NPHT Friends

Friends who pay their annual donation by cheque are reminded that renewal is due on 1 January. The annual minimum donation remains at £10.00, and has not increased for some twenty years. It is hoped to issue membership cards again in 2013, for those who continue to support the Trust. The Treasurer’s contact details are noted on page 4.

PHS fiftieth anniversary

The fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Printing Historical Society falls in 2014. The committee is considering how best to mark this occasion, with a possible publication, conference and dinner, among other things. The Chairman (whose contact details appear on page 4) would welcome comments and suggestions.

ST BRIDE NEWS AND EVENTS

The St Bride Library remains open to the public on Wednesdays between 11:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Access to the Library at other times is possible by prior appointment (to book please email library@sbf.org.uk). Access is open to all, on acquisition of a Reader Card (costing £5.00 for one year, but free to Friends of St Bride). The on-line catalogue of the library is accessible at prism.talis.com/cityoflondon/ and it is wise to request items in advance of a Wednesday visit to avoid waiting for delivery when you arrive. Further details can be found at www.stbride.org.

Justin Howes Memorial Lecture

Albert Corbeto will give the eighth annual Justin Howes Memorial Lecture in the Bridewell Hall at St Bride on Tuesday 25 February 2013 at 7:00 p.m. His title is The golden age of the Spanish book: improvements in printing and typography during the Enlightenment. The second half of the eighteenth century has been regarded as the golden age of Spanish printing. The leading printers of the period, such as Ibarra or Sancha, produced books of high intellectual and material quality which were greatly admired. Faced with a growing demand and a shortage of types, Spain developed a home-grown punchcutting industry which began to innovate in letterforms. Admission £5.00. For further details and to book please see the St Bride website at www.stbride.org/events.

THE DESIGN OF UNDERSTANDING 2013

A one-day conference hosted by St Bride and curated by Max Gadney on Friday 25 January 2013. Registration from 9:00 a.m. Tickets £150.00 (£75.00 for Friends and students). Mr Gadney writes: ‘We will not just be looking at the discipline of Information Design but broader, to subjects such as visual and statistical literacy, as I believe that good conferences have breadth as well as depth’. More information may be found on the conference blog pages at www.thedesignofundertanding.com.

Printing workshops

Getting started with the Adana. This one-day course is for new or aspiring letterpress printers who hope to set up a simple home studio using the Adana platen press. You will receive instruction in hand-composition of type and printing on an Adana, as well as maintenance of the press, workshop management and what to look out for when purchasing equipment. Facilitator: Helen Ingham or Bob Richardson. Evenings (6:00–9:00 p.m) Wednesdays 6 and 13 February. Daytime (10:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.) Saturdays 19 January, 16 February and 16 March. Maximum class size: six. Fee: £90.00.

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 14 January to 18 February, and from 25 February to 8 April (omitting 1 April). Maximum class size: six. Fee: £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, Stanhope 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-composition and an introduction to the presses.

Subsequent weeks will cover wood-letter printing, table-top 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 monoprinting and overprinting whereby 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.

Richard Lawrence oversees the printing of a linocut at St Bride
Exploring letterpress and linocut. This course will teach basic hand composition and letterpress printing, and linocut printmaking. Courses run over two consecutive days, 6:00–9:00 p.m. every Wednesday 9–30 January. Fee: £245.00 (£195.00 for those over sixty and students). All materials and refreshments are provided. Please bring a selection of A4 photocopied images to work with. Facilitators: Helen Ingham and Richard Lawrence.

Booking and further details. To book, and for further details (including other classes, courses and workshops) please see 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

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.

Print Networks Conference

Travel, topography and the booktrade. The thirty-first Print Networks Conference on the History of the British Book Trade will be held at the University of Chichester, on 23–25 July 2013. Guest speakers will include Professor Bill Bell (of Cardiff University) and Anthony Payne.

Call for papers. The theme is broadly defined, and any papers relating to the production, distribution and reception of texts and images about travel, real or imagined, from the middle ages to the modern era, in Britain and the Anglophone world, will be considered. Papers on travelling and migrating practitioners of the book trade, the physical movement of texts and travelling printing technology are also welcome. Papers should be of thirty minutes’ duration. An abstract of the paper should be submitted (preferably by e-mail) by 31 January 2013 to Catherine Armstrong (at C.M.Armstrong@mmu.ac.uk), or by post to the Dept of History, Politics and Philosophy, Manchester Metropolitan University, Geoffrey Manton Building, Rosamund Street West, Manchester M13 6PL.

The Print Networks Conference also offers an annual fellowship to a postgraduate scholar whose research falls within the parameters of the conference brief, and who wishes to present a paper at the conference. The fellowship covers the cost of attending the conference plus some assistance towards costs of travel. A summary of the research being undertaken accompanied by a letter of recommendation from a tutor or supervisor should be sent to the above address by 31 January 2013.

The papers presented will be considered for publication; details to follow at the conference. It is understood that papers offered to the conference will be original work and not delivered to any similar body before presentation at this conference.

Accommodation will be provided on the Bishop Otter campus of the University of Chichester. In addition to a full programme of papers, there will be a conference dinner and a visit to the special collections of the University of Chichester library.

Baskerville conference

Industry and genius: John Baskerville, art, industry and technology in the Enlightenment, a two-day conference, will be held at the Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre (1046 Bristol Road, Birmingham), on 6 and 7 April 2013. Organised by the Baskerville Society, the Typographic Hub, Birmingham Institute of Art and Design, and the Centre for West Midlands History at the University of Birmingham, the conference explores the life, context and significance of John Baskerville (1706–1775). He was an inventor, entrepreneur and artist with a worldwide reputation who made eighteenth-century Birmingham a city without typographic equal. Baskerville not only designed an influential typeface, he also experimented with casting and setting type, improved the printing press, developed ‘wove’ paper and refined the quality of printing inks. Despite his fame and influence many aspects of Baskerville’s work and life remain unexplored and his contribution to printing, the arts, technological change and the Enlightenment are not yet fully recognized.

Speakers will include: Dr Caroline Archer, Frank Blokland, Anne Brady, Ewan Clayton, Dr Malcolm Dick, Joey Hannaford, John Henningway, Dr John Hinks, Joanna Jarvis, Yvonne Jones, Martin Killeen, Persida Lazarevic, Gerry Leonidas, Dr Val Loggie, Simon Loxley, Barry McKay, Sébastien Morlighem, Andrea de Pasquale, Diana Patterson, Prof. Nicolas Pickwood, Jeff Pulaski, Ben Waddington and Jesmin Yeo, with keynote addresses given by Prof. James Mosley and Dr Susan Wynman. Further details can be found on the Typographic Hub website at www.typographichub.com.

Drawn to the page: Irish artists and illustration 1830–1930

An exhibition at Trinity College, Dublin, curated by Dr Angela Griffith and Dr Philip McEvansoneya in conjunction with the Department of Early Printed Books at Trinity College Library. The exhibition emphasises the important contribution made by Irish artists in the period sometimes called the heyday of European book and periodical illustration. On display will be examples of colour illustration, from the meticulous hand-colouring of the Cuala Press to printing techniques which allow art to be reproduced with near perfect fidelity. Among the artists included are Mabel Annesley, Joseph Campbell, Harry Clarke, Robert Gibbings, Robert Goff, Charles M. Grey, Myra K. Hughes, Daniel Madlise, William Mulready, E. M. O’Rourke Dickey, George Petrie, Margaret Stokes, F. S. Walker, Elizabeth C. Yeats and Jack B. Yeats. The exhibition runs until 21 April 2013. For more information please see the website at www.tcd.ie/Library/about/exhibitions.php.

Resurrecting the book

A conference on the theme ‘Resurrecting the book’ will be held at the Library of Birmingham on 15–17 November 2013. The organisers write that ‘with e-book downloads outstripping the purchase of hard copies, with libraries closing and discarding books and with the value of the book as physical object being increasingly questioned, this interdisciplinary conference brings together academics, librarians, artists, creators, designers and users of books to explore a wide variety of issues pertaining to the creation, design, construction, use, reuse, preservation, loss and recovery of the material book, electronic and digitized books, and of collections and libraries.’ Call for papers. Abstracts on these themes, covering any historical period
Reading and writing in Warwickshire’s past

This is a weekend conference organised by the Dugdale Society to celebrate the history of reading, books, writing and printing in Warwickshire over five centuries. The speakers will be concerned with both readers and writers, and will consider the production, sale, distribution and consumption of books, pamphlets, newspapers and other forms of writing. Speakers will address such questions as 'How did the reading public change over the centuries?', 'Were the people of Warwickshire changed by their reading?', 'How were writers influenced by their local environment and the reception of their works?', 'What was Warwickshire’s importance as a centre for printing and publishing?'

Conference fees: £52.00 (£49.00 for those over sixty-five and students, or £47.00 for members of the Dugdale Society). Speakers: Nat Alcock, Caroline Archer, Victoria Gardner, Ian Green, John Hinks, Maureen Jurkowski, Gail Marshall, Roger Pringle, Jon Stobart, Denise Thomas and Robert Bearman. Further information and registration forms may be had from Christopher Dyer (e-mail cd50@le.ac.uk, or mail Centre for English Local History, University of Leicester, 5, Salisbury Road, Leicester LE1 7QR). There are two bursaries (each of £52.00) for postgraduate students who are currently engaged in research on a relevant subject, donated by the Printing Historical Society. If you wish to apply for one of these, please contact Professor Dyer.

For further information on the Dugdale Society please contact the secretary (e-mail dudgale.society@hotmail.co.uk, or mail Mrs Cathy Millwood, Dugdale Society, Shakespeare Centre, Henley Street, Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 6QW).

Letterpress courses at Frogmore Mill

The Paper Trail offers regular, roughly monthly letterpress courses at its Frogmore Mill in Apsley, near Hemel Hempstead. The sessions are lead by ex-industry and education printing professionals and are open to complete beginners, offering an introductory insight into letterpress printing and also the chance for those with art or design expertise to 'have-a-go'. Each participant sets a specimen text in metal type, which they then print using one of the Adana presses from the collection. Historical and contextual knowledge is also delivered. On completion of the course participants may access the equipment in order to work on projects of their own creation. A small charge is made for this and access is by prior arrangement. Courses run on Sundays from 11:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m. and cost £45.00. For details and course dates see the website at thepapertrail.org.uk, and to book a place call 01442 234600 or e-mail education@thepapertrail.org.uk.

Printing workshops in Oxford

The Bodleian Hand-Printing Workshop has announced a further series of workshops and courses, to be held at the Story Museum, 42 Pembridge Street, Oxford OX1 1BP. Details may be found on the Museum’s website at www.storymuseum.org.uk. For booking please contact the Story Museum on handprinting@storymuseum.org.uk or 01865 790050.

Print your own Valentine. A two-session course, allowing attendees to design, illustrate and print an original Valentine’s day card. Tutor: Paul W. Nash. Maximum class size: nine. Suitable for adults (aged sixteen plus).

ASLP certificate sought

Michael Twyman

I have been trying to locate a copy of the membership certificate of the Amalgamated Society of Lithographic Printers of Great Britain & Ireland. It was designed in the 1880s and chromolithographed by Blades, East & Blades in a format suitable for wall display. Early twentieth-century reproductions show a design with a portrait of Senefelder at its head and a set of vignettes of lithographic presses. I have tried the obvious locations, including the union’s archives in Warwick University. Any information leading to a copy that could be photographed would be most gratefully received. Contact me on lithomn@totalise.co.uk please.
Atlas press: information sought

Katie Brown, Curatorial Officer for Blits Hill Victorian Town at the Ironbridge Gorge Museum, Telford, is seeking information on the Atlas press in their collection. She knows of relevant details in the PHS Journal, in James Moran’s Printing presses, and in the NPHT Directory, but would welcome any further leads in her research. If you can help, please call 01952 601011 or e-mail katie.brown@ironbridge.org.uk.

Thompson British Automatic Platen history appeal

Graham Pressman

I am researching the history of the Thompson British Automatic Platen press and would be glad to make contact with anyone who can add to my knowledge. My contact details are: Telephone: 01692 582292. E-mail: pressman167@btinternet.com. Mail: The Bungalow, Cart Gap Road, Hap-pisburgh, Norfolk NR12 0QL. Data can also be entered on my historical website at www.catseyepress.co.uk/Thompson.asp.

This press was manufactured by T. C. Thompson. The company has now been wound up and there is a small amount of information about the press on the internet. Whilst there are still a few people left who may remember or have written records of the facts, my project seeks to make contact with them and try to publish the information for the interest of those remaining operators and collectors. Whatever is learned will be published and made freely available to all.

It has been established that the press was launched before the second world war and continued in production into the 1960s. Advertising from the period suggests there was a hope of huge sales after the war. Whether this hope was realised is, for now, unknown. My own experience is that most letterpress printers know the Heidelberg platen, but few seem to be experienced with the Thompson. Those who are familiar with the machine find it, at least, comparable with the German press and many of those platen minders who have spent much time using Thompsons seem to have found them to be more versatile and convenient.

The information that this project is seeking includes:

1. When did production of the Thompson British Automatic Platen begin? Was the first serial number 0001?
2. Is there any detailed information about the earliest design produced? Was it intended as a copy of the Heidelberg or not? Is there a survivor of this, earliest, model?
3. When was the first machine of the type we now know, produced?
4. When were each of the various changes/improvements introduced and at what serial numbers?
5. How, if at all, can machines produced at the Alvis factory, in Coventry, be told apart from those produced by T. C. Thompson in Manchester? Did the two factories share supplies of castings?
6. How many machines were produced by each of the manufacturers?
7. When (at what serial number) did the machine go out of production?
8. Does anybody have a collection of parts or complete machines which could be made available, in order to keep survivors running?
9. Handbooks often have a date and a serial number hand-written on them. I should be very grateful to have any transcriptions of these.

There is a shortage of some parts. Anybody having supplies of parts (even just one item) could help to keep these old presses running for those who still use them on a daily basis. Any Thompson British Automatic platen owner needing help is welcome to telephone.

PHS Journal

The next issue of the Printing Historical Society’s Journal has been further delayed, partly by technical problems, but is due to appear in spring 2013. The Society and Editor would like to apologise for its lateness.

APHA honours Sebastian Carter and the LEC

The American Printing History Association has just announced that its 2013 award for ‘a distinguished contribution to the study, recording, preservation or dissemination of printing history, in any specific area or in general terms’ has been made to Sebastian Carter. Many readers will know Sebastian and his work as a designer and fine letterpress printer (at the Rampant Lions Press), as an historian and critic of type, as a leading member of the Printing Historical Society, and as current European editor of the Fine Press Book Association’s Parenthesis, among many other achievements. The APHA also awards a prize to an institution or body which has excelled in the same field, and this year the recipient is the Limited Editions Club of New York.

USEFUL CONTACTS

National Printing Heritage Trust
www.nph.org.uk
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Treasurer: E. C. James, The Pinfold, Church Road, Dodleston, Chester, Cheshire CH4 9NG gb1750@dial.pipex.com

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