



## Newsletter

Number 156  
Summer 2004

### LIEBERMAN LECTURE

The 2004 Lieberman Lecture will be held in the spring of 2005 in Chicago at the Newberry Library.

The Fall issue will have more details.

### Ten Speakers Set for Annual Conference

30 SEPTEMBER – 1 OCTOBER 2004

**P**ICTURE THIS: THE ART AND TECHNIQUE OF ILLUSTRATION," our 28th annual conference, will be held at the University of Delaware Library, in conjunction with an exhibition on the renowned artist and wood engraver John DePol, and with Oak Knoll Fest, the largest gathering of fine press printers, collectors, hobbyist printers, and bookish folks in North America. Because of this confluence of events, we will start the conference a day earlier than usual, on Thursday and Friday, so participants can attend Oak Knoll Fest (a short drive away) over the weekend.

Early birds on Thursday from 2-4 pm will have the chance to join tours of the University of Delaware's Morris Library or to view the exhibitions and the newly opened Mark Samuels Lasner Collection. The conference opens Thursday at 4:30 PM with a keynote address by publisher and printing historian David R. Godine to mark the opening of "John DePol: Artist and Engraver." The lecture and the reception are sponsored by the University of Delaware Library Associates and the University of Delaware Library. Your evening is free to enjoy in the lively and interesting college town or in nearby Wilmington.

Our conference begins in earnest on Friday morning and will follow a format similar to that used at our New York City conference, with short papers followed by questions. Friday's program features presentations by

### Finding printed material online (not including eBay).

**O**NE of the difficulties in writing about specific aspects of the Internet is that it is a moving target. In preparing for this article, I reviewed a handout I had drawn up a few years ago on how eBay works and the features that are useful. About half of it would have to be rewritten to make it useful today. Websites come and go (remember Bibliofind.com or WorldBookDealers.com?) and features are added or removed. So keep in mind that I'm writing for the moment.

My past two articles for the *APHA Newsletter* dealt with finding printing equipment online, but now let's look at printed materials. Most people can't collect printing presses, linotype machines, cabinets of type, paper cutters, etc. (especially those who live in apartments), so they have to be satisfied with collecting the end products. The Internet has altered how we find second-hand or antiquarian books and how dealers sell them. It is now easier, faster, and more impersonal to find the books you need.

In the old days (before Bill Clinton), when you were looking for a group of books, you would start by contacting the dealers who specialized in the subject and seeing what was in stock. What was left was a list of wants that would be sent to various dealers, and then you waited. And waited. And waited. Sometimes it would take years for you to finish off the list. Now you can search the stock of thousands of dealers online and acquire almost the entire list in a couple of months.

There are three types of sites you can peruse for used books. Many dealers have their own website with a searchable database of their stock. This is fine for your favorite dealers (and you do have your favorites, don't you?), but inefficient if you are searching for a list of books.

The second type is a database of multiple dealers. Here you have the benefit of being able to search the stock of many dealers with one search. The largest one is <www.abebooks.com> with more than 12,000 dealers contributing. The Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America (ABAA) and the International League of Antiquarian Booksellers (ILAB) both have databases of their members. There are a myriad of other sites around the world too numerous to list here, but *Rare Book Review* (London) has a directory of sites in each issue, plus reviews of them.

For high-octane searching, there are the metada-

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tabases. These are websites that take your search, run it against multiple databases and display the results; one-stop searching. This is a very efficient way of working through a list. The two major sites that do this are <www.bookfinder.com> and <www.addall.com/used>.

So far everything sounds simple, but there are insidious things lurking below the surface waiting to trip you up, and you won't even know it is happening. Being a well-educated person who has *ABC for Book Collectors* memorized and knows the specialized vocabulary used for describing printed materials is a hindrance to finding books online. While in the old days it took a major commitment to become a successful antiquarian book dealer, we now have virtual book dealers who deal exclusively online. There are many people who have only a small stock and do not know the proper vocabulary in describing a book. So, if you use specific search terms, you might eliminate relevant results because some of the dealers didn't use them (or use them correctly).

Your first instinct in finding a book may be to use one of the metadatabases, but be careful. In order for these sites to search across multiple databases, they can only search elements common to all the databases. Some databases have extra features that might be important to more successful searching. Also, some sites have such specialized features that they can't be included in the metadatabases. For example, there is an excellent site for antiquarian books in Scandinavia, <www.antikvariat.net>, which currently has 86 dealers and about 820,000 titles – a pittance compared to Bookfinder.com. As an experiment, I once took a list of Scandinavian bibliographies and reference books and searched the list on the two sites. I found for sale 66% of the titles on the Scandinavian site, but only 44% on the much larger Bookfinder.com. Antikvariat.net takes into account the unique traits of the Scandinavian languages and its search features are so specialized that it isn't searched by the metadatabases.

Another thing you have to be careful with the metadatabases is that individual websites might not be available for various reasons, such as maintenance. If you do a search and a site is down, the results page shows "o" results instead of telling you that the system is not working properly. The results might not be accurate, but you won't know.

Some of you might be instructors teaching courses related to history of printing and the book, and you

would like specific examples to show your students. Here is where the online sites can be fun. Think of the type of materials you would like to have, come up with terms to toss into a keyword search and then try variations and see what turns up. If you want a book in sheets, try various combinations of uncut, unbound, unfolded, etc., and look over the results.

I'll end this article with a little bit of trivia. I went through issues of *The Book Collector* to find the first dealer's advertisement with an e-mail address and URL. The first advertisement with a web address was in 1995 and the first one with an e-mail address was in 1993. It doesn't seem that long ago, but considering the life of the periodical, e-mail addresses have appeared in barely 20% of its existence. Now the tricky trivia: what year did the first fax number appear in an advertisement of that periodical? (Answer on page 4)

Vincent Golden

THE NEXT INSTALLMENT: BOOKS AND EBAY

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## Beach Reading

So what are you reading on your summer vacation? Your editor finds quiet vacation mornings on a porch the best time to read books that are heavy – either literally or metaphorically. Standing on the NYC subway, where most of her reading is done, mitigates against hardcover anything. And returning home in the evenings, she finds mysteries and Pleasant Novels provide the best antidote to a stressful workday.

Working through the three volumes of the Technische Hochschule Darmstadt 1995 edition of Fournier's *Manuel Typographique* (one volume of facsimile, one of Harry Carter's English translation, and one with James Mosley's notes) required both arms of the Adirondack chair and the ottoman; even though the volumes are each rather small, they want to be read simultaneously. It would take an octopus to read it on public transportation!

This year, your editor will actually read (rather than just look at the pictures of) Alastair Johnston's *Alphabets to Order: Literature of 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Typefounders' Specimens*. As we will be traveling by car, the trunk might also hold Legros and Grant's *Typographical Printing Surfaces*, on the reading list for James Mosley's Rare Book

School course. Unfortunately, its 730 pages have proven just too heavy to carry around town (although it might come in handy as a defensive weapon).

So what might you pack into your suitcase this year? There's a new edition of Lewis Blackwell's *20th Century Type* (New Haven: Yale University Press, c2004). Even better, Richard-Gabriel Rummonds's *Nineteenth-Century Printing Practices and The Iron Handpress* was due out from Oak Knoll in June 2004. If it hasn't made it to your bookstore yet, you might dip into his 1998 epic *Printing On The Iron Handpress*.

Another book just out is Fred Smeijers' *Type Now: A Manifesto* (Hyphen, 2004). We haven't seen

this yet, but if it is as interesting and provocative as his *Counterpunch: Making Type in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, Designing Type Now* (Hyphen, 1997), it is well worth a read.

It has been suggested that sand-kicking fellow beachgoers might object to bespectacled APHA members reading large, scholarly tomes. Crossover volumes to consider include APHA's own publication *D.B.U. and R.R.: Selected Extracts From Correspondence That Passed Between Daniel Berkeley Updike & Rudolph Ruzicka*, which is readable and interesting. Simon Loxley's anecdotal *Type: The Secret History of Letters* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004) is recommended by board member Martin Hutner. For something enjoyable, provocative

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♥

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★ MANY ITEMS FROM THE SUPERB COLLECTION OF JACK GOLDEN ★

bits of which could be read aloud to your friends (well, selected friends), try Eric Gill's *Essay On Typography*, High Wycombe, 1930 (there are new editions, including a lovely small-format facsimile Godine paperback from 1993, still available).

And if you really have to read a novel, there is *The Rule of Four* (Dial Press, 2004), a work of suspense by Ian Caldwell and Dustin Thomason which centers on the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (but dwells on the text rather than on the book itself). It is gripping enough to make one antisocial ("just let me finish the chapter"), so perhaps it should be read only if you go on vacation by yourself. *Bon voyage!*

Jane Siegel

2004 Conference Speakers from page 1

nine illustrious experts on topics ranging from the 16th to the 21st centuries. We will even squeeze in time for lunch and a visit to the University's other exhibitions and its new letterpress studio, the Raven Press. Details will follow, but our Friday speakers include:

- ♦ Jane R. Pomeroy on the wood engravings of Alexander Anderson, who introduced the technique to the early American republic;
- ♦ Steven Escar Smith of Texas A&M University on the life and illustrative techniques of Harper artist Thure de Thulstrup;
- ♦ Barbara T. Gates of the University of Delaware, on women illustrators of Victorian natural history;
- ♦ Margaret Smith of the University of Reading, on moveable woodcuts in a sixteenth century Venetian book;
- ♦ David Whitesell of Harvard University on attempts in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to design typographic sorts as illustrations and for maps;
- ♦ Janice Heart of the University of Arts, London on Robert Macpherson's Italian illustrations;
- ♦ Gordon B. Neavill of Wayne State University on illustrations in the Modern Library series;
- ♦ Wesley B. Tanner of Passim Editions on a process for cutting "digital woodcuts;" and
- ♦ Barry Moser of Pennyroyal Press on "Retaining the Power of Image."

My own head is spinning from this galaxy of speakers, but if that's not enough, Friday concludes with a reception at Oak Knoll Books and a gala banquet at the Arsenal in historic New Castle. Two panel discussions at Oak Knoll Fest on Saturday and Sunday, moderated respectively by Tim D. Murray of the University of Delaware and D. Breon Mitchell of the Lilly Library, will each look at institutional and private collecting of artists' books and printers' archives.

Besides the opportunity to learn and see new things, the Fest features an opportunity to buy books from Oak Knoll at 20% off (and with no local sales tax)! Indeed, all your purchases in the state of Delaware will be tax free.

"Picture This" and the many related activities at the University of Delaware and at Oak Knoll Fest promise an extraordinary weekend for anyone interested in illustration, printing, and the book arts. Join us!

*Paul Romaine, Vice-President for Programs*

## New Members

- |                                     |                                      |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Susan Brynteson<br>Wilmington, DE   | Mark Knudsen<br>Campbell, CA         |
| Christopher Fraker<br>Marietta, GA  | Nancy Ruth Leavitt<br>Stillwater, ME |
| Tom Goglio<br>San Jose, CA          | Irina Tarsis<br>Medford, MA          |
| Terry Horrigan<br>San Francisco, CA | Lynne Thomas<br>DeKalb, IL ☞         |
| William Jakub<br>McKees Rocks, PA   |                                      |

### *DESPERATELY SEEKING A DESIGNER*

Our production editor, who has done such a lovely job these past few years fashioning a Newsletter which befits an organization dedicated to printing, must retire. We seek someone who can take e-mailed copy, massage it in a standard page set-up program, and forward it to the printer on a quarterly basis. The only compensation is the glory of knowing that people who care appreciate your work.

In addition, literate folk who know their grammar and attend, or have friends who attend, the APHA conference and annual meeting, are encouraged to join, or take over, the editorial team.

Contact Jerry Kelly, Vice-President for Publications, <publications@printinghistory.org> to offer your services.

### An Heartfelt Apology from Your Faithful Editor

YES, dear reader, this issue is late in the spectacular manner normally reserved for Italian periodicals. The "Beach Reading" article really ought to be rewritten as "Back to School Fashions for the Bibliophile."

The fault is mine, and I am truly very sorry. I'm sure you could do better – please volunteer.

We do believe that the Fall issue, containing the Membership Directory, will come out in a timely fashion.

*Jane Siegel*