

# Printing History News

The Newsletter of the Printing Historical Society and  
Friends of St Bride Library

Number 52 ☆ Autumn 2016

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## Events

### ***Oxford Guild of Printers' Wayzgoose***

The Oxford Guild of Printers will hold a Wayzgoose in the Dora Cohen Hall at the Wheatley Campus of Oxford Brookes University on Saturday 22 October, 10 am to 5 pm. Stalls will be held by fine and private press printers (offering their printed books and ephemera, second-hand type, equipment and printing sundries), societies, booksellers (specialising in press books, typography and bibliography), suppliers of paper, type and relief blocks, binding materials, etc. Entry is free. For further details, see: [www.oxfordguildofprinters.com/events/](http://www.oxfordguildofprinters.com/events/).

### ***Manchester Artists' Book Fair***

This, the eleventh Fair, will be held at the Old Fire Station building on London Road, Manchester, on 15–16 October. More information at: <http://www.manchesterartistsbookfair.com/>.

### ***Interactions: Ceramics***

In October 2013, the Printing Historical Society launched an occasional series of 'Interactions', the purpose of which was to bring together experts in the field of printing history with colleagues in allied subjects in order to exchange news and views on what is, or should be, happening in their associated fields; to communicate common interests and concerns; and to identify gaps in knowledge. The Society hopes such 'Interactions' will help relate printing history to other disciplines, engender interest in kindred subjects and perhaps generate publishable material for inclusion in the *PHS Journal*.

The next 'Interaction', chaired by Michael Twyman, looks at the cross-overs between printing and ceramics, and will take place on Saturday 22 October 2016 at the Wedgwood Museum in Barlston, Stoke-on-Trent. This will include a round-table debate and the opportunity to view the new Wedgwood Museum.

Participation is open to members of the PHS, and if you would like to join in

the debate, please contact Caroline Archer: [caroline.archer@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:caroline.archer@bcu.ac.uk).

### ***From Craft to Technology and Back Again: Print's Progress in the Twentieth Century***

30–31 March 2017, National Print Museum, Dublin.

Guest speakers: Prof. Michael Twyman, 'Industrial photogravure: its influence on design 1920–50'; Dr Nicola Gordon Bowe, 'The role of Harry Clarke (1889–1931) as illustrator, innovative art editor and graphic designer in Dublin 1921–25'.

During the twentieth century the printing industry underwent considerable change as it shifted from a craft-based trade to a technology-led profession. This international conference will consider the progress of print during the twentieth century.

The event is organised by the Printing Historical Society in conjunction with the Centre for Printing History & Culture, and the National Print Museum, Dublin.

### ***Book History Research Network event: Book Collecting in Ireland and Britain, 1650–1850***

An event organised by the Rare Books Group of Ireland in conjunction with the British Book History Research Network and the Edward Worth Library. Please contact Elizabethanne Boran to register: [eaboran@tcd.ie](mailto:eaboran@tcd.ie). Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, Friday 25 November.

## Friends of the NPHT

Those individual members of the Friends of the NPHT who were paid-up at the time the Trust was absorbed into the PHS will automatically become members of the Society. It is hoped that they will continue their membership in future years. Museums which received complimentary copies of *PHN* from the Trust will continue to receive the *Newsletter*, for the time being at least.

## PHS Journal

The next number of the *Journal* of the Printing Historical Society (new series No. 24) has been delayed by technical problems, and is now due to go to press in September. I apologise for the delay with this number. Essays will include 'A new census of wooden presses in Great Britain' by Alan May, 'The Earl of Buchan's connections with early English lithography' by Michael Kassler, Steven O. Saxe on the Bruce pivotal typesetter, and Vance Mead's updated account of 'Printers, stationers and bookbinders in the plea-rolls of the Court of Common Pleas'. The following number, which has been guest-edited by Claire Bolton, is well advanced, and is due to appear in late 2016 containing papers on 'The long survival of the wooden handpress in Belgium' by Patrick Goossens, 'A note on interlinear spacing at the University Press, Oxford, 1670–1780' by Martyn Ould, 'Scaleboard: the material of interlinear spacing before "leading"' by Paul W. Nash, 'Some trends in the development of type-cases' by David Bolton, and 'Reconsidering a conclusion: were the earliest types cast or cut to type-height?' by Stan Nelson. Several papers are also in hand for the *Journal* in 2017, but submissions are always welcome, and should be sent to the *Journal* Editor (contact details on page 4).  
PAUL W. NASH

## New PHS Treasurer sought

The Printing Historical Society is still urgently seeking a new Honorary Treasurer. This post will suit someone with an interest in the aims of the Society who has the necessary accounting skills and is based in Britain. Some knowledge of the financial and legal obligations of British charities would be an advantage.

The ability to attend the AGM and two committee meetings per year in London would also be an advantage. Please contact the Honorary Secretary as soon as possible (see contact details on page 4) if you feel that you can help.

## The closure of the National Printing Heritage Trust: two points of view

As the founder of the NPHT, I naturally feel sad and disappointed that, after over 25 years of its existence, it has ceased to exist as an independent charity. However, it seems appropriate that it will continue, with its original aims, under the wing of the Printing Historical Society. Both organisations almost certainly owe their formation to the influence of the exhibition 'Printing and the Mind of Man' at IPEX 1963 which aroused an interest in the history and changing technology of 'The Art the servant of all Arts'.

In the same year, the October issue of *British Printer* carried two articles under the heading, 'The Case for a National Museum of Printing'. One of these was by James Moran, then chair of the St Bride Library Committee; the other was by myself. Not long after these articles appeared, the PHS was formed. In 1970 this was expanded by the formation of the Northern Group of the PHS, consisting of some 100-plus members, of which I acted as secretary for many years.

Before the founding of the NPHT, in August 1990, there had been several attempts to start a national museum of printing. The most notable of these was a meeting held at a hotel at Adel, near Leeds in 1988, which was well attended by Yorkshire printers, many of whom subscribed to a fund. However, the instigator died soon afterwards and nothing further was heard of his scheme. One person present at this meeting was Peter Whittaker, owner of the Compugraphic company, who had a remarkable personal collection of over twenty line-composing machines, which were donated to the Museum of Science & Industry in Manchester. This museum, which Peter felt should have been home of a National Museum of Printing, already housed the National Paper Collection (originally at St Mary Cray, Kent), together with many hand-presses, etc., collected by the museum's first director, Revd Dr Richard Hills, when the museum's original premises were near All Saints, Manchester.

It is appropriate to record the initial support of the (then) BFMP and the NGA, but what failed to materialise was a wealthy sponsor who might have helped build up a Trust Fund capable of getting a national museum off the ground. Despite this, much useful work was

achieved, for example the compilation and publication of a *Directory* listing the printing artefacts in over 100 museums in England and Wales. This was largely the work of Desmond Field, of the John Jarrold Museum of Printing, Norwich. Mostly, the Trust became a grant-giving charity which, over the years of its existence, assisted the acquisition, restoration or setting up of presses and other items.

Much assistance has been given to private printing collections, including the remarkable museum of David Winkworth, so badly affected by the floods in Cockermouth, not long after the Trust had helped it to acquire a fine Linotype machine.

During the time that the Trust has existed, it has had many keen and enthusiastic supporters. Among these, the Trust is indebted to Michael Passmore, its first Chairman, and Professor Michael Twyman, who succeeded him. Throughout most of its time, the Trust Fund was in the safe and capable hands of E. Clifford James, honorary treasurer. Thanks also to Dr Paul Nash who took over from myself the role of co-ordinator and editor of the *Newsletter*.

Despite there being national museums of just about every industry or activity, not just in Britain but in many countries (including our neighbours, Ireland and Scotland), it must remain a hope that a museum of printing and its long history will materialise. It may now be already too late and, as the years roll by, there remain fewer people with the technical knowledge, practical experience and skills to ensure that such a collection would be properly preserved and maintained. There is also the problem of loss of important artefacts from museums, private and public, dispersing their collections. And it is not just machinery that can disappear but also archival items, which can be in danger of being sent for recycling.

Finally, I would like to record that I made a large number of friends during my time as a Trustee and Co-ordinator. I also tried to visit every museum, private and public, that has (or had) printing exhibits, not just in Britain but in Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong and Canada, all of which have left happy memories.

DR DEREK NUTTALL, MBE



The demise of the National Printing Heritage Trust as an organisation in its own right should raise a dialogue among all those who have an interest in printing and its associated crafts and skills as to what exactly is 'printing heritage', what is currently being done, and what the future holds. Here, then, are some thoughts to get the discussion under way.

First, a note on descriptive words: although 'heritage' and 'history' do have different meanings, the two have much in common, and the recent integration of the NPHT into the Printing Historical Society is a logical, positive move and will offer opportunities for the two bodies to work together to achieve common goals relating to printing history and heritage.

Then, there is no doubt that currently there is much interest in printing history and heritage – at least from a practical, craft-skills point of view. The folk getting started in this are mostly newcomers to printing and come from many different backgrounds. Their reasons for wanting to start printing are varied, too, but all have this common thread running through their reasons: they all wish to see the old skills being continued; and they wish to use – and preserve – the presses, type and associated equipment, either for their own pleasure or to set up a small business.

Why, then, if there is so much interest particularly in our printing heritage, has the NPHT folded?

The reasons could be many; but the main one could relate to age. Many of the newcomers to practical printing are fairly young folk – a healthy thing in many ways, for it is good to know that these younger people wish to know more about a craft that is far removed from the digital devices which many of them use so readily.

However, these are also busy people trying to balance many parts of their lives, and asking them to devote time and energy to help promote 'printing heritage' in the bigger and wider sense (setting up a national printing museum, for instance) may be asking too much. So, those who do have the time (but not necessarily the energy) to give to these wider aspects of printing heritage are the older, retired folk, who also, probably because of their long-term involvement in the craft of printing, can see the value of printing heritage on a different scale. Sadly, though, those older folk who have the knowledge do not necessarily have the energy to devote to large-scale projects.

Perhaps, then, we need to be realistic

about printing heritage, and encourage those who are drawn with a passion into using old printing and binding equipment and their related skills, to see their own small print-studios as 'heritage centres'. This would also encourage them to learn more of the history of printing, which would also enhance their knowledge of the equipment in their guardianship; and also, probably, make them better printers!

So maybe the pattern for the future will be one in which there will be a few larger 'regional printing heritage centres' in both private and 'public' ownership across Britain which will act as training centres to help and encourage a much wider network of small 'heritage studios' to obtain, use and preserve equipment properly and wisely, and to encourage them to 'open up' on such occasions as national heritage weeks or to offer occasional 'Open Days' to provide access for the wider public.

We who are passionate about the conservation and preservation of our heritage of printing skills, equipment and knowledge should see now an opportunity to open and maintain a dialogue about how best to put in place a national structure which will ensure that all that has been achieved during the past 500 years of printing will be recognised and preserved for the next 500 years.

KEN BURNLEY &  
JONATHAN WARD-ALLEN

## Shakespeare's sonnets in letterpress

The Bodleian Libraries, as a partner in the Shakespeare Oxford 2016 festival, and as part of a year-long Oxford commemoration of the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death, invited the contribution of letterpress-printed Shakespeare sonnets by small presses from around the world.

On Thursday, 10 November, the Bodleian Libraries will welcome old and new sonnets to the collections.

The sonnets will be presented to the Bodleian Libraries by Katherine Duncan-Jones, editor of the Arden edition of Shakespeare's sonnets.

A selection of the printed Shakespeare sonnets will be on view, and some of the new sonnets will be read at the presentation ceremony at Blackwell Hall, Weston Library, 11–11.30 am. No need to book; just drop in. All of these sonnets will be made part of the Bodleian collections.



## Jabez Francis parlour press

The NPHT *Newsletter* No. 28 (Autumn 2010) featured an article about a Jabez Francis parlour press owned by the late Brian Aldred. The press, dating from the 1870s, was the only one known to exist at that time.

It was in 2015 that a No. 4 Jabez Francis press was found in the loft of St Luke's Church in Brighton, Sussex. Stored with the press were some printed tickets from a church fundraising event dated Tuesday 3 March 1908. It is possible that the press had been in the church loft since that time. The Revd Julie Newson very kindly donated the press to the John Jarrold Printing Museum (JJPM) in Norwich in April 2016.

The press was passed to Tony Durier, a volunteer member of the JJPM, for restoration. The cast iron has been finished with the modern equivalent of black lead, and this has given the ornate operating lever and tympan a very attractive finish.

It is uncertain if the No. 4 Jabez press was originally fitted with a frisket frame. As the JJPM is a working museum the decision was taken to make and fit a frisket frame as it makes the press so much easier to use. Initial printing trials have given good results and have created a great deal of interest both to museum members and to visiting members of the public.

The JJPM has now had another No. 4 Jabez press brought to its attention. It has been stored in a shed in Hoddesdon in Hertfordshire. Photographs we have seen indicate that this machine is in good original condition, and it may also be donated to the museum.

ANTHONY DURIER

## Two new books from the PHS

By pure coincidence, two new books from the Printing Historical Society will be ready at approximately the same time, and it is hoped to issue them free to paid-up members at the same time (and in the same package). The first is Michael Twyman's learned transcription of and commentary upon the facsimile of John Phillips's lithographic notebook.

The other book is Claire Bolton's *The Fifteenth-century Printing Practices of Johann Zainer, Ulm, 1473–1478*, which is being published jointly with the Oxford Bibliographical Society.

These two works are being issued free to members of the PHS, in lieu of two numbers of the Society's *Journal* (which has been behind-hand for some years), thus bringing the entitlement of members up to date at last. Additional copies of John Phillips's lithographic notebook may be purchased from the Society at the members' price (see [www.printinghistoricalsociety.org.uk/](http://www.printinghistoricalsociety.org.uk/)

publications/), while further copies of Bolton's work are available from the Oxford Bibliographical Society (see [www.oxbibsoc.org.uk/](http://www.oxbibsoc.org.uk/)).

## Chromolithography

The PHS, which published Michael Twyman's *A History of Chromolithography: Printed Colour for All* in 2013 in conjunction with the British Library and Oak Knoll, is now the only European source for copies of the book. This important study offers a complete and comprehensive history of chromolithography, its processes and practitioners, with more than 800 illustrations and facsimiles. The book is likely to be the standard reference work on the subject for many years to come, and remains extremely good value for PHS members at £40 per copy (the price for non-members is £75, or \$130 if acquired in America from Oak Knoll). For further details please see the website at [www.printinghistoricalsociety.org.uk/publications/](http://www.printinghistoricalsociety.org.uk/publications/).

## Letters received

I would like to offer your readers an outline of my recently completed but unpublished book, *Pride, Passion and Printing*, which is the story of the Bradford printing company Percy Lund Humphries (the Country Press) 1884–1994 – one of the great British printing companies, and widely acclaimed in Europe and America. The underlying philosophy of the company's founders, Percy Lund and Edward Walter Humphries, was 'only produce work of the very highest standard'. It never deviated from this goal. PLH was the vanguard of new ideas, printing processes, equipment, management and training.

The following words will give a flavour of my work: photography and photographic chemicals; letterpress; gravure; lithography; 90 languages including Chinese; the development of the atom bomb; the Replika process; Jean Berte process; the Glazer process; Jan Tschichold; Herbert Spencer; David Hockney; works laboratory; works committee; apprentices group; new technologies; latest machinery; quality and perfection; the *Penrose Annual*; Russian and American markets; the Academy; leadership; characters and personalities; asset stripping; war veterans and heroes; economic crises and tensions; digital technology; free trade zones; secrets in the cellar; dark satanic mills . . .

Members of the PHS will certainly have known of, maybe even worked for PLH. All will know of the *Penrose Annual*. Perhaps after reading this very brief promotion, they will reach out for their favourite volume of *Penrose* to reminisce about the golden age of printing.

CHARLES LUBELSKI

I am undertaking a photo project about a family printing business my great grandfather started in the late 1800s that ran until around the mid-1970s, and hope readers may be able to offer some help.

The press was called the Brooks Press and was based in Wirksworth, Derbyshire, being run by a Frank William Brooks, also of Wirksworth. They used to print material for the locality, as well as a number of books on poetry. In 1932 they had a foolscap folio platen press, a demy folio 'Jobber' platen and a Heidelberg platen. If anyone has any information about the Press, or the whereabouts of the machinery that was used at the shop, I would be grateful. CHRIS BROOKS

(chris@chrisbrooks.net)

I have to comment on the piece in the Summer *PHN* about the Albion press in New Plymouth. I was unable to see it in person when I was there, but I am quite sure it is neither the oldest nor the first press used in New Zealand – there is an older Walker Stanhope (No. 108, 1813) at the Wai-te-ata Press at Victoria University in Wellington, though it does not have priority of New Zealand use, being there on loan from the Cambridge University Press. And there is a Columbian press which I believe is older than the Albion and may have been used to print New Zealand's first newspaper, the *New Zealand Gazette*, of which the first issue was printed in London in August 1839 and the second issue in Wellington in April 1840. I am trying to trace the Columbian through its travels in New Zealand.

BOB OLDHAM

Information is sought about Adams Brothers, printers of Fish Street Hill, London around 1870. Replies, please, to [bruce@brucejohns.co.uk](mailto:bruce@brucejohns.co.uk).

## The Brunswick Printers

The Brunswick Printers is the name by which a handful of POWs held in Oflag 79 camp in Braunschweig, Germany, has come to be known. Theirs is the only known and documented story of a clandestine printing press operating in a POW camp, the sole purpose of which was to print escape maps.

Previously known only through a 1951 article in *Printing Review* written by Philip Radcliffe-Evans, a Liverpool printer and the instigator of the Brunswick Printers, a series of fortuitous coincidences has resulted in this letterpress limited edition of the full story.

The book has been typeset by hand and printed by traditional letterpress at Juniper Press in Liverpool in a limited edition of 150 numbered copies, and consists of the original *Printing Review* article, illustrations of the press, and separate colour facsimiles of the four maps printed in the Oflag 79 camp.

A companion facsimile unlimited edition will be printed, to reflect the interest that this book will generate among lovers of letterpress, those interested in printing history, cartographers and map-makers, and the many fascinated by World War 2 POW narratives.

For more information, email Ken at: [juniperpressliverpool@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:juniperpressliverpool@yahoo.co.uk).

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## CONTACTS

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(incorporated as a sub-committee of the Printing Historical Society)

[www.npht.org.uk](http://www.npht.org.uk)

**Contact:** Paul W. Nash, secretary@npht.org.uk

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### ST BRIDE LIBRARY

Bride Lane, Fleet Street, London EC4Y 8EE. [www.sbf.org.uk](http://www.sbf.org.uk)

**Librarian:** Post vacant. [info@sbf.org.uk](mailto:info@sbf.org.uk)

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