

Printing History News

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

Number 33 ★ Winter 2011

ST BRIDE EVENTS **Print workshops**

Justin Howes Memorial Lecture

On Tuesday 21 February at 7:00 p.m. Fred Smeijers will give the 2012 Justin Howes Memorial Lecture. His subject is 'Life after *Counterpunch*'. Having been out of print for nearly four years, a new edition of Smeijers' book *Counterpunch: making type in the sixteenth century, designing typefaces now* was published this summer. The talk reflects on advances made in the period since the book first appeared in 1996, both in terms of research and practice. Smeijers has compared his earlier findings with new evidence gathered using research tools of greater technical precision, in particular microscope images of materials at the Plantin-Moretus Museum, and has considered the contributions of Peter Burnhill and Justin Howes to the field. The lecture will be held in the Bridewell Hall at St Bride and tickets (available in advance from St Bride) cost £5.00 each.

THE DESIGN OF UNDER- STANDING 2012

A one-day conference at St Bride on Friday 27 January 2012. Organizer Max Gadney says: 'St Bride is the ideal partner for a conference that values insight as much as inspiration. Looking at information design and beyond, our speakers are experts in their fields who practise and speak without ego. This conference is about designers needing to understand their subjects before communicating them. It is also about subjects tangential to design and the universal lessons we can learn from them. The format encourages concise crisp stories and we won't be having any dull portfolio viewings.' The conference begins at 9:30 a.m. (registration from 8:45) in the Bridewell Hall, St Bride Foundation, Fleet Street, London EC4Y 8EE. Further details may be found at www.stbride.org.

Letterpress short course

Designed for beginners or those with some knowledge of typography, graphic design or relief printing. There will be six sessions running from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. every Monday from 9 January to 13 February 2012. Maximum class size six. *Fees:* £355.00 (£305.00 for those over sixty and full-time students).

During this course students will examine the processes and materials needed to create their own letterpress work using Albion, Columbian and Adana presses. Each week will focus on a particular area of letterpress. The course will begin with an induction to the workshop, health and safety, an overview of letterpress printing with examples of practitioners' work, an explanation of hand setting and an introduction to the presses.

Subsequent weeks will cover wood-letter printing, tabletop platen presses, two-colour printing and the use of metal type and polymer blocks. The final sessions will be dedicated to more experimental processes such as mono-printing and overprinting wherein participants will create their own pieces under supervision. The course will provide an excellent overview of the letterpress process, materials and workshop management. *Facilitator:* Helen Ingham. For booking see below.

Other courses and classes

Other courses, classes and sessions planned for next year include: *Open evening* 20 February 2012; *Getting started with the Adana* 14 January, a one-day course with Helen Ingham at £90.00; *Supervised access* every Tuesday 10–24 January at £175.00 (£135.00 concessions); *Two-day letterpress intensive* 21 and 28 January, 18 and 25 February, and 10 and 17 March, with Richard Lawrence, sessions run 11:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., at £245.00 (£195.00 concessions); *One-day linocut and type poster workshop*, dates to be

announced; *Introduction to book-binding*, six sessions, every Wednesday between 11 January and 15 February, with Douglas Bevans, sessions run 6:00–9:00 p.m., at £355.00 (£305.00 concessions).

Booking

To book, and for further details, please visit www.printworkshop.stbride.org. Alternatively you can book by credit card, by telephone on 0207 353 4660. Concessions are available for members of the Friends of St Bride.

OTHER EVENTS

INDUSTRY AND GENIUS IN THE PRINTING TRADE

A two-day conference, held jointly by the Printing Historical Society and the Birmingham Institute of Art and Design on 4–5 September 2012 at the Birmingham School of Art, Margaret Street, Birmingham.

Between the Hall of Memory and Baskerville House in Birmingham stands a sculptural tribute to John Baskerville. On the columns of Portland Stone are reversed bronze letters spelling the word 'VIRGIL', the Roman poet whose works Baskerville printed in 1757 using the famous typeface he created. A poem in praise of the printer appeared in *Aris's gazette* in 1751, entitled 'Industry and genius', from which poem the sculpture takes its name.

The contribution made by printers, processes and products to their industry and the wider political and cultural world will be examined. Papers are invited on any aspect of the 'industry and genius' of printing, including trade networks, the structure of businesses, relationships with booksellers, publishers and authors, political and cultural significance and technical innovations, of all periods. Subjects connected with Birmingham and Midlands printing will be especially encouraged. Papers should be of up to thirty minutes

duration. An abstract (of around 300 words) of the proposed paper should be sent by 31 January 2012, preferably by e-mail to Francis Cave of the PHS at secretary@printinghistoricalsociety.org.uk or by post to Francis Cave, Honorary Secretary, Printing Historical Society, St Bride Library, St Bride Institute, Bride Lane, Fleet Street, London EC4Y 8EE.

BROADSIDE DAY 2012

A third annual one-day event exploring all aspects of street literature and popular print traditions will be held on Saturday 25 February 2012, between 9:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. at Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regents Park Road, London NW1 7AY. The event has been organized jointly by the English Folk Dance and Song Society and the Traditional Song Forum. For further details contact Sophia Linehan on sophia@efdss.org (please use 'Broadside day 2012' in your subject line) or contact Steve Roud on sroud@btinternet.com.

STREET LITERATURE: CHEAP PRINT, POPULAR CULTURE AND THE BOOK TRADE

This three-day conference, organized jointly by Print Networks and the Centre for Urban History, University of Leicester, will be held at the University on 10–12 July 2012. Speakers will include Adam Fox of the University of Edinburgh, author of *Oral and literate culture in England 1500–1700*, and Sheila O'Connell of the British Museum, author of *The popular print in England*.

Offers are invited for conference papers of thirty minutes' duration on the theme of 'Street literature: cheap print, popular culture and the book trade', broadly defined. Papers may relate to aspects of the production, distribution and reception of 'street literature' (including chapbooks, ballads, broadsides, newspapers, popular prints and other cheap printed matter) in the British Isles, or in other English-speaking parts of the world, between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries, inclusive. An abstract (up to 650 words) of the offered paper and a biographical statement (up to 100 words) should be submitted, preferably as an e-mail attachment, by 31 January 2012 to Dr John Hinks at jh241@le.ac.uk.

A Conference Fellowship is offered to one or two postgraduate students (or independent scholars of equivalent

status) whose research falls within the conference theme, who wish to present a paper. The Fellowship covers the cost of attending the conference and assistance towards travel costs. A summary of the research being undertaken, together with a letter of recommendation from a tutor or supervisor, should be sent to jh241@le.ac.uk or posted to the address below by 31 January 2012.

The papers presented may be considered for publication and must therefore comprise original work not presented or published elsewhere. For further details please contact Dr John Hinks, Centre for Urban History, University of Leicester, Leicester LE1 7RH. Email: jh241@le.ac.uk

NEH Summer Seminar for College and University Teachers: Tudor books and readers 1485–1603

Between 18 June and 20 July 2012, John N. King of Ohio State University, and Mark Rankin of James Madison University will direct a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminar for College and University Teachers on the manufacture and dissemination of printed books and the nature of reading during the Tudor period (1485–1603). In particular, they intend to address the question of whether the advent of printing was a necessary precondition for the emergence of new reading practices associated with the Renaissance and Reformation. Participants will consider ways in which readers responded to elements such as book layout, typography, illustration and paratext (such as prefaces, glosses and commentaries).

This seminar will meet from 18 June until 20 July 2012. During the first week of the seminar, attendees will visit Antwerp, in order to draw on resources including the Plantin-Moretus Museum, and London, in order to attend a rare-book workshop and consider treasures at the British Library. During the four ensuing weeks at Oxford, participants will reside at St Edmund Hall as they draw on the rare book and manuscript holdings of the Bodleian Library and other institutions.

Those eligible to attend include American citizens who teach at college or university level, graduate students and independent scholars who have received the terminal degree in their field (usually the PhD). In addition, non-US citizens who have taught and lived in the USA for at least three years (by

March 2012) are eligible to apply. NEH will provide participants with a stipend of \$3,900. Full details and application information are available at the website www.jmu.edu/english/Tudor_Books_and_Readers. For further information, please contact Mark Rankin (rankinmc@jmu.edu). The application deadline is 1 March 2012.

Book History Research Network

The Book History Research Network holds a series of twice yearly events. Information about these and a register of interests can be found on their website at www.bookhistory.org.uk. Please visit the website to register and to sign up for the next free event.

M-SHED Events

Bristol's M-Shed will be running a number of Christmas events this year, including the first of a new series of 'print and pack' sessions. For details please the website at www.mshed.org.



Columbian and common presses at the Story Museum in Oxford

THE BODLEIAN HAND-PRINTING WORKSHOP AT THE STORY MUSEUM

The Bodleian Library's Bibliography Room was founded in 1949 by F. P. Wilson and Lars Hanson, then Merton Professor of English Literature and the Bodleian's Keeper of Printed Books respectively. Together with Herbert Davis, Oxford's first Reader in Textual Criticism, they instituted a series of classes in bibliography and hand-printing in a room equipped with presses,

type, hand-made paper and specimens of printing from the hand-press period.

Courses are held each Michaelmas term for students on the English MSt (Master of Studies) programme, and further courses have been run for academics and amateurs interested in learning about bibliography and hand-printing. One-off classes and demonstrations have also been held, and in 2010 and early 2011 the Bodleian ran a successful series of 'family printing sessions', notionally for children to learn something of the history and practice of hand-printing, but appealing at least as much to adults.

In 2011 the New Bodleian closed for major rebuilding and a new home had to be sought for the Bibliography Room. After some searching and negotiation, a suitable space was found at the Story Museum in Pembroke Street, Oxford. The building was acquired by the Story Museum in 2009 as the site for their planned museum of children's literature, fantasy and story-telling (with a special focus on Oxford as the home of such figures as Carroll, Tolkien, Lewis and Pullman). Two large, airy rooms on the first floor were offered as accommodation for the type and presses.

In the early months of 2011 the Bibliography Room was packed up, and in June Jeremy Winkworth and his team (including volunteer Patrick Goossens) moved the entire contents of the Room into the new building. The business of moving five iron presses (four Albions and a Columbian), a common press, three seventeenth-century type frames and several tonnes of Bell, Caslon and other type up three storeys from the basement of the New Bodleian, across Oxford to Pembroke Street, and there up another flight of stairs to the first floor was not a simple one. But all went well, and the Bibliography Room – temporarily rechristened the Bodleian Hand-Printing Workshop at the Story Museum – was ready to receive students and amateurs again in October. MSt classes began at once, and the weekly 'open sessions' shortly afterwards. Demonstrations and workshops were quickly held and the first of a new series of family printing sessions fell on 3 December (more are planned for the new year). The Museum is developing plans for further workshops and courses, details of which will be available on the Story Museum website (www.storymuseum.org.uk). Those interested should contact the Museum (office@storymuseum.org.uk) or the main tutor (and editor of *PHN*), Paul W. Nash (paul@strawberrypress.co.uk).



Liberty press in Colombia

The Liberty press depicted above, manufactured in Berlin by F. M. Weiler around 1902, was recently discovered in Colombia, in the possession of the museum Casona de Taminango in the city of Pasto. It was found and photographed by Adriana Bastidas of Grupo Historia y Teoría del Diseño at the University of Nariño, who is currently researching the history of printing in Pasto. The press had apparently come to Colombia via Ecuador, imported by Leopoldo Lopez Alvarez before 1938 for his Tipografía Atenas. Ms Bastidas hopes to discover more about it, and to find other presses used in the area in the letterpress era. It is hoped to include further reports on the subject in future issues of *PHN*. For details of this type of press see 'The Liberty press: a platen job press invented by Frederick Otto Degener' by Robert Oldham and Erik Desmyter in the *PHS Journal* (New Series 10, 2007).

Editor of the *Journal of the Printing Historical Society*

John Trevitt, who has edited the *PHS Journal* since 2008, will retire at the Society's Annual General Meeting in 2012. Number 17 of the *Journal*, which is due to appear before the end of this year, will be John's last issue as Editor, and the members of the PHS committee would like to express their warm thanks to him for his labours over the past four years.

We are very pleased to announce that John's successor as Editor will be Sandro Jung, who will be taking over with number 18 of the *Journal*. Sandro, who will be sharing the editing with several guest-editors over the next few years, is Professor of Early Modern British Literature at Ghent University. We would like to welcome Sandro to the Editorship, and wish him every success in the role (any offers of, or ideas for, potential articles may be addressed to him at sandro.jung@btinternet.com).



Imperial press in Dursley

Further to the article about evidence of printing in Dursley in the last issue of *PHN*, readers may be interested to know that the local Heritage Centre in the town possesses an Imperial hand-press (platen size 59 × 64 cm). The photograph of the press *in situ* reproduced above was taken recently by Richard J. Nuttall.

NPHT archives and other items donated to St Bride

Derek Nuttall

When I retired as a founder Trustee and Honorary Correspondent of the National Printing Heritage Trust in 2002, I began to sort through the mass of correspondence relating to the formation and inauguration of the Trust as well as to its subsequent progress. Among the correspondence are letters from many leading people in the printing industry at that time and also from many firms which have not survived the technological changes of the past couple of decades. Initially there was considerable support for the setting up of a national museum of printing which, regrettably, remains an unrealized ambition. However, contact was made with more than a hundred museums all of which have (or had) exhibits relating to printing, paper-making, etc. From these contacts the Trust produced its *Directory of printing items in British museums*.

The files containing the selected correspondence were collected by St Bride earlier this autumn along with a number of items from my own collections which date back to the 1940s when I first entered the printing industry. These included eleven box-files of technical data, catalogues, price lists, etc. relating to various branches of letterpress and lithographic processes, bookbinding, ink and roller making, and process engraving, which together form a detailed record of the equipment and processes used mainly in the period 1950 to 1970.

Also donated to St Bride Library was a set of *Journals* from the early days of the Institute of Printing and three founts of large metal display types (Egyptians and 'Fat Face') which were bought by a Cheshire printing business around the year 1842, and which I acquired around forty years ago.

REVIEWERS SOUGHT

The *Journal of the Printing Historical Society* is keen to recruit new book reviewers in all aspects of printing and book history, covering all eras. If you would consider undertaking a review, please contact Victoria Gardner with details of your areas of interest, at vmgardner@gmail.com.

Printing Historical Society Grants 2012

The deadline for applications for PHS grants for the year 2012 is 1 January. Further details may be found in *PHN* 32 (page 11), on the Society's website (www.printinghistoricalsociety.org.uk) or obtained from Chair of the Grants and Prizes Sub-Committee, Peggy Smith (at m.m.smith1@btinternet.com).

NEW BOOKS

The Dutch Museum of Lithography has marked its first decade with the publication of a new book *Het Nederlands Steendrukmuseum*. Michael Twyman has described the museum as 'superb' and 'the finest display of lithography I have ever seen anywhere'. The first chapter of the new book is an account of the establishment of the Museum by its founder Peter-Louis Vrijdag. Subsequent chapters cover the first ten years of the Museum's life, the invention and rise of lithography and a

series of 'columns' by experts and practitioners in the field. Small folio, 32 × 24 cm, 160 pages (more than 250 full-colour illustrations), price 29.50 euros. Copies are available from the Museum at www.steendrukmuseum.nl, where parts of the text may also be read in English translation.

The compositor in London: the rise and fall of a labour aristocracy by Isidore Cyril Cannon. St Bride Library is pleased to announce this new book, which attempts to establish who the compositor was and why he held such a special place in the history of the printing industry. It is built around Dr Cannon's doctoral thesis presented to the London School of Economics in 1961. Cannon worked in the printing industry while studying. The thesis has been given revised footnotes, a new prologue and epilogue by the author and a foreword by Nicolas Barker. An extensive bibliography has been drawn from the text and has been amended and updated with a view to assisting the reader who wishes to consult the original sources. Large octavo, 24 × 17 cm, 304 pages (with eighteen monochrome illustrations), price £30.00 in paperback (£25.00 to members of the Friends) or £50.00 in hardback. For details please see the online bookshop at www.stbride.org/shop or contact St Bride for details on 020 7353 3331.

SMALL ADS

The Oxford Guild of Printers is a society for practical and impractical printers, historians, printmakers, bookbinders and anyone interested in the history or reality of typography. Talks, demonstrations, film-nights and Wayzgooses are held regularly in Oxfordshire, and members receive an informative monthly *Newsletter* for a subscription of only £15 per annum. For further details see the website at www.oxfordguildofprinters.co.uk.

Monotype Recorder

John Trevitt is compiling a catalogue of the *Monotype Recorder* in and since the era of Stanley Morison. He would be interested to buy all or any issues, starting with number 187 (January–February 1922), and then sell any duplicates. He sells secondhand books through Abebooks, trading as typographia, and can be reached via email: jj@trevitt.freeseerve.co.uk or through

the post at Rose Cottage, Church Road, Weobley HR4 8SD. Tel: 01544 318388.

Micrometer wanted

Paul Collier writes: 'I am the Letterpress Technician at Plymouth University and am looking for a type-high micrometer manufactured by Cornerstone and used for measuring block-mounted images prior to printing. I would like to purchase but am also willing to take on a permanent loan basis.' Please contact Paul on paul.collier@plymouth.ac.uk.

BOOKS BOUGHT

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

USEFUL CONTACTS

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