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Fellowship of American Bibliophilic Societies

Volume 1, Number 5, Autumn 1997

FROM THE EDITOR

It is a pleasant surprise that there are even more clubs that share bibliophilic interests similar to our own. Since our last newsletter, FABS has grown by three new clubs to a total of 17 affiliated organizations. Bruce McKittrick, our membership chairman, anticipates several more groups may join FABS.

We now distribute over 3,400 copies of the newsletter. The newsletter is an important link between us. Through it we can learn what is going on at other clubs. Their programs, projects, and newsletters can be compared. All of this in order to make our own clubs better.

The newsletter is funded by the annual dues collected from each club. The newsletters are sent in bulk to FABS representatives who then redistribute the newsletter to each member of his or her club.

From this newsletter we learn what is going on elsewhere. Some of us who will be in other cities can contact the local club to see whether it is possible to attend one of their programs. Clubs can learn of potential speakers they might later invite to their own clubs. You will notice talks scheduled on Faulkner, Verne, Japanese influence on advertising and even one on the literature of punishment. Our mission is to exist as a loose association of representatives from a wide range of clubs that seek ideas, cooperation and an occasional shared experience together. This newsletter is meant to be one step in that direction.

Lawrence N. Siegler



PLANS FOR A SPRING FABS TRIP

Arrangements are being made for a trip to Philadelphia and Delaware in the spring of 1998. The Library Company, the Rosenbach Museum and Library, Winterthur, and many more activities are included in the trip. The Philobiblon Club and the Delaware Bibliophiles will be instrumental in making this trip a fascinating and enjoyable one. The trip is open to all members of FABS clubs. Your FABS representatives will soon be advising you of the specifics.

RECEPTIONS AT BOOK FAIRS

The Grolier Club has kindly invited FABS members to a reception at their club prior to the New York City ABAA Book Fair on April 16, 1998. Receptions provide an opportunity to meet members of the local club and others from around the country who are there for the Fair. Past receptions in New York and San Francisco were warm and enjoyable occasions.

FABS REPRESENTATIVES

If one is planning a visit to any of our cities, arrangements to attend a club function can be made through these representatives. There is a general meeting of representatives on October 16 in Chicago at the Newberry Library.

BALTIMORE BIBLIOPHILES

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514 St. Paul St.

Baltimore, MD 21202-2282
Tel: 410-962-8580

THE BAXTER SOCIETY

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THE BIXBY SOCIETY

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THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA

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THE CAXTON CLUB

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THE GROLIER CLUB

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JOHN RUSSELL BARTLETT SOCIETY

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THE OTTAWA BOOK COLLECTORS

Dr. Franklyn Hicks
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THE PHILOBIBLON CLUB

George R. Allen
2031 Walnut St.
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THE ROWFANT CLUB

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SACRAMENTO BOOK COLLECTORS CLUB

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TULSA BOOK COLLECTORS CLUB

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THE BOOK CLUB OF WASHINGTON

Russell Johanson
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Seattle, WA 98104
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WELCOME TO THREE MORE CLUBS

Our three newest members are the Ottawa Book Collectors Club, the Bixby Society, and the Tulsa Book Collectors Club.

The Ottawa Book Collectors Club was founded in 1978 and currently has 35 members. Not only do they produce a full and enjoyable newsletter named, interestingly enough, *The Bibliolatrist* but have issued two volumes of annals entitled *Miscellany*. Number 1 is out of print. *Miscellany 2* is now on sale for \$25 and could be of interest to clubs that might plan to print annals. The volume is worth reading for its own sake and contains many items of bibliophilic interest.

The Bixby Society had its beginnings in 1991 and now has about 70 members. The club is named after William Bixby, a nationally prominent turn-of-the-century book collector and philanthropist. A founder of the Washington University Library, he also gave many items to the Huntington Library and the Grolier Club. Their newsletter is produced three times a year. The Club has lectures and tours to regional collectors and dealers.

The Tulsa Book Collectors Club emerged from a Sunday afternoon panel on book collecting which was organized by Shirley Gidley, Reference Librarian at the Tulsa City-County Library. Sid Huttner, Curator of Special Collections at the University of Tulsa Library, offered the Club the use of the Library's rare book room for its "home base" and for its monthly meetings. Membership is composed of collectors, dealers and librarians and has been growing since its inception.

CLUB NEWS AND PROGRAM OF EVENTS

THE BALTIMORE BIBLIOPHILES

FABS members are cordially invited to attend our meetings. Call Arthur Cheslock for details.

Wednesday, September 17: The Rosenberg Gallery, Gaucher College 6:00pm; *The Japanese Influence on Advertising from 1875-1890*, Thomas Beckman, Registrar, The Historical Society of Delaware.

Tuesday, October 14: Evergreen House, The Theater, noon; *In Foreign Parts: Nine Stories*, Elisabeth Stevens, Author and Etcher.

Thursday, November 20: Evergreen House, 6:00pm; *Technology and the Future of the Book*, James Neal, Librarian, Johns Hopkins University.

THE BAXTER SOCIETY

We cordially invite you to attend our meetings. Call Eliot Stanley for details and reservations. Last season we were delighted with a visit from a member of San Francisco's Roxburghe Club. We hope more FABS members visit in the future.

The following events are scheduled, generally at 7:30pm on Wednesdays.

September 10: Ronald Keller, Printer and Publisher, Red Angel Press, Bremen, Maine and NYC, *A Visual Response to the Printed Word*.

In October, Michael Alpert, University of Maine Press, *Running a State University Press*.

In November, Ken Shure, Business Director of the Gehenna Press, *Our Recent Activity and Plans*.

In December, The Annual Meeting.

Eliot Stanley's Rockwell Kent collection of books, graphic and decorative arts will appear on exhibition at the Grolier Club from September 10 to November 7 in New York City.

THE BIXBY SOCIETY

We hold quarterly meetings at the Mercantile Library of St. Louis and we organize regional tours to visit various private collections.

In late September, we will meet to examine the treasures of the Mercantile Library before it moves to a new building at the University of Missouri in St. Louis. In early November, we will tour book shops in central Illinois. Other programs are in the process of development.

THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA

Planned public programs are usually held at 312 Sutter St., Suite 510 on Mondays at 7pm. after the regular open house which lasts from 5-7pm. We are always glad to welcome visitors.

Club News: The Oscar Lewis Award was presented in February to Richard Dillon for his contributions to Western History and to Marjorie G. Stern for her contributions to the Book Arts.

Gary Kurutz's monumental study, *The California Gold Rush: A Descriptive Bibliography of Books & Pamphlets Covering the Years 1848-1853*, appeared and is selling briskly. Designed by W. Thomas Taylor and printed on letterpress in Adobe Caslon on Mohawk vellum, the cloth-bound volume consists of 830 pages with illustrations, index, and location information. Mr. Kurutz, long time Chairman of

the Club's Publications Committee and Special Collections Librarian at the California State Library, spent eight years compiling this work.

Available in late 1997 is the Club's Publication No. 207: *A Voyage to California, the Sandwich Islands & Around the World in the Years 1826-1829* by Auguste Duhaut-Cilly. Translated and edited by August Frugé and Neal Harlow. Patrick Reagh of Sebastopol is the designer-printer of this handsome illustrated volume, a new translation of an important text.

The keepsake for 1997 is in preparation; its subject is from certain treasures of the Club's library, edited by Albert Sperisen and Barbara Land, long time volunteers in our library. This will be designed and printed by James Wehlage of Classic Letterpress; each of the twelve sections will be illustrated by photographs, some in color.

In October, Mindell Dubansky, Preservation Librarian at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, will speak on his Museum's bookbinding collection. Our planned Winter exhibition will introduce Club members and visitors to the Merle Armitage collection of member George Gelles.

THE CAXTON CLUB

Dinner programs are ordinarily held on the third Wednesday of the month, generally at the Mid-Day Club. Pre prandials: 5-6pm, Dinner: 6-7pm, with a speaker to follow.

September 12: Michael Intratour, *Continuous Tone Printing and Facsimile Reposition*, lunch, 12:30pm.

September, 24: Celebration of the 100th anniversary of Somerset Maugham's first novel, *Liza of Lambeth*, symposium by local Maugham collectors, dinner at the Casino Club.

October 10: Caxtonian John Railing, *Pop-up Books, part II*, dinner

October 15: Lunch, to be announced.

DELAWARE BIBLIOPHILES

The 20th anniversary of the founding of the club was celebrated on March 7, 1997, at Chadds Ford Inn, Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania. Thirty-seven members and guests attended.

The speaker of the evening was Dr. John Bidwell of Princeton University Library. His Oxford D.Phil. dissertation was "The Brandywine Paper Mill and the Anglo-American Book Trade 1787-1837." He borrowed excerpts from his thesis to tell of the "hard times at the Brandywine Paper Mill." Dr. Bidwell made the era come alive and vividly described the intrigues and maneuvers that occurred in those days. Robert Fleck of Oak Knoll Books presented Dr. Bidwell a limited edition of Bidwell's *Early American Papermaking*. Each attendee received a pop-up book, *The Knight's Castle*, through the generosity of Gordon Pfeiffer, our President. A commemorative bookmark was also distributed. It was printed in an edition of 250 by Browne & Co., New York and contains an original wood engraving by John DePol, which he recently gave the Delaware Bibliophiles.

Our program is assembled by Tom Beckman and Bert Denker; FABS members are invited.

Sunday, September 21: 2pm, tour of Martha Carothers's studio to see her work and her collection of the publisher Harlan Quist. Carothers is Chair of the University of Delaware Art Department.

Saturday, October 18: 11am, visit to the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts in Philadelphia, conducted by Glen Ruzicka, Chief Conservator. Lunch will be followed by a visit to the Rosenbach Museum.

Wednesday, November 19: 6pm, Annual Auction, location to be announced.

BOOK CLUB OF DETROIT

There are six programs annually. At least one of them is an all-day seminar, co-sponsored by the Friends of the Detroit Public Library, the Wayne State University Press and other area bibliophilic organizations. Meetings are generally in the Burton Room at the Detroit Public Library. FABS members are invited. Call Sam Gatteño, for details.

Early October, Opening Social Gathering.

November 6, Faulkner Night, panel of University of Michigan professors and Toby Holzmann, collector of Faulkner's work.

December 12, Christmas Party.

FLORIDA BIBLIOPHILIC SOCIETY

There are monthly Sunday meetings from September to May. Meetings are held either at the University of Tampa's Merl Kelce Library or at Heritage Village's Pinellas Room in Largo, Florida. Members of FABS are welcome, perhaps as they pass through or stay near the St. Petersburg area during their peregrinations south. Any questions should be directed to Lee Harrer, FBS Newsletter editor and general factotum.

September 21: 1:30pm, Heritage Village, Largo, *Local History and the Book*, Leland Hawes, historian and newspaper columnist.

October 19: Annual Meeting, 1:30pm, Members discussion of their collections, University of Tampa Library.

November 16: Heritage Village, Largo

Club News: Our Annual Banquet on May 11 honored our outgoing President Norman Tanguay and elected George Spiero President and Jay Dobkin Vice-President. Our summer newsletters contained items on Mark Twain, Robert Frost, Maxwell Bodenheim, and Amy Lowell.

THE GROLIER CLUB

The Grolier Club's general calendar of events is as follows:

September 10 to November 7: Small exhibition, *Rediscovering Rockwell Kent; Books, Graphic and Decorative Arts, Selections from the collection of Eliot Stanley*. Opening, 5:30pm.

September 16 to November 15: Public exhibition, *The Practice of Letters; The Hofer Collection of Writing Manuals, 1514-1800*. The Curator is Anne Anninger, Opening 6:00pm.

September 25: Gallery Talk and Dinner, Eliot Stanley will conduct a tour of his exhibition and after dinner will talk about Rockwell Kent. Gallery talk at 5:30pm. Cocktails at 6:30pm., dinner at 7:00pm, Members only.

September 27pm: All-day trip to Baltimore, Sponsored by the Prints, Drawings, and Photographs Committee. Includes tours of the Peabody Library, the Walters Art Gallery, and the Baltimore Museum of Art, Members only.

September 30: New Members tour, reception, and dinner. Tour at 5:30pm, reception at 6pm, dinner at 7pm. Open to all Grolier Club Members and their guests.

October 21: Club Meeting, David Becker on *Writing Manuals*, 6:00pm; reception follows.

October 30: Lecture, Marcia Allentuck on *William Morris*, 6:00pm; reception follows.

November 8: Symposium on Writing Manuals. Co-sponsored by the Society of Scribes. Scheduled speakers include David Becker and Robert Williams, 10 am-1pm.

November 19 to January 9: Small exhibition: *Inside Editions; A Literature of Punishment*. From the collection of Larry Sullivan. Opening 5:30pm.

December 9 - February 21: Public exhibition: *The Book Room: Georgia O'Keeffe's Library at Abiquiu*, curated by Ruth Fine, Elizabeth Glassman, and Juan Hamilton. Opening probably at 9:00pm.

January 21-March 20: Small exhibition, *Early 20th Century Women Printmakers*. From the collection of Leslie Garfield. Opening 5:30pm.

January 22: 114th Annual Meeting 6:30pm, reception 7:15pm, Members only.

These events are subject to change and often for Members only. Please call Eric Holzenberg, Librarian for details.

OTTAWA BOOK COLLECTORS

Monthly meetings begin more or less promptly at 7h00pm (19h30 to metric purists) in the small conference room located on B-1 of the Main Branch of the Ottawa Public Library, 120 Metcalf St.

We have our meetings from September until June.

September 8: Double entendre delirium! As a variation on the more customary summer-gleanings (a.k.a. the annual "show and tell"), OBC members are asked to bring (and eloquently bibliospeak) a book which is:

heavy, saccharine, odoriferous, or indistinct.

October 27: NQNDY (Not Quite Nailed Down Yet) but the plan is to invite a distinguished and prominent bibliophile attending the Ottawa Antiquarian Book Fair to address the OBC membership.

THE PHILOBIBLON CLUB

The Philobiblon Club has meetings on the second Tuesday from September to June, usually at the Franklin Inn Club at 7:30pm. It is expected that each meeting will be preceded by 6:00pm, cocktails and dinner by reservation only.

October 14: William Stoneman, formerly Schiede Librarian at Princeton University, and the new Librarian of the Houghton Library, Harvard University, *Experiences at the Scheide*.

November 11: James N. Green, Library Company of Philadelphia, *Readers and Reading in Colonial Philadelphia: Thomas Bradford's Circulating Library*.

December 9: Peter Stallybrass, University of Pennsylvania, *Fingers in Books*.

February 10: Melissa J. Homestead, University of Pennsylvania, *Harriet Beecher Stowe and Copyright*.

March 10: Andrea Immel, Cotsen Librarian, Princeton University, *The Cotsen Collection of Children's Books*.

May 12: William Helfand, collector, *The Doctor Dismissing Death*, from Mr. Helfand's collection of imagery of medical history.

Visitors from other FABS clubs are most welcome. More information can be obtained from Dan Traister, c/o The Van Pelt Library, 3420 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104; Tel: 215-898-7088; e-mail address is: traister@pobox.upenn.edu

THE ROWFANT CLUB

We have dinner meetings Wednesdays at 6:00pm at our clubhouse three times per month from October to May. Our weekly Friday luncheon programs cover a wide range of subjects. We welcome your visit to Cleveland. Contact George Weimer, IV; 216-566-7019 for arrangements.

September 30: Visit to the exhibit, *From the Ends of the Earth - Judaic Treasures From the Library of Congress*, Cleveland College of Jewish Studies, 6:30pm.

October 8: Official Opening, M. Joseph Abacete, Canton Museum of Art, *The Sistine Chapel*. Members only.

October 15: Michael Murray, Organist, *Albert Schweitzer - Musician*.

October 22: Mel Meehan, Dealer in posters, *Military Posters - World War I and II*

October 29: Bruce and Matthew Ferrini, Manuscript dealers, *Security Issues Where There Are Rare Books/Manuscripts*.

November 12: Thomas E. Wagner, Cleveland State University Professor, *Molecular Understanding of the Mind*.

November 19: Annual H. Jack Lang Lecture, Stephen Fliegel, Curator, Cleveland Museum of Art, *Tuscan Manuscripts*.

December 10: Margaret Brouwar, Composer and Teacher, Cleveland Institute of Music, *Modern Composing*.

December 17: Christmas Party and Auction.

January 4: Sunday after New Year's Open House.

January 14: Member Robert H. Jackson, *On His Collection of The Beat Authors*.

January 21: Edward Haymes, Professor, Cleveland State University, *Wagner's Mythology*.

January 28: Alan Miles Ruben, *China - The Dragon Awake*.

February 2: Candlemas Annual Meeting, Members only.

February 11: Virginia Bartow, Librarian, New York Public Library, *Rare Books in the NYC Public Library*.

February 18: Professor Donald Larmouth, University of

Wisconsin, *U.S. Language Policy - Linguistics and Modern English*.

February 25: Matthew Biscotti, Book Dealer, *Sport Book Collecting - Especially Fox Hunting*.

March 11: Ron Haybron, Cleveland State University *Modern Cosmology*.

March 18: Peter Wainwright, retired Lecturer, University of Arizona, *On Bataan and World War II in the Pacific*.

March 25: Arthur Guttman, Baltimore Collector, *Mencken and his Work*.

April 8: Karen Barnes, M.D., *Neurology and the Intellect*.

April 15: Roy Goodman, *Genetics and the Soul*.

April 22: Dr. William Kelso, Director of the Archaeological Excavations at Jamestown, *A Startling New Discovery*.

April 29: C. Collins, Professor at Babson College.

May 13: Michael T. McMenamin, *Churchill*.

May 20: Closing Dinner. Dr. Alan Fern, Director, National Portrait Gallery at the Smithsonian, *Portraits as Autobiography*, Members only.

THE ROXBURGHE CLUB

The Roxburghe Club of San Francisco meets on the third Tuesday of the month at the University Club, high atop Nob Hill. If you plan to be in San Francisco, please join us for dinner and a book talk. You should reserve with George Fox. Our schedule for the next few months is as follows:

September 16: Dominic Riley who will speak on *Restored To Life: The Mechanics, Art, Science, Craft, and Scholarship of Book Restoration*.

October 21: William P. Bartlow, Jr., will speak on *The Relationship of the Book Collector with the Book Dealer*.

November 18: Dard Hunter, III, will speak of his illustrious grandfather and papermaker, Dard Hunter.

Our traditional Christmas meeting is a cocktail reception held at the Book Club of California to honor our printer members who provide all meeting announcements and occasional keepsakes. Printers provide brief views into projects which they are working on and usually have samples to show. Combined with the holiday merriments. This event makes for a very casual and enjoyable get-together.

Club news: The fall season of the Roxburghe Club of San Francisco begins with two new officers for the next two years taking over from Harlan Kessel and Jack MacLean. The new Master of the Press is George Fox and The Printer's Devil is Earl Emelson.

JOHN RUSSELL BARTLETT SOCIETY

During the balance of the season, we plan to have the following lectures at 8:00pm. If you plan to be in the Rhode Island area and want to attend these events, or want more details, please call Pamela A. Rakowski, 64 Cathedral St., Providence, RI 02908; Tel: 401-863-2726.

September 16: Roger Keyes, *Traditional Japanese Illustrated Books*.

October 5: Daniel Kelm, *Design and Accident in the Wide Awake Garage*. This talk will be followed by a small Publishers' Book Fair on the Brown University campus.

November 12: Carol Cook, *History of the Athenaeum (Providence) and its Natural History Collection*.

In February: Discussion/forum with area used-book dealers.

March 4: M.D. Taussig, *Jules Verne*. This will also be our annual meeting

April 3: The annual Stillwell Prize Competition. A speaker is not yet chosen.

SACRAMENTO BOOK COLLECTORS CLUB

The Club will present speakers from the following :

September 12: Naida West, Author, *River of Red Gold: Historic Sacramento*.

October 10: Roger K. Larson, MD., Collector of Western History, *The Life of George Wharton James*.

November 14: Robin Heyeck, Manager of the Heyeck Press, *Discussion of Printing Fine Press Books*.

December 9: To be announced.

For more information please contact Vince Lozito, FABS representative.

BOOK COLLECTORS CLUB OF TULSA

We meet the second Thursday each month, except December and August, in the Jack H. and Tybie Davis Satin Rare Book Room of the McFarlin Library at the University of Tulsa. The Club also takes occasional bookish field trips. We would be happy to have FABS members visit and enjoy our meetings. Call Gary Himes 918-743-8666 or Sid Huttner, 918-631-3133 for details.

September 11: Historian Dannie Goble will talk about his soon-to-be-published history of the city of Tulsa, issued to commemorate the city's centennial.

October 9: Photographer and Chair of Tulsa University's Art Department, Stephen Sumner will discuss collecting photography and photography books.

November 20: Oklahoma City bookseller Bob Edwards, Abelanche Books, will discuss collecting Oklahomiana.

November 22: Tulsa Bookfair. Details TBA.

January 8: Annual Members Swap and Sell meeting.

February 12: Joseph Kestner, TU professor of English, will talk about his half century of collecting Victorian detective fiction he has built over 50 years. This may become a trip to see his collection.

March 12: Sid Huttner, Curator of Special Collections, The University of Tulsa Library, will speak on *Caring For Your Books: Some Things to Do, Some Things Not to Do*.

April through August: To Be Announced

BOOK CLUB OF WASHINGTON

This spring saw the initiation of our new quarterly, a compendium of bibliocentric articles, reviews, items on ephemera, libraries, notable collectors of the past and an anonymously written "gadfly" column. Appropriately named *The Quarterly*, the second issue was released in early September.

Our 15th year was celebrated by an exhibition at the Seattle Public Library of collections of our members. In July we held our (hopefully annual) picnic at the Bainbridge Island home of our treasurer Will Shopes. It was a charming and edifying afternoon. Our program for the next months:

September 4: with the Seattle Antiquarian Book Fair, lecture on forgeries, at the Space Needle, dinner at 6pm.

November 12: Book Club of Washington Auction, Rainier Club.

There are more programs planned later in the season. If by chance you are in the Seattle area, do not hesitate to visit.

SUBMISSIONS

In response to a request to all FABS's representatives for items of interest for this newsletter, The Florida Bibliophile Society submitted an article written for its newsletter in February 1990 by Joseph (Jay) B. Dobkin, retired Special Collections Librarian at the University of South Florida and a member of the Florida Bibliophiles.

JAY'S JOTTINGS

Looking back on a lifetime of reading, it is more than a little puzzling trying to figure why some things stick while others are blotted out by the mists of accumulated years. What are the synapses that make our recall such a matter of chance?

From the hidden recesses of my mind there still echo the words of *Little Black Sambo*, my first attempt to read at the age of three. While I received no religious education formally or otherwise, the Bible on the family bookshelf came out on rainy days and gave me a lifelong fondness for *Ecclesiastes* and the *Song of Songs*. An outdated set of the *Book of Knowledge* with copious black and white illustrations, as well as some text in French, soaked up interminable hours when I should have been out in the open air with sensible children. Out of the blur of early reading, the *Rover Boys* merge into the *Pickwick Papers* and Emerson.

How many of you can remember *Flush of Wimpole Street* and *Broadway*? How very warmly I do, in part, I suppose, because of the delightful illustrations that made me want to cuddle that Spaniel. About the same time came a bewildering attempt to pierce the density of Schopenhauer. This was a complete failure and only makes me wonder what a nice boy was doing in such a strange place.

A rush of memories of Sabatini's *Scaramouche*, Pietro di Donato's *Christ in Concrete* and C.S. Forester's *Hornblower* books followed. For nearly twenty years I looked forward to the fantasies of Robert Nathan. Unfortunately, the first I read made the rest a little pale by comparison. *Portrait of Jennie* remains my favorite in this genre.

Despite the fact that my introduction to verse was clouded by the fondness my grandmother had for Edgar Guest, she most thoughtfully saw fit to read Frost, Sandburg, Ogden Nash, Dorothy Parker and Edna St. Vincert Millay with me. The words "We were very tired, we were very merry. . ." are deeply etched indeed. The love of verse is a gift that has remained with me and makes me regret the apparent incomprehensibility of too much that passes for poetry today.

My university days saw the growth of my first real book collection. Early editions of British ballads filled the back of my desk as the college years passed. Acquired one by one for a dollar or two (this was 1938-1942), these friends of my youth are sorely missed now. In my mind's eye I still see the engraved illustration for the ballad *The Two Corbies*. How very much these books gave to me for so many years! At times there was love at the first reading and then a lifetime of friendship.

Best of all there are those innumerable friends waiting to be met and savored. If only the eyes hold out, the spirit is still willing and eager. Who knows but what the next volume will bring true love, enlightenment, and lasting peace in this too often cruel world.

Browning, in his brief poem "Rabbi ben Ezra," avers "Grow old along with me! / The best is yet to be. / The last of life, for which was made. . ." must have had books in mind as well as his readers. For books are, indeed, the comfort of age.

A REPORT FROM THE BOOKWORLD

Dan Traister, Rare Book Librarian at the University of Pennsylvania's Van Pelt-Dietrich Library, University of Pennsylvania and member of the Philobiblon, kindly submitted some recent news in the library world which might be of interest to FABS members.

Summer may be a hot time in terms of weather, but it is not usually a hot time for news, not in the library world at least. This past summer, however, two important American research libraries, separated from one another by a continent, announced new appointments to positions of importance.

Michael A. Keller, Stanford's University Librarian, announced that the new Frances and Charles Field Curator and Head of Special Collections will be Roberto Trujillo. Trujillo has had a steady and successful succession of roles at Stanford, generally in Latin American and Iberian Peninsular collections. Mr. Trujillo has an M.S. in Library Science from California State University and a B.A. from the University of New Mexico.

From Harvard's Center of Renaissance Studies at Villa I Tatti, Italy, Dr. Assunta Pisani will become Stanford's Assistant Librarian for Collection Development. Previously Associate Librarian of the Harvard College Libraries for Collection Development. Pisani holds a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from Brown University, an M.L.S. from Simmons College, and a B.A. from Northeastern University.

Harvard College, known on the West Coast as the "Stanford of the East," has also made an important appointment this summer. William Stoneman is the successor to Richard Wendorf as the Librarian of the Houghton Library. This library is one of the nation's most eminent rare book and manuscript collections. Stoneman has been the Librarian of the Scheide Library at Princeton University. He is a Canadian whose graduate work concentrated on Anglo-Saxon manuscripts. In October he will speak about his experiences at the Scheide Library to the Philobiblon Club in Philadelphia.

In other news, one of the longest-running programs designed to

facilitate the continuing education of collectors, librarians, and booksellers was held again at the University of Virginia Rare Book School. The program was begun originally at Columbia University by the Library School's Professor and Associate Dean Terry Belanger. Now a Professor at the University of Virginia, Belanger continues the program for four weeks in July and August.

Suggestive of both the instructional personnel and the range of courses (some 24 of them, some more than once), are the speakers and topics from this past summer's list: Martin Antonetti (Smith College), *History of the Printed Book in the West*; John Bidwell (Princeton University) and Timothy Barrett (University of Iowa), *History of European and American Papermaking*; Sue Allen (independent scholar), *Publisher's Bookbindings, 1830-1910*; Chris Clarkson (Director of the Book and Manuscript Conservation program at West Dean College, Sussex, England), *Introduction to Medieval and Early Renaissance Bookbinding Structures*; William P. Barlow (collector) and Terry Belanger, *Book Collecting*; Paul Needham (Director of the Books and Manuscripts Department, Sotheby's New York), *The Use of Physical Evidence in Early Printed Books*; Nicholas Pickwood (independent conservator and formerly conservator at Harvard's Library), *European Bookbinding, 1500-1800*; and Michael Winship (University of Texas), *The American Book in the Industrial Era*. (The writer must admit he has also taught in this program, including this past summer, so his is not an entirely unbiased view of its virtues.)

These classes drew almost 300 students to Charlottesville during the four weeks of Rare Book School. Students also heard lectures by, among others, book designer Greer Allen, bibliographer G. Thomas Tanselle, literary critic Peter Stallybrass, and librarian Roger Stoddard. Belanger spoke about the history of the Book Arts Press, of which Rare Book School is an arm.

Information about the Rare Book School at the University of Virginia is on the World Wide Web: <http://poe.acc.virginia.edu/~oldbooks>

DEALING WITH A DEALER

(A recent conversation with R.H. Jackson and others).

Introduction: Negotiating with a book dealer is accomplished in several settings: at his store, over the phone or computer, or at a book fair. Common in all commerce are courtesy, civility and trust. But there must be specific techniques, *caveats*, signals or *modi operandi* that are useful for a book collector to know and use when he or she engages in a transaction with a book dealer.

Question: Are there any serious *faux pas* to avoid when dealing with a dealer? Any *gaucheries* that are specific to the book dealer world? Or messages one might wish to convey or not convey?

Response: Know the dealer. Know and understand the dealer's specialty. Visit them personally, if not at their store then at a fair. Forget e-mail for the first contact. The net can't be as conclusive or effective as a conversation on the phone or a visit. Ask other bookpeople about the dealer. Never downplay the stock or say that you have better items than they have for sale. It's best just to say, "I have another copy." Don't brag but tell what you have. It is always helpful to describe what you need. Discuss your collection, if possible, in modest terms. This will give the dealer an idea of your style and perhaps your budget. Handle books with care. Remember the dealer is most often a serious bookman who is happy for you to appreciate his books. In other words, courtesy and respect for the trade and for books in general are always appreciated.

Question: Should you offer a low bid? If so, how can this be done tactfully? Are shipping costs and insurance negotiable? Shouldn't one do research first? Where?

Response: Probably one should not try to negotiate the first time you buy a book. It is much more tactful merely to say "no" instead. It is not shameful to say the item is out of your range or that it seems too high. Don't be influenced that the item sold once at an even higher price. The best preparation is to know what sells for what. Auction records, catalogues, material such as the recent Quill and Brush price book publication and the Internet are good reference

points. The idea is to create a cordial and mutually respectful relationship with the dealer. Dealers will show their best materials to their best customers first. Be prepared to give a prompt answer, if possible. Dealers can be discouraged by hedging, or being tentative with slow responses. If you know what you want and what is a fair price, you can better build a lasting relationship and generally buy at a good price.

Question: Are vague, hyperbolic or incomplete descriptions such a clear signal of high-handedness? What do you look for?

Response: There are standard descriptions. One can find them in a recent issue of *Biblio Magazine*, for example. Read catalogues, visit fairs, and the dealer's shop to see the difference among similar copies. Even if you buy the item, compare it with its catalogue description. You might get a list of the American Booksellers Association of America's (ABAA) rules for dealers to learn what is considered unethical.

Question: Are returns bad behavior? What is the best way to return an item?

Response: Generally, dealers will accept returns. You ought to have a good reason and not appear to be capricious. Send it back in the same package you received it, if possible. Of course, good dealers will accept returns if there seems to be fraud or misrepresentation. The reputation of a dealer can be learned by asking fellow collectors, other dealers, or the ABAA. Certain U.S. dealers have significant business abroad. They can be very helpful if you plan to travel overseas. Dealers in various countries differ in style. Beware of fraud and forgeries, especially with manuscripts.

Question: What changes are going on with dealers?

Response: There is more specialization, for example, in modern "firsts." Dealers seem better capitalized today and are often very literate and knowledgeable about their area. For sizable purchases the dealer may accept partial payments over time. Stores often reflect the dealer's personality and style. There are fewer dealers now in New York City. Key dealers are more widely spread around the country. The Internet and such computer operations as Interloc are going to be a big factor in regulating the market and making pricing more efficient. Basically, however, the book dealer world is held together and functions as much on trust as on money. A love of books and the capital needed to trade and care for them as treasures help keep the business going.

AN INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF FINE CONSERVATION BINDINGS

Can the world of design binding come together with the world of conservation of antiquarian books? Can we save an antique book or document with a binding that uses not only good conservation techniques but also contemporary design esthetics?

Joanne Sonnichsen, President of the Book Club of California, has sent notice of an exhibition of fine bindings to take place in Paris from May 15 to July 31, 1999.

The aim of this exhibition is to show what kinds of bindings today's bookbinders can imagine for antiquarian books and documents. An illustrated catalogue of the exhibition will show all the appropriate, practical, perhaps unexpected or surprising solutions that might serve as examples.

If you are interested in this exhibition - whether you are bookbinder, restorer, conservator, librarian, archivist, bookseller, or bibliophile, and if you already possess bindings which could be made part of this exhibition, or if you intend to make one for it, write to Françoise Courbage, Conservateur en Chef, Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris, 24 rue Pavée, 75004 Paris; Fax: 01-42-74-03-16.

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