Number 38 ★ Spring 2013

ST BRIDE NEWS

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 e-mail 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.sbf.org.uk.

Printing Historical Society AGM

Notice is hereby given that the 2013 Annual General Meeting of the Printing Historical Society will be held on Wednesday 8 May at 5:30 p.m. in Bridewell Hall at the St Bride Institute, Bride Lane, London EC4Y 8EE. Any members wishing to raise items of formal business are reminded to inform the Honorary Secretary in writing no later than 27 March. Following the formal business, at 6:00 p.m. there will be drinks and a presentation of some of the treasures of the St Bride Library.

Printing workshops

A new series of printing courses, workshops and one-off classes is in preparation, and the following have been announced. Details and further dates will soon be posted on the website at www.printworkshop.stbride.org. Concessions are available for members of the Friends of St Bride.

Open evening, 17 April, 6:00–9:00 p.m. A chance to see the workshop and meet the tutors. Free.

Three-day spring letterpress course, 3–5 April. £355.00.

Letterpress short course, six Monday evenings (except Bank Holidays), 15 April–3 June. £355.00.

Introduction to colour lino cutting (relief printing), six Thursday evenings, 18 April–23 May. £370.00.

Getting started with the Adana, one day course, 20 April, 18 May, 21 July and 17 August. £90.00.

OTHER EVENTS

TEXT AND IMAGE IN THE CITY

A Book History Research Network study day on print and manuscript culture in British and European towns and cities will be held at the Centre for Urban History, University of Leicester, on Friday 31 May 2013. Papers are invited from postgraduates, independent researchers and established scholars. Topics might include but are not limited to:

• Intersections between urban cultural history and the history of books/prints/manuscripts/images
• How the culture of text or image has contributed to – and/or been shaped by – its primarily urban setting
• Urban texts and images: their creation, production, distribution and consumption/reception
• Popular print culture and ‘street literature’ (ballads, chapbooks, broadsides etc.)
• How texts and images disseminate urban ideas and culture into rural hinterlands
• Reading the ‘word city’ through newspapers, maps, posters, timetables and ephemeral texts/images
• Representations of urban space or modernity in text or image; urban ‘renaissance(s)’
• Innovative, radical and subversive uses of urban texts and images

The day will include a talk and display of prints by Sarah Kirby, Artist in Residence at the Centre (see page 11). Please e-mail proposals (300 words maximum) plus a brief biographical statement (60 words) to John Hinks (jh241@le.ac.uk) by 8 April 2013.

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. The conference will explore the life, context and significance of John Baskerville (1706–1775). Further details can be found on the Typographic Hub website at www.typographichub.org.

Travel, topography and the book trade

**Travel, topography and the book trade.** 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. 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. Further details may be found at www.bookhistory.org.uk/print-networks/events.

Reading and writing in Warwickshire’s past

This weekend conference, organised by the Dugdale Society with the support of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and in association with the Printing Historical Society, will be held on Saturday and Sunday, 14 and 15 September 2013, at the Shakespeare Centre, Henley Street, Stratford-upon-Avon.

The conference celebrates the history of reading books, writing and printing in Warwickshire over five centuries. The speakers will deal with the production, sale, distribution and consumption of books, pamphlets, newspapers and other forms of writing. They 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). For further details please contact dugdale.society@hotmail.co.uk.

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 digitised books, and of collections and libraries.’ For further details, please see the website at www.resurrectingthebook.org.

Poster workshop at Reading

On Wednesday 24 April a poster workshop and study day will be held at the University of Reading, as a follow-up to the Victoria and Albert Museum’s recent poster conference. The day will combine practical printing with the study of original examples. Practical sessions will be run by Martin Andrews and Alan Hardie using wood type, wood blocks and iron hand-presses, as well as lithographic techniques. The study sessions, run by Michael Twyman, will cover the evolution, production, use and context of posters. Held in the Print Studio of the Institute of Education at the University’s London Road site. Price £40.00, to include tea and coffee. Enquiries to Diane Bilbey at d.j.bilbey@reading.ac.uk.

**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. 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-work of the Cuala Press to techniques which allow art to be reproduced with near perfect fidelity. The exhibition runs until 21 April 2013. For details please see the website at www.tcd.ie/Library/about/exhibitions.php.
COSSAR NEWS

National Museums Scotland report that their project to save and restore the Cos- sar Press formerly located at Crieff is well under way. After transfer to temporary storage in Glasgow (see PHN 35), the press has now been rebuilt, though some work remains before it will be in full working order. The process, and the finished rebuild, are recorded in the photographs above. The final phase of the project will be to transfer the press to Edinburgh for display. The appeal has been supported by the National Printing Heritage Trust, the Scottish Newspaper Society, the Oxford Guild of Printers, UNITE and others, but further money is needed. Further details are on the Scottish Printing Archival Trust site at www.scottishprintarchive.org.

The William Morris Society’s Printing Room Project
Helen Elletson

The William Morris Society would like sincerely to thank the Printing Historical Society and the National Printing Heritage Trust for their generous support of our recent project to restore and re-interpret our print room at Kelmscott House in Hammersmith (the home of William Morris for the last eighteen years of his life). The print room is the first visitors enter and contains one of our most important objects, one of the three Albion presses used by the Kelmscott Press (and the only one still in the United Kingdom; depicted right).

The Albion is dated 1835 and was the first purchased by Morris for his Press in 1891. Two years after his death in 1896, the Press closed and the Albion was purchased by C.R. Ashbee, founder of the Guild of Handicraft, who used it at their premises in Chipping Campden.

When this enterprise was dissolved, Ananda Coomaraswamy bought the press for use at the Norman chapel at Broad Campden. It later moved to Stratford-upon-Avon when it was acquired by the Shakespeare Head Press. Upon the demise of this business, Basil Blackwell bought the press to “carry on its tradition of scholarship in fine printing” and in 1929 Blackwell moved the press to Oxford where it remained until the William Morris Society acquired Kelmscott House; Blackwell then restored the press to its home in Hammersmith. The press is still used on a regular basis, so has been operational now for 177 years.

Thanks to support from the PHS and NPHT the Society has been able to:
1. Restore the original terrazzo floor, with a deep clean and sealing treatment to protected it from spills of printing ink.

2. Install museum-quality display cases to allow items from our collection to be exhibited for the first time in this room. The new cases will also make it possible to receiving loans from other museums.

3. Install low-energy lighting to allow sensitive objects, including Kelmscott books and ephemera, and manuscripts, to be displayed.

4. Provide new interpretation and visitor facilities. A film showing the press in operation has been made, so that visitors can see the press in action even when it is not in use. Seating has also been created. For the majority of the time an experienced printer will be on hand to demonstrate the press. Wall-mounted graphic panels are soon to be created, and the new wall-panels will allow us to display framed items for the first time.

5. Install environmental monitoring and a dehumidifier to maintain a constant temperature and relative humidity.

This project has enabled the William Morris Society to display its collections, hold regular printing demonstrations and provide a fascinating experience for visiting school-children, and offers the potential of training for young compositors and printers.

Watford’s printing past
Caroline Archer

I am running a project in conjunction with Watford Museum to document Watford’s printing past. We have three goals – short, medium and long-term: to stage an exhibition in the Museum in November 2013 to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the opening of the School of Printing in Watford in 1953; to overhaul the printing rooms
Seventeenth-century engraving: advice sought

I am an historian of science interested in the drawings and illustrations produced by the early Royal Society. I am hoping to apply for a research grant and am looking for a curator or practitioner who would be both familiar with intaglio techniques and materials of the second half of the seventeenth century, and willing to help with the reconstruction (re-engraving using contemporary tools and techniques) of a couple of scientific engravings from the period (for example, those in Hooke’s Micrographia). If you can help, please contact me, Dr Sachiko Kusukawa, at Trinity College, Cambridge cb2 1tt, 01223 357732 or sk111@cam.ac.uk.

PHS Journal

The next issue of the PHS Journal will be a double (numbers 18 and 19) for 2012, and is due to appear in spring 2013. The Society and Editor would like to apologise for its lateness.

Price £4,000 + shipping. Please contact Richard Adams on 0208 9626280 or richard@adamsassociates.org.uk.

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