p.m. By looking at the work of various artists and makers this talk suggests ways in which we can develop the conditions for creative thinking and making.

The Designer Bookbinders Competition Exhibition will be held at the John Rylands Library, Deansgate, Manchester from Sunday 5 December 2010 to Sunday 13 February 2011 inclusive (closed 24 December to 3 January). Opening hours: Monday 12:00–5:00, Tuesday–Saturday 10:00–5:00, Sunday 12:00–5:00.

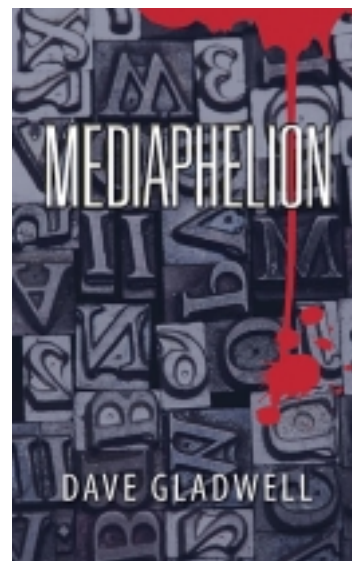


NEW BOOKS

Sun Engraving and Sun Printers

The way of the Sun: the story of Sun Engraving and Sun Printers is due to be published in October 2010. The book tells the story of the famous engraving and printing company and its techniques which revolutionised the mass-production of books and magazines in Britain in the twentieth century and helped to make Watford the printing capital of the world. The book will be a hardback with 416 pages, illustrated in monochrome throughout, plus 32 pages in colour, at the pre-publication price of £20 plus post and packing, if ordered by 30 September (after which date the price will be £22). Further notes about Sun Engraving and Sun Printers and on the new book can be found at www.sunprintershistory.com. Orders may be placed with Shirley

Greenman (telephone 01923 227945) or Brian Reynolds (telephone 01869 811007, email braynho@yahoo.co.uk).



Mediaphelion

A new book with the above title has recently been announced by the American publisher Strategic Book Group (and is available in the UK from Amazon and other suppliers). The author is Dave Gladwell, who has apparently based his story, in part, on the essays he submitted for the Donald Milham Award. The text is described by the publisher thus: 'Exalting in their undisputed powers for over two hundred years, the Print Craft Unions flourished without challenge, thriving on "industrial incest". In the midst of these dealings, Media magnate Murdel ruled his empire with a dubious past and no limits to his scruples, flattering and fooling the outside world as he attained great success. But those within Print's fortress walls knew Murdel's designs and struggled, not merely to maintain control, but to survive. Then came "Mediaphasia", dumbness from a disease of the brain, preventing free speech, and a total or partial loss of understanding words.' The book is a paperback with the cover-price \$15.50 or £9.50.

GRANTS IN PRINTING HISTORY FOR 2011

The Printing Historical Society is pleased to resume its limited number of annual grants, for three years beginning in 2011. The grants, for up to £1,000 each, should relate to historical

research in: printing technology, the printing and related industries, printed materials and artefacts, type and type-founding, print culture, and printing processes and design. On the whole the Society tries not to overlap with the grants offered by bibliographical societies.

The deadline for applications, which must be submitted on paper, is 1 January 2011. For detailed instructions on how to apply, please see the grants and prizes section of the PHS website at printinghistoricalsociety.org.uk, or contact Peggy Smith by e-mail at m.m.smith1@btinternet.com.

Rare example of Jabez Francis's 'parlour' press

Those readers who attended recent events held by the British Printing Society or the Oxford Guild of Printers' Wayzgoose will have had a chance to examine, and in some case print with, one of the small iron 'parlour' presses manufactured and sold by Jabez Francis from around 1870 to 1880. The press was brought to these events by Brian Aldred, and is shown above. Unlike the earlier wooden presses of Holtzapffel, as described and depicted in the facsimile reprint *Charles Holtzapffel's printing apparatus for the use of amateurs* (Private Libraries Association, 1971), Francis's presses were of iron construction. Five different sizes were available. In their introduction to the facsimile, David Chambers and James Mosley mention that another example of Francis's design, sometimes known as 'Everybody's Press', is to be found at St Bride, with a bed measuring 9½ x 12 inches. This would make it one of the larger Francis presses, either his number 4 or 5, and the same is true of the press in Mr Aldred's possession (although this press appears to be missing its frisket). Chambers and Mosley also remark that Francis's press, although superficially like Holtzapffel's, worked on a quite different principle.

Francis published his own manual for amateur printers, called *Printing at home* (first published 1870, second and third editions followed), which has a charming frontispiece showing an archetypal Victorian family enjoying printing together in their parlour. Further information on Francis's press can be found in James Moran's *Printing presses* (1973, p. 235) and in the *Journal of the Printing Historical Society*



Above and below: views of the recently-discovered Jabez Francis press



(23, 1994, pp. 19–24, 8–9), which reproduces another Victorian printing manual, P. E. Raynor's *Printing for amateurs* ([1876]).

Mr Aldred would like to hear from anyone who can supply further details, or knows of any other examples of Francis's small iron presses. He can be contacted at 37 Moor Park Drive, Addingham, Ilkley LS29 0PU. Telephone 01943 830457.

Mystery counterweight

Justin Knopp has asked me to thank all those who contacted him about the mystery counterweight shown in last month's *Printing History News*. It turns out to be the 'Hope and Anchor' weight from an early Clymer and Dixon Columbian press.

Murders and Marvels: the Chapbooks Project at the University of Leicester

John Hinks

Five years ago, the Bibliographical Society formed a working group on chapbooks. The original aim was a published checklist of English chapbooks, but this soon grew into an ambitious plan to create a website to support chapbook research, with three elements: (1) a database of library holdings, (2) digitised text and images from a range of chapbooks, and (3) information on the history, production, distribution and readership of chapbooks. The project was begun with a series of research grants, one of which went to the University of Leicester, enabling the employment of a research assistant, Malcolm Noble, who sampled chapbooks from Cambridge and Nottingham University Libraries and Birmingham City Library. The results indicate what could be achieved if funding could be secured for a major chapbooks project along the lines originally envisaged.

The main research aims of the Leicester project are to investigate the content, readership and publication of chapbooks. Popular short titles are one way to identify content using the database. The most frequently found short titles include collections of songs, Robin Hood, Jack the Giant Killer, Valentine and Orson, and Cinderella. Readers' annotations can also be revealing: seven per cent of the chapbooks

surveyed have annotations, which can help to date editions (which are usually undated). The database can also be used to produce maps that show the publishing places for chapbooks in the individual collections.

The University of Leicester is funding a PhD studentship on 'National identity, popular culture and eighteenth-century chapbooks', to which Gervase French has recently been appointed. Longer term possibilities are being investigated, including AHRC collaborative doctoral awards with libraries, and possible applications for further major funding. In July 2012, the University of Leicester will run a joint conference with Print Networks on the topic of cheap print and the book trade. Further details can be obtained from John Hinks at jh241@le.ac.uk.

ITEMS OFFERED TO MUSEUMS, WANTED AND FOR SALE

Free to a museum, the following items: a Gestetner hand-operated duplicator, ca. 1950, in working order with stencils and ink; a Varytyper, as used in the Newspaper Strike, in full working order and complete with a range of type segments; an Apricot F1 computer, bought in 1985 (for well over £1,000) with 'Star' dot-matrix printer and all manuals, disks, etc.; an unusual double-depth type case of the kind used to hold heavy fonts of large metal types for use on auction/election posters. The items are located in Chester, and are free to any museum which can arrange collection. If interested, please contact Derek Nuttall on 01244 660501.

Columbian press for sale. Simon Green writes: 'This Clymer and Dixon Columbian Press of 1835 was part of my collection in the Hayle Mill Printing Museum. This is a fairly early example from the original makers and comes complete with an Eagle and Angel (many Columbians don't). It is easy to collect as it is fully dismantled and all components can easily be inspected. There is one bolt and nut missing and one thin cotter pin and these can be easily made. There is no indication that the existing paint is particularly interesting and the 'gold' paint is clearly modern. There may be clues to its original paint job under the most recent layers. This is a great opportunity for anyone who wanted to do a full restoration job from



scratch but it is also a very practical press which should be usable with relatively little work if that's your preference. The press is stored near Maidstone, Kent, England and is offered for sale for £10,000 complete as it lies; buyer to collect.' If interested please contact Simon on simongreen@aol.com.

Adana 8x5 press wanted. Staffordshire University would like to establish a small letterpress workshop to engage Graphic Design students with the letterpress process. They are, therefore, looking for an Adana 8 x 5 press in good working order. Anyone willing to sell one should please contact Jim Williams at j.g.williams@staffs.ac.uk.

Guillotine free to a museum or other good home. April Parrot writes: 'I am looking for a home for a paper guillotine, of the sort last made in 1938 by Greigs. This one was taken from a scrap yard and then re-assembled by my father approximately 60 years ago. It has been in full working order in our old property in Kings Langley, and then we moved to The Paper Trail two years ago. They wanted the machinery we held to be seen in the Mill Tour. However, they have since had a change of mind and we are now moving to new premises in London Road, Apsley. Unfortunately the guillotine will not fit and I would like it to go to either a museum or someone who could put it into use, not back to the scrap yard'. If you can help, please contact April on 01442 454280 or 07901 510945.

Type available. The following type is offered by the Bounds Green Press, 129-131 Bounds Green Road, London N11 2PP. Contact Sheth on 020 8888 1343 or info@bgpress.cop.uk. No reasonable offer refused for any of the following (type name followed by the size(s) available): Amanda, range 18-54; Baskerville 30; Blackletter 18; Bodoni 10, 12; Bodoni Bold 10, 42; Bodoni Bold Italic 12; Bold Script 18; Calligraphia 24; Clarendon 10; Con-

sort 18, 24; Dorchester Script 18, 24; Engraved, range 12-18; Extended 6, 8, 18; Flash 30, 36; Forte Script 24; Franklin Gothic 14, 36; Garamond Italic 12; Gill Sans Medium 18; Gill Sans Bold 24, 30; Gill Sans Ultra 24; Gill Shadow Caps 18; Gothic Condensed, full range 6-72; Goudy 14 and 24; Grot 5, 18; Grotesque Condensed 24; Heavy Script 18, 24; Imprint 18, 24; Kursiv 18, 24, 30, 36; Madonna, range 18-60; Modern 6, 9; Old English 14, 18, 24; Palace Script 14, 18, 24, 36; Placard 36; Placard Bold Condensed 6, 10, 12; Plantin 6, 10, 12; Playbill 24; Rockwell, range 18-48; Rockwell Condensed 6, 10, 12, 48; Shadow 30; Spartan 6; Spartan Light 6; Temple Script 48; Times Medium, Italic and Bold, full range 6-30; Ultra Bodoni 10; Ultra Italic Caps 14; Univers Medium, Italic and Bold, full range 6-48; Univers Extra Bold 12/13 and 14; Univers Medium Expanded 12/14; Univers Bold Expanded 12/14; plus ornaments and borders. For more details please contact Sheth.

USEFUL CONTACTS

National Printing Heritage Trust
www.npht.org.uk

Hon. Correspondent: Jeremy Winkworth
jezmactastic@hotmail.com
Treasurer: E. C. James, The Pinfold, Church Road, Dodleston, Chester, Cheshire CH4 9NG
gbf70@dial.pipex.com

Printing Historical Society
c/o St Bride Library, St Bride Institute, Bride Lane, Fleet Street, London EC4Y 8EE
www.printinghistoricalsociety.org.uk
Chair: John Hinks
jh241@le.ac.uk
Treasurer: Andrew Dolinski, 34 Martineau Lane, Hurst, Berkshire RG10 0SF
treasurer@printinghistoricalsociety.org.uk
Journal Editor: John Trevitt, Rose Cottage, Church Road, Weobley, Hereford HR4 8SD
jj@trevitt.freereserve.co.uk

Friends of St Bride Library
www.stbride.org
Chair: Rob Banham
rob@stbride.org

St Bride Library, St Bride Institute, Bride Lane, Fleet Street, London EC4Y 8EE
www.stbride.org
Librarian: Nigel Roche
nigelroche@stbridefoundation.org

Printing History News
Editor: Paul W. Nash, 19 Fosseyway Drive, Moreton-in-Marsh, Glos. GL56 0DU
paul@strawberrypress.co.uk

Published by the NPHT, PHS and the Friends of St Bride Library, September 2010. Printed by Synergie, Birmingham.