

Printing History News

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

Number 46 ★ Spring 2015

Friends of the National Printing Heritage Trust

Members of the Friends of the NPHT are being sent membership cards again this year, with copies of the present number of *Printing History News*. The Trust has maintained a database of Friends for many years now, but will be reviewing membership during the coming year, and removing from the list any individual member whose subscription (a minimum donation of £10) for next year is not paid by the end of February 2016 (subscriptions fall due on 1 January). Corporate and institutional members will be contacted separately about their subscriptions and need not fear such removal from the membership list. If you believe you are a member of the Friends of the NPHT and have not received a membership card with this *PHN*, please contact the Hon. Correspondent (see page 4).

ST BRIDE NEWS AND EVENTS

The St Bride Library is now closed to visitors, while major rebuilding works are undertaken. All pre-booked appointments will be honoured and the Library will continue to provide access for those with ongoing research, for as long as it is practical to do so. No new appointments can be accepted at the moment, although this decision will be reviewed at regular intervals. Lectures, printing workshops and other events will continue as usual (see below). The on-line catalogue of the Library is available at prism.talis.com/cityoflondon/ and further details of the closure may be found at www.sbf.org.uk/library.

Printers' wayzgoose

The St Bride Foundation will hold a printers' wayzgoose (book, print and second-hand fair) on Sunday 17 May

2015 in the Bridewell Hall, between 11:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Tables will be held by some thirty fine and private presses, amateur printers, printmakers and booksellers offering their wares and second-hand type, equipment and printing sundries. Entry is free.

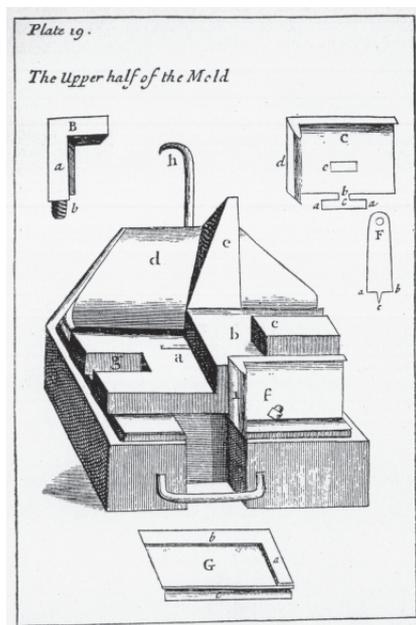


Plate 19 from Joseph Moxon's *Mechanick exercises* (1683), showing half of a hand-mould (reduced)

Justin Howes Memorial Lecture

Stan Nelson will give the 2015 Justin Howes Memorial Lecture in the Bridewell Hall at St Bride, at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday 28 April 2015. His lecture is entitled *A surprising diversity: the typesetter's hand-mould through 400 years*. The hand-mould is arguably the single most important invention in the history of western printing and, once its principles had been established in the fifteenth century they changed little. But the details of the mould, and the manner in which it was used, evolved over the centuries, until by the mid-nineteenth century it allowed for as many as six hundred sorts to be cast per hour. It was only at this point that

the hand-mould was superseded by other technologies, which automated the process of type-casting.

Stan Nelson is a printing historian and practical typesetter, who has made his own punches, matrices and moulds as part of the process of understanding this vital technology. He retired from the Smithsonian Institution in 2003 and has written and lectured extensively on the history and practice of typesetting. Tickets at £5.00 are available from EventBrite via the St Bride website at www.sbf.org.uk/events/justin-howes-memorial-lecture-2015.

Exhibitions

3Printmakers. A display of the work of three contemporary artist-printmakers will be held in the bar of the Bridewell Theatre between 2 March and 1 June 2015. The three artists in question are Edwina Ellis, Bella Larson and Peter S. Smith.

Trevor Jones: a retrospective shows the work of arguably the most original and influential bookbinder of the twentieth century. Many of the bindings on display come from a private collection and have never been seen before. The show co-incides with the publication of a new monograph on Jones's life in bookbinding. Open 18 March to 10 April 2015 (closed 3–6 April). Monday–Friday 10:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. Saturday 11:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Covered: contemporary designer bookbindings is the annual exhibition of the latest work by Fellows and Licentiates of Designer Bookbinders. All the work is previously unseen and will be for sale. Open from 26 May to 6 June 2015.

The Pantone postcard project is an exhibition of a hundred Pantone postcards, customised by a hundred different book-artists. Open in the Layton Room, 15 June to 3 July 2015. Monday and Friday 10:00 a.m.–9:00 p.m. Tuesday–Thursday 6:00–9:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday 11:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

The medieval illuminated book of hours

A lecture by Christopher De Hamel, hosted at St Bride by Designer Bookbinders, at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday 14 April 2015. Books of hours are the most common surviving medieval manuscripts, made originally for domestic use by lay people. Some were spectacularly illuminated for rich patrons but many are quite humble, everyday books. The lecture examines what a typical book of hours contains, what its illustrations show and how such books were used, offering clues on how we can date and localise examples. De Hamel will describe how books of hours were made, who made and illuminated them and where, with some account of their bindings. *Admission:* £15 (£10 for DB members, £8 for students).

Printing workshops

Three-day hand-composition and letterpress course. During this course students will examine the processes and skills needed to create their own work using letterpress. This includes hand-composition of metal type and the use of Albion, Columbian, Stanhope and Vandercook hand-presses. Subsequent courses will look at wood-letter printing, two-colour printing and the use of illustration blocks with type. *Facilitator:* Mick Clayton. *Running:* 6:00–9:00 p.m. on three consecutive days 21–23 April 2015, and on three consecutive Mondays 1–15 June 2015. *Fee:* £195.00.

One-day Adana course. This is aimed at the new or aspiring letterpress printer who is looking to set up a simple home studio using the Adana press. Students will receive instruction in hand-composition and use of the Adana, maintenance of the press, workshop practice and what to look for when purchasing equipment. *Facilitator:* Mick Clayton. *Running:* 10:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m. on Sunday 19 April, Saturday 30 May and Monday 13 June 2015. *Fee:* £90.00.

Booking and further details. To book, and for further details (including other classes, courses and workshops) please see www.sbf.org.uk and click on the 'Workshops' tab. Alternatively you can book by credit card, by telephone on 0207 353 3331. Concessions are available for Friends of St Bride, over-sixties and full-time students.

OTHER EVENTS

Book-trade history in the digital age: a one-day workshop

Call for papers

Print Networks announces this workshop, to be held on 24 July 2015 at Chetham's Library, Manchester. At a time when more bibliographical and print-related resources are available on-line than ever before, Print Networks invites proposals for papers of twenty to thirty minutes, panels of one hour, and presentations on aspects of the following topics:

Existing resources: their potential for development; pitfalls and problems in using them within book history; innovation, new resources and work in progress; how do digital resources transform book-trade history?

Using digital resources: tracking publications; reconstructing businesses; biographical research; geographical mapping; trade networks

Dreams and visions: what kinds of resources are needed by book-trade historians? Is interoperability more desirable than a proliferation of stand-alone resources?

An abstract (300 words) should be submitted by 10 April 2015 to Maureen Bell at m.bell@bham.ac.uk. Booking for the event will open via the Book History Research Network website in April (see www.bookhistory.org.uk)

Early printed books at Cambridge University Library

The exhibition of incunables and post-incunables from Cambridge University Library's collections, entitled *The private lives of print: the use and abuse of books 1450–1550*, runs at the Library until 11 April 2015. It is accompanied by an illustrated catalogue entitled *Emprynted in thys manere: early printed treasures from Cambridge University Library*, which includes a description by Sebastian Carter of Johannes Schussler's 1472 edition of Cassiodorus' *Historia tripartita*, which was a source of William Morris's 'Troy' type. Further details can be found at www.exhibitions.lib.cam.ac.uk/incunabula, where two short videos concerning the exhibition and early printing may be viewed.

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 Pembroke Street, Oxford OX1 1BP. Further details may be found on the Museum's website at www.storymuseum.org.uk. For booking please visit the website or telephone 01865 305305.

Family session. Aimed at parents and children, the session consists of a short history of hand-printing and type manufacture, demonstrations of printing on a common press and hand-composition, and the chance for each attender to set their name and print it as part of a keepsake. Suitable for children aged eight and over, accompanied by an adult. *Tutor:* Paul W. Nash or Michael Daniell. *Running:* 2:00–4:00 p.m. on Saturday 24 April 2015. *Fee:* £8.00 per person.

Adult workshop. Similar to the family session, but aimed at those of more mature experience. *Tutor:* Paul W. Nash. *Running:* 6:30–8:30 p.m. on Thursday 9 April 2015. *Fee:* £17.50 per person (£15 concessions).

Letterpress and binding courses at Frogmore Mill

The Paper Trail offers regular courses and workshops in letterpress printing and bookbinding at its Frogmore Paper Mill in Apsley, near Hemel Hempstead. There are letterpress sessions (including an introduction to hand-composition and printing on the Adana press), poster printing sessions (including the use of wood type and printing on a cylinder proof press), and bookbinding courses which run over ten sessions. On completion of the printing courses participants may access the equipment in order to work on projects of their own creation. Letterpress and poster printing sessions run on Sundays from 11:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m. and cost £45.00; bookbinding courses run on Thursdays from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and cost £155 for ten sessions (or £15.50 for individual sessions). For details and course dates please see the website at www.frogmoremill.com and to book a place call 01442 234600 or e-mail education@thepapertrail.org.uk.

PRINT NETWORKS' PETER ISAAC ESSAY PRIZE

In honour of its founder, the late Professor Peter Isaac, Print Networks has announced the latest round of its biennial essay prize, for the best essay in the field of the 'history of the book trade in the Anglophone world'. The rules are as follows:

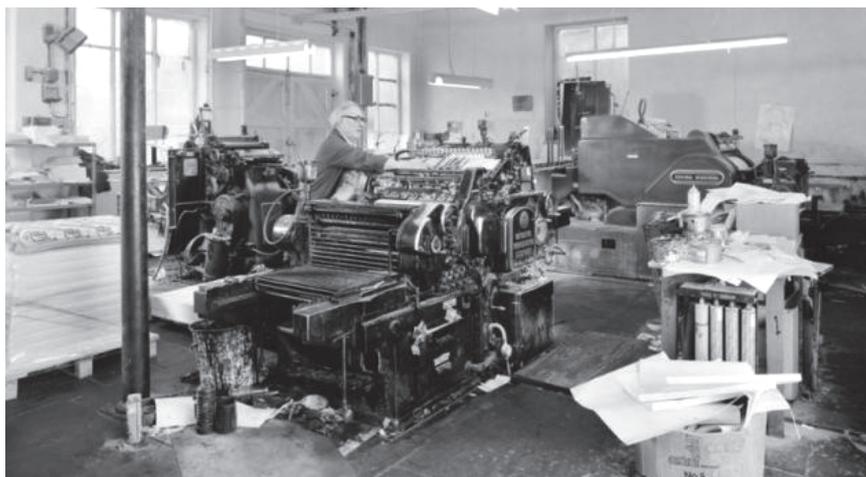
The essay can be on any aspect of the history of the book trade in the Anglophone world, from 1450 to the present day. Papers drawing on research in primary sources and methodological, critical or theoretical essays are welcome. Any student registered for a post-graduate degree (master's or doctoral) is eligible to enter. Early-career scholars up to three years after the completion of their PhD are also eligible, as are independent scholars without a formal affiliation. The text of the essay (exclusive of references and bibliography) must be between 6000 and 8000 words. The essay must be submitted in English and must not have been published elsewhere. An electronic copy of the essay (in Word format) must be submitted as an e-mail attachment to Dr Catherine Armstrong, convenor of Print Networks by 10 April 2015. C.M.Armstrong@lboro.ac.uk.

The essays submitted will be assessed by at least three members of Print Networks' committee (all of whom are active researchers in the field). Submissions will be judged in terms of their originality, depth, scope and rigour and the extent to which they make a new contribution to historical understanding, as well as qualities of style and presentation. The Print Networks committee reserves the right not to award a prize in any particular year. The prize will be announced in early July via e-mail and on the Print Networks website, and will be awarded publicly at the Print Networks workshop. The prize will be £150 plus free entry to the Print Networks workshop to be held at Chetham's Library, Manchester on Friday 24 July 2015.

THE END BUT NOT THE END: Thomas Gee printing works, Denbigh

Judy Roberts

The trust set up to restore and re-use the old Thomas Gee printing works in Chapel Street, Denbigh, North Wales, has ended. After more than twenty years of trying to acquire this grade II* listed building with a view to creating



The press-room at Gwasg Gee before its closure in 2001

workshops and museum spaces, we have had to admit defeat. As a building preservation trust and a charity, the trust received encouragement and support from several organisations. Although, regrettably, we have not been able to buy the building we hope that we have encouraged people to recognise its value and importance to Denbigh, the whole of Wales and to the history of printing.

All is not lost, as many items from the printing works, photographs and additional material donated by members of Thomas Gee's family, are to remain in Denbigh. The building which housed Ysgol Fron Goch, and more recently the Magistrates' Court, is being transformed into a local museum by a group of dedicated enthusiasts. The trustees of this new Denbigh Museum have been willing to house all the artefacts the Gee trust has collected over the years and are planning to display these for the benefit of the public. To celebrate the recent bicentenary of the birth of Thomas Gee, the museum held an open day with an excellent display of items from our collection together with material from the Denbigh archives. The museum committee also hopes to arrange occasional printing workshops and demonstrations. In this way we are confident that Thomas Gee and his influential printing works will be remembered.

PHS anniversary keepsake

The keepsake which is being issued to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the PHS is due to be issued to members (to all those signed up at the time of last year's conference) later in 2015. It has taken the collaborative efforts of many printers and artists to produce, and it is hoped to publish a short account of its creation after it is (finally)

completed. There will be sixteen leaves in all, printed by, and representing, the following techniques: half-title-cum-cover printed letterpress; title-leaf printed letterpress; chinese woodcut (hand-burnished); European woodcut (a contemporary block, cut in the traditional manner by Margaret Lock); hand-cast type (cast and set by Stan Nelson), printed on a common press (depicted below); engraving by Brian



Michael Daniell printing a forme of hand-cast type on a common press at the English Faculty, Oxford University



Paul W. Nash printing Brian Hanscomb's engraving on a rolling press

Hanscomb printed by hand (depicted above); wood-engraving, using an original block cut by Orlando Jewitt; stone lithography, using two stones drawn by Martin Andrews and printed by him and Alan Hardie at the University of Reading (depicted overleaf);



Alan Hardie inking Martin Andrews' lithographic stone prior to printing on an iron 'scraper' press

iron presses and machine type-casting, represented by a page hand-set and printed by Charles Whitehouse using nineteenth-century types and an Imperial Press; stereotyping, printed from a plate made by the flong method (this has yet to be completed successfully); the 'lithographic revolution' printed by offset lithography; nature printing, with a print of a leaf by Pia Östlund; Monotype and Linotype, set using the former technology by Nick Gill; photocomposition (this is the only leaf which it has not been possible to prepare by the method described, photo-setting not being practiced, it would seem, anywhere in the western world); digital composition and printing; and the colophon (printed letterpress).

The text has been written by Paul W. Nash, with the help of the experts who contributed to the production, with the display, captions and additional texts set in metal type, by hand or on the Monotype.

HUGH WILLIAMSON AND CLAUDE GARAMOND

John Trevitt

In the PHS *Bulletin* 34 of Spring 1993, the memorial issue for Hugh Williamson, who had died the previous year, Vivian Ridler mentioned Williamson's ambition 'to write a doctoral thesis on a printing-historical theme'. Ridler went on to say that Williamson 'had already written extensively on Jean Jannon, "the man who was not Garamond", in several issues of the *Bulletin*, and his doctoral thesis was ... to be based on those articles. I believe there are plans for its publication.' Nicolas Barker's obituary notice for Hugh, published in *The Times*, noted that 'he had just finished a book on the Garamond types, yet to be published'.

I wonder, what became of this book?

NEW BOOK

The eternal letter: two millennia of the classical roman capital. This new work, edited by Paul Shaw, will shortly be published by the MIT Press. It contains essays written for the book by John and Nicholas Benson, Frank E. Blokland, Matthew Carter, Ewan Clayton, Lance Hidy, Jost Hochuli, Jonathan Hoefler, Richard Kindersley, Scott-Martin Kosofsky, Gerry Leonidas, Gregory MacNaughton, Martin Majoor, Steve Matteson, James Mosley, Tom Perkins, Yves Peters, Ryan L. Roth, Werner Schneider, Paul Shaw, Julian Waters and Maxim Zhukov.

The book will be fully illustrated. A description and ordering details can be found at the website: mitpress.mit.edu/books/eternal-letter. Current members of the Printing Historical Society will receive a thirty percent discount on the full price of \$55.00, when ordered via the MIT Press website quoting the following discount code at checkout: MSKO30. (Shipping charges will apply to each order).

PHS Journal

Number 22 of the *Journal of the Printing Historical Society* is now in preparation and will be issued later this spring. It is due to contain five essays, Alan May writing on his reconstructions of Moxon's hand-mould and Dürer's drawing of an adapted one-pull press, Hendrik Vervliet on Granjon's combinable ornaments, Elizabeth Upper on red frisket-sheet fragments, and Riccardo Olocco on the roman types of Francesco Griffo, as well as book reviews. Number 23 (Autumn 2015) will be guest-edited by John Feather on the theme of the relationships between printers and publishers.

Treasurer for the PHS and NPHT

Following the retirement of Andrew Dolinski, the PHS is seeking a new Treasurer. In recent years, the job has been combined with the Treasurership of the NPHT, and it would make sense to continue to connect the roles. The ideal candidate would be someone with an interest in printing and its history, and a knowledge (not necessarily professional) of book-keeping. If you can help, please contact the Secretary of the PHS (details below).

Ron Costley

I am sorry to record the death of Ron Costley, the distinguished typographer and book-designer who had such an influence through his work for Faber and Faber, Chatto and Windus and the Shenvall Press. It is hoped to include a full obituary in a future number of *Printing History News*.

SMALL AD

Imperial Press wanted. I am a letterpress printer and press-enthusiast based in France and am seeking a small, ideally table-top, Imperial press (of the sort manufactured in England in the nineteenth century by Sherwin and Cope). If you can help, please contact me on gailardsteiner@wanadoo.fr.

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