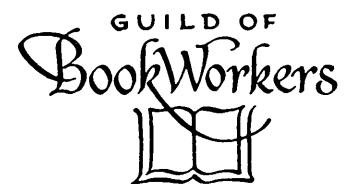


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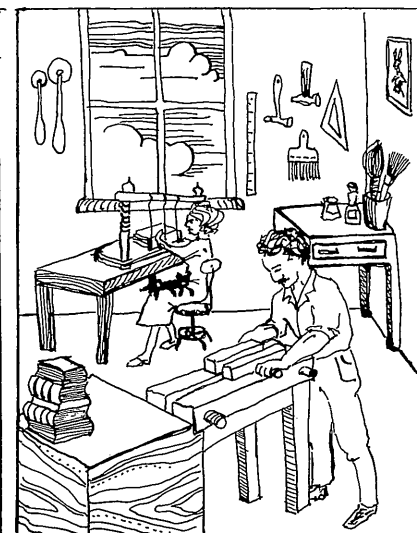
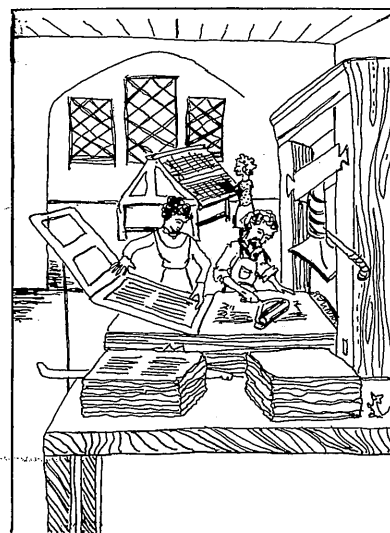


## GUILD OF BOOK WORKERS JOURNAL

Volume XXV

Number 1

Fall 1986



1986

# 80th ANNIVERSARY

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The Cover: Printer, Decorated Papermaker, Calligrapher and Bookbinder—four adaptations of Jost Ammann's woodcuts by GBW member Pam Spitzmueller.

*Editor for this issue:* Virginia Wisniewski Klett.

Articles and reports by members and non-members are welcome for consideration. The views and opinions expressed in this Journal are those of the respective authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Guild.

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CELEBRATING 80 YEARS / *J. Franklin Mowery, President of the Guild of Book Workers*

In this year the Guild celebrates its eightieth birthday, having been founded in 1906. In celebration and recognition of this astounding continuity we inaugurate a major traveling exhibition entitled "80 Years Later" which will travel to five different sites around the country, and is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue. This exhibit shows the diversity of the field of book arts and the quality of the work being done by the Guild's members.

For the eightieth anniversary issue of the Journal Volume XXV, Numbers 1 & 2, it was decided to publish information about what is going on in different parts of the country. Various Guild members were asked to write about the regional chapters, the activities of guild members and about any training that is taking place in their area. I think the Guild can be proud of the accomplishments it has realized in the past 80 years in inspiring and furthering the development and growth of the book arts in this country, but this is just the beginning.

I think that in the not too distant future that the world will look to this country for guidance and for setting the example in quality book works. Remarkable is the fact that, in a country that has virtually never had a tradition of training for those wishing to enter into the book arts field, that a tradition and style that is impressive has developed.

In the membership directory of the Guild one can find the names of many of the leaders in every aspect of book arts, printing, calligraphy, papermaking, bookbinding, and book conservation. This is, I think, a sign that the Guild represents a true and vital link among the book arts.

## THE NEW YORK CHAPTER—A DIVERSIFIED GROUP / *Nelly Balloffet*

Members of the Guild of Book Workers in the New York metropolitan area formed a regional chapter in Fall 1985. A questionnaire was sent to members in this geographical area to obtain suggestions for activities and for direction the members wished to take. The response indicated interest in visits to collections, workshops and social gatherings. The first chairperson was Judy Reed to serve to June 1986 when Nelly Balloffet was elected.

The chapter has grown to approximately ninety members and continues to carry out its three-fold mission. Within the past several years visits have included a Fall open house at Jeri Davis's studio for two consecutive years and a visit to Elaine Schlefer's studio. These were social events at which quite a bit of technical information was exchanged. An invitation was extended and the members toured the Center for Editions, a fully equipped printing and binding teaching facility, directed by Warren Lehrer, at the State University of New York at Purchase. Most recently the Columbia University School of Library Services invited the members to attend the Spring Series on Conservation and Preservation.

There was a hiatus from workshops for several years, partly because there have been so many more classes and seminars available in the New York area than when the Guild began to offer workshops in the late seventies. However, people are again interested in specialized workshops. Recent workshops have included the making of headbands, taught by Jenny Hille, based on the book that she and Jane Greenfield wrote. The response was so great that a second section had to be scheduled. Pam Spitzmueller did a workshop on Long Stitch Sewing and Silvia Rennie's workshop was on edge decoration.

Future plans will include a visit to the Married Mettle Press owned by Ben and Debbie Alterman. A previous visit was postponed because of the Alterman's deep involvement with the production of *Billy Budd, Sailor*. Workshops will be offered, and social gatherings will continue to bring members together. There is an open invitation to the membership at large to take part in any of the New York Chapter's functions (usually announced in the Newsletter).

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Nelly Balloffet, present chairperson of the New York Chapter, is owner of the Paper Star Bindery, Inc. and preservation consultant to libraries. She has a Master of Library Science from Columbia University and received book conservation training at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and with Laura S. Young and Caroline Horton.



## A BOOKWORKERS GUIDE TO FORMING A REGIONAL CHAPTER: Suggestions based on the Midwest Experience / *Maria Grandinette*

Last year, in a spurt of wild enthusiasm no doubt provoked by the return of spring to Michigan, Julia Miller and I invited one hundred bookworkers and friends of the book from Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana to join us in Ann Arbor for a meeting. We had a hunch that they, like us, were feeling a little isolated, and that we would all benefit by getting together regularly and "locally." We proposed that we form a regional chapter of the Guild. As it turned out, our hunch was right, and in June the Midwest Chapter was formed. What follows are suggestions, drawn from our experience, to those of you who are interested in forming a regional chapter wherever you may be.

*Don't go it alone.*

An undertaking of this kind is too much for one person. (Imagine addressing all of those envelopes, licking all of those stamps . . .) Share the fun and the work, do it with a friend.

*Define your region; that depends where you are.*

You need twenty dues-paying members to form a regional group. Windy metropolitan centers like Chicago, artistic new wave communities like Santa Fe, and sophisticated Tex-Mex towns like Austin usually have enough people interested in the book arts to form a group without looking much further than the suburbs. In some parts of the country traditional geographic and historic boundaries continue to prove their use, as is the case in New England.

For those of us that are living in a state outside of the original 13 (Vermont excepted) distances between bookworkers is the issue; how far apart the membership is will determine how often they can get together. We felt that distances greater than a day trip by car would be too much to ask people to travel. On the other hand we knew people would be willing to travel some just because we are so spread apart and crave contact.

*Let someone know what you're up to.*

Before taking the plunge we gave Frank Mowery a call to get a go-ahead and to get straight on the particulars. We also applied to Don Guyot (the Guild's Vice-president-at-large) and David Bourbeau (former head of the New England Chapter) for advice and suggestions. The "particulars" as it turns out were very few:

- \*\* The internal organization of the regional chapter is determined by the chapter.
- \*\* Regional members pay ten dollars on top of the national dues. That money, paid at the same time as the annual dues, is returned to the regional group in full to spend as they wish. The regional group may decide on its' own dues rate. For instance, they may decide to have a student rate, or that people in the same family only need to pay once.

- \*\* The National Guild will give the regional group, once formed, \$250 seed money to spend as they see fit.
- \*\* The regional group selects a chairperson who serves as their representative in the national organization and sits on the Executive Committee. As a member of the Executive Committee the representative has one vote.
- \*\* As mentioned earlier, twenty dues-paying members are required to form a chapter.

*Ask the question, "who's out there and are they interested?"*

To test the waters you need to bring a group of people together, but who? Draw up a list of names of potential members. Our resources included: The Guild of Book Workers and AIC membership directories, listings in Renee Roff's *Directory of American Book Workers*, Ox Bow participant lists, and finally our local telephone directory. We contacted educational and cultural institutions in the area such as the Toledo Museum of Art, Wayne State University, Cranbrook, and the Detroit Public Library. We wrote to local booksellers and collectors. printers and calligraphy groups.

*Plan an activity in conjunction with your meeting. As long as you're getting together why not do something together as well.*

Julia and I planned a full day of activities that included tours of the Bessenberg Bindery (a local hand bindery), the conservation studios of the Bentley Historical collections and the University of Michigan Library, the Clements Library, and the Rare Book and Special Collections Department of the University of Michigan.

*Send an invitation.*

We drafted a letter of intention and enclosed along with it the proposed schedule of the day's events. We also included a postcard questionnaire. We asked people to let us know if they were interested in attending the meeting, or, if they were unable to attend, whether they supported the idea of a regional group.

We sent about one hundred letters. In cases where we thought people might know of others who would be interested we enclosed additional postcards. We received approximately forty-five positive responses. In short, we were in business.

*Make firm the plans for the day.*

Contact hosts at participating institutions; make a commitment for the meeting day.

Reserve a meeting room.

If you have decided to arrange a lunch for all attending locate a pleasant place. Talk to the chef; agree on a price per person and be certain that the price includes the gratuity.

*Send another letter.*

Let everyone know what kind of response there was. Include the confirmed, updated, and revised edition of the day's events.

We chose to send, along with the letter, the following items: directions to Ann Arbor, a directory of places to stay, and a list of things to do and see in the area. The Chamber of Commerce is a great source of information, don't overlook them. They gave us a booklet that listed Ann Arbor hotels, restaurants, cultural and sporting events, etc. They even publish a list of the many book stores in the Ann Arbor area.

If you're sending a number of items you can save time and money by making double-sided copies.

If you've decided to have a luncheon, ask people to send their checks in advance. That will make things easier on the day of the meeting.

Most importantly, encourage people to bring examples of their work to share with others.

#### *Attend to the details of the meeting.*

Be prepared. Before the meeting:

Have on hand information about the Guild. We laid out copies of the many Guild publications: The Journal, newsletters, exhibition catalogues, the supply and membership lists, and the Guild membership brochure.

Arrange with someone to take the minutes throughout the meeting. In our case, Cory Oysler agreed to do the job.

Have an agenda. In our letter we stated that our objective was to determine interest and support for a regional chapter. Provided support was established we would then select a coordinating group to organize membership, meetings, and workshops for the coming year. Finally, we wanted to select a host site and date for the next meeting.

Once the meeting is in session:

Introductions should not be overlooked. Our group was large enough that we felt we'd like to start with introductions. Each person in a few words told us who they were, where they were from, and what their primary interests in the book arts were.

Discuss the issue at hand. Virginia Wisniewski-Klett began the meeting with an overview of the history of the Guild. She then outlined the many benefits of membership, including receipt of Guild publications, GBW library borrowing privileges, exhibition opportunities, annual GBW Standards Seminars, and the option to purchase or borrow videotapes of Standards meeting presentations.

Next the nature of a regional group was described. We looked at some of the activities of the New England and New York groups. This was followed by a vigorous discussion. Some of the topics were: the pros and cons of aligning ourselves with the Guild, kinds of organizational structures, formats and venues for future meetings and workshops, and make-up of the membership. The latter

subject is an important one. Guild membership is predominantly bookbinders, did we want to encourage the participation of book artists, papermakers, printers, calligraphers, and decorated paper makers?

Take a vote. Hands were raised and the Michigan-Ohio-Indiana regional chapter was established. By the way, some good advice was given to me by the Clarks which I foolishly ignored. They suggested that I collect dues on the spot; instead I asked each person to mail in their own. Everyone did, but not at once, as a result it was several months before we knew if we had the requisite twenty members.

Don't neglect expenses. You've no doubt invested some money in the organization of this event; now is the time to discuss how you spent it. Remember, always keep records of your expenses, not just at this stage but at all stages.

Spend time on the details. Determine your organizational structure even if you are a bunch of anarchists. Select hosts and a host site for the next meeting.

Finally, adjourn the meeting following the longstanding book arts tradition, to a tavern. (That is provided you haven't already called the meeting to order in one.)

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Maria Grandinette is Head of Conservation and Book Repair at the University of Michigan. She has apprenticed with Laura Young, Jeri Davis and Hedi Kyle and later worked in book conservation at the New England Document Conservation Center before going to Michigan.

## THE HAND BOOKBINDING PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA / *Paula M. Gourley*

A two-year program in hand bookbinding was added to the curriculum in the M.F.A. program in the Book Arts in August 1985 to supplement the existing program in fine letterpress printing, begun in 1983 and taught by Richard-Gabriel Rummonds and Glenn House.

I came to the University of Alabama from Brussels, Belgium where I had recently spent four months studying fine binding with Liliane Gerard and Micheline de Bellefroid at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts Visuels de la Cambre, as well as undertaking private lessons with fine binder, Françoise Bausart in Antwerp.

The study in Belgium had been preceded by one year of private lessons in the bookbinding atelier of Paule Ameline in Paris, France and several months in the atelier of Roger Arnoult, studying gold tooling. Prior to that, I had spent two years studying fine binding in the French manner with Don Glaister in Palo Alto, California while I was still living on the Monterey Peninsula. Throughout this entire period, I continued to fabricate decorated book papers with the Turkish watercolor marbling method which I had learned early in 1977, during which time I was a bookbinding apprentice with a bookworker in Hartford, Connecticut and a student working on my undergraduate degree in creative writing at Goddard College in Vermont.

Having experienced bookbinding training as an apprentice, a private student and a student in a bookbinding school in Europe, what I had absorbed from the varied approaches to teaching the craft seemed appropriate to use as a basis for the core of the bookbinding program in Alabama. Originally, the ideological basis for the Book Arts program was a concept of traditional training modelled on the apprenticeship system, modified to meet the needs of the individual students in relation to their interests and skill levels. As the program has developed, I have modified the structure of the courses in bookbinding as appropriate to the projects undertaken in the courses on letterpress printing, which all the students study concurrently with binding, during the first year. Thus, the books which are produced are whole objects, designed from the content out, with the binding styles considered from the outset rather than as an after-thought. The sequence of courses in binding are based loosely on the structure of the five-year bookbinding program at the Ecole de la Cambre, for the aesthetic and technical strength of the books produced there, combined with contemporary approaches and conservation considerations. I am not attempting to teach conservation binding, however, and am utilizing my strengths and training in fine binding as a basis for the program. The sequence of the courses covers pamphlet and non-adhesive binding, alternative structures, boxmaking and protective containers, case, Bradel and millimeter

binding, Oriental books and cases, small edition bindings and introductory work with leather for quarter and half-leather books during the first two semesters. After the first year of study, the students may choose to major in either letterpress printing or fine binding/edition binding, each of the bookbinding concentrations being designed on an individual basis. The classes in binding then cover French tight-back binding and millimeter binding using quarter and half-leather with bands of leather all around during the third semester and full-leather bindings during the fourth semester. We are not equipped to work at finishing with traditional tools, so I cover basic design using minimal equipment for inlay, onlay and mosaic work. My feeling at this point is to encourage those students with an interest in continuing in fine or design binding to study these techniques and develop their design skills after completing the program and to concentrate on developing technique while here.

The students who enter the program may have little or no exposure to fine hand bookbinding or quite a range of skills acquired either through workshop experiences, short courses or private study, as well as self-taught skills. Making the program meet the needs of students who wish to pursue careers as edition binders, fine press printers, private teachers, or any variation of these areas is a true challenge. Two years is a very short time when learning some five hundred years worth of handcraft artistry. The University of Alabama program is an academic program in the Graduate School of Library Service and thus is a truly unique program; the only one of its kind in the United States. In order to meet the academic requirements of the University, the students must also take courses in history and humanities to augment their studies in the craft of binding books. Clearly, a short program is not nearly enough time to truly master the art of hand binding a book, though what we are trying to accomplish is to raise the standard of book work in the United States and to keep alive and vital an art which has for too long been considered a dying one. In fact, the book arts are truly alive and well in Tuscaloosa, Alabama and the art of the book is becoming a significant force in the art and book world in America.

The book arts have been steadily growing, quietly but surely, and incorporating not only the handbound, hand printed book, but papermaking, calligraphy, paper decoration, conservation and restoration of works on paper, book illustration, wood engraving, and the fabrication of hand made tools for the handbound, handprinted book.

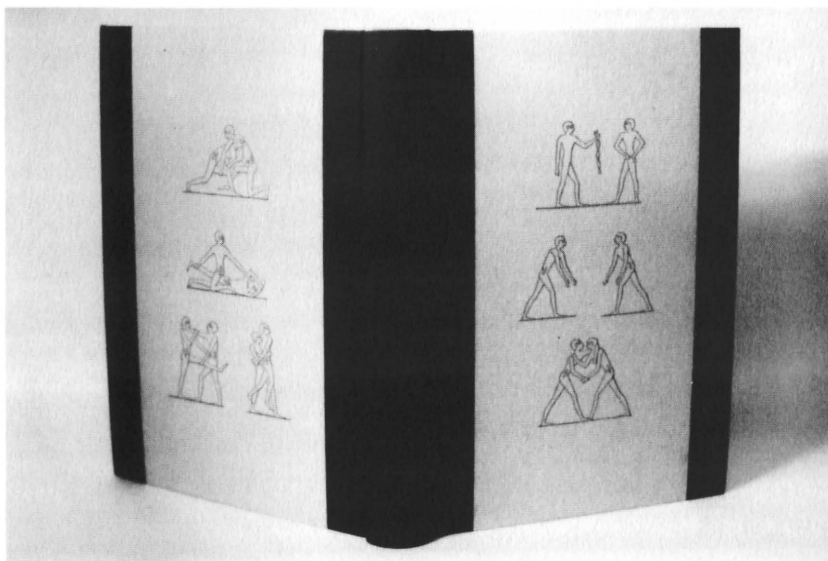
We have encouraged the students to undertake internships during summer and semester breaks, and have been successful with short studies in conservation departments, private presses and private bookbinding ateliers in augmenting the program on campus. I feel exposure to other points of view is essential and will give the student a well-rounded educational basis for future work, as well as a broader technical range for problem-solving and practical experience.



Susanne Martin with a marbled sheet.

I have recently been at work developing an exchange program with two schools in France (Le Vesinet near Paris and the Centre Interregional de Conservation des Livres in Arles), beginning with the summer of 1988, in order that the students in the book arts in the United States may have the benefit of exposure to the European approach to modern binding. This may be the seed of continued exchange between nations and educational institutions to build and strengthen training programs and skills on both sides of the Atlantic and allow even more exchange of technical and practical information. All would benefit and the art of the book will be stimulated even further with the larger access to tools, materials and historical context, as well as major museums and bibliophilic collections. I envision future exchanges with schools and individuals in England, Belgium, Germany and Switzerland, "*La reliure sans frontières* (Bookbinding without boundaries!)."

I suppose that if I were to describe the style of binding which I favor and practice, I would use the words "refined" or "restrained." Not being one who decorates heavily or attempts to put a lot of emphasis on startling creative design, I tend to teach underemphasis. One should not, in my opinion, forsake good technical training for creative expression. My books are simple in appearance, the technique primarily French, the designs restrained and non-obvious. I am interested in teaching good, basic, traditional technique with an attitude of high-



Bradel binding of *The Art of Wrestling*.



integrity and refinement being the important things. To date, this approach seems to be working.

The students in the program are producing books which look elegant and are technically sound. I cannot demand more than that they continue to develop and refine even more, placing impeccable technique as the goal. This is not always easy to tell someone who wants to “create” and make wild and crazy books. This particular program is not geared to that kind of work. As in the letterpress printing program here, the emphasis is on the worthwhileness of the text or content. I do not believe in sacrificing the basic value of the book’s text to the vanity of surface decoration. Rather, I would have the finished work, whether edition, alternative, non-adhesive casebound or full leather design binding invite the reader into the book, to want to enter the text and read.

If I have a dream or desire for accomplishment in this program, it is to give the students the maximum amount of instruction in as many techniques as possible, teaching them to spend the time it demands to produce work of the highest quality, to maintain total integrity as professional crafts-artisans, to be the best that they can be in their work. I would like to see dissolved the artificial boundaries between styles of binding, between printers and binders, an alleviation of the attitude that



Cary Wilkins printing the covers for *The Art of Wrestling*.



Rosalina Gross-Smith preparing marbled paper covers for *Just Shades* printed at the Collegiate Press and bound by the students in the MFA program.

one way is better than another. We have an obligation as professionals to release our grasp on dogma, to be the best that we can be, to teach the best that we know in the most conscientious manner possible and to develop ourselves as we develop our craft into something living and vital. This can be my contribution. It is my dream.

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Paula Marie Gouley is a hand bookbinder trained in French traditional binding styles. She also specializes in decorative paper, most specifically Turkish watercolor marbling. She is a full-time member of the faculty of the Graduate School of Library Service at the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, and associate director of the Institute for the Book Arts, where she teaches bookbinding in the M.F.A. program at the university. She has exhibited her work widely and is known for her subtle, low-key approach to the arts of bookbinding and decoration.

## THE CONSERVATION INTERNSHIP AT THE FOLGER LIBRARY, A PERSONAL NOTE / *Don Guyot*

I was both flattered and challenged when your editor asked me to write about my internship with Mr. Frank Mowery at the Folger Shakespeare Library. Flattered by the invitation to write about an experience which continues to infuse my work with a vitality born of a learning opportunity of immense richness. Challenged by the need to organize the experience in order to make sense out of a thing which remains quite a focal in my mind's eye. Indeed, each morning when I return to my own workbench to begin a day's tasks, I am reminded of the time I spent at the Folger absorbing a vast amount of data, but doing so without any semblance of an organizing principle. From time to time, as I am working at the bench, bits of this data emerge as a single remembrance. And after each of these comes to mind, is regarded afresh, then recedes, I urge myself to organize that which I learned, observed, heard, felt, smelled, and, if you know me well, even tasted, into a comprehensive article which might enlighten someone interested in the conservation of unspeakably valuable paper materials. Bold as such an attempt might seem, however, it would fail, even as others more bold have failed in the past, because the task is more than one with mere human powers can accomplish.

Even so, I believe that something can be said and that it should be said. So I was pleased to have been asked to say something, because it allows me to begin articulating for myself some of the benefits the program offers. And if this has value to someone else, so much the better.

Let me begin then by saying that this piece will not be a recitation of countless formulae such as how many grams of magnesium carbonate or of magnesium hydroxide to add to pure water before bubbling carbon dioxide gas through it for a specified time in order to produce a given quantity of a solution of magnesium bicarbonate for deacidifying paper. Let me begin, instead with a description of the context for the experience that I am intending to articulate.

William Shakespeare has been published more often than any other author who ever lived, save those who are incorporated in the books of the world's great religions. The corpus of his work has been translated into nearly every language spoken. On the one hand this provides a clarion testament to the very high and almost universal esteem in which Shakespeare's wisdom is held. On the other hand, it relates the equally high value which has become attached to the actual copies of the texts of the man's works. These copies exist, not in original manuscripts but rather in early one-play editions called quartos, so named because they were printed on large sheets of paper which were folded twice after printing, or, quartered. The earliest of these quartos, entitled *Titus and Andronicus*, was printed in 1594. Later, the separate plays were collected and printed in one volume. This printing of the collected works appeared in 1623 and has come to be known as the First Folio.

The Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. owns seventy-nine copies of the First Folio, including among these the printer's personal copy. Scholars will never know for certain how many of the First Folios were produced, but expert estimates place the number at no more than one thousand twenty. Of these, about two hundred forty copies are extant, in more or less complete state. Significantly, of the extant copies, fully ONE THIRD are in the Folger Library. Furthermore, it owns one hundred eighty-two Quarto plays, and a deed to Shakespeare's property in the Blackfriars section of London (1612). This is ". . . the only document in the Western Hemisphere known to have been handled by Shakespeare."

The Library owns as well countless yards of Shakespearean memorabilia, stuff generated through hundreds of years of active interest in the most profoundly gifted dramatist who ever wrote. Some other statistics: two hundred fifty thousand playbills; three thousand prompt-books; fifty thousand paintings, engravings and prints; many thousands of costumes, including a corset presumed to have been owned by Queen Elizabeth I. By comparison, there are only five copies of the First Folio available for study in the British Library.

How this came about is a fascinating story in its own right. And, while detailing it lies well beyond our purpose here, it may be appropriate nevertheless to sketch its outline briefly. It began apparently in 1879 when Henry Clay Folger, as a senior at Amherst College in Massachusetts, attended a lecture by the American thinker and essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson. The lecture commemorated the three hundredth Birthday of William Shakespeare! Six years later Mr. Folger bought a facsimile edition of the First Folio, paying one dollar and twenty cents for it. In 1889 he purchased an original Fourth Folio for one hundred seven dollars and fifty cents. From this moment on Mr. Folger and his wife (Emily Jordan Folger; Vasser, 1887) spent their lives and a considerable fortune acquiring works by and about William Shakespeare. The fortune spent on Shakespeare was derived from his work first as an attorney for John D. Rockefeller and then, after 1911, as the first President of Standard Oil of New York, a position he held until 1929. He retired from Standard Oil just prior to the great failing of the stock market in October of that year. In the interval between his retirement in 1929 and his untimely death a year later, Mr. Folger set the mechanisms in place for forming the library and for establishing its governance.

The collection itself was amassed quietly, often one bit at a time. On several occasions, however, entire collections were purchased, as in 1897, when the complete collection of the Earl of Warwick's one thousand seven hundred rare books was bought, both on the strength of an offer of a large sum of money and on the suggestion by Folger that the Earl would then have many yards of emptied shelves with which to do something else. As the materials were acquired, from

whatever source, they were crated and transferred to a fireproof warehouse in New York City where they remained until 1932.

True to his thoroughness, Mr. Folger decided that his library should be located near other sources rich in the scholarship of his interests. Within easy reach of America's National Library and The Library of Congress, Mr. Folger bought property. He hired an architect and had his library constructed, across an alley from one of the buildings of the Library of Congress. Remembering his beginnings and his fond association with Amherst College, Mr. Folger placed responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the library with a committee of the College's Board of Regents.

With the matters of superstructure and of governance settled, The Folger Shakespeare Library became a reality. In 1932 the materials were recalled from the warehouse in New York City, three thousand crates filled with Folger's purchases accumulated over a thirty year period, were encountered. Can you imagine the effect upon the intellectual public when the contents of these crates were revealed: seventy-nine First Folios (1623); fifty-seven Second Folios (1632); twenty-three Third Folios (1663–1664); and, thirty-six Fourth Folios (1685). Also included were several tens of the various Quartos. In short, when the Library opened in April, 1932, the world learned that it contained ninety-three thousand rare volumes, fifty thousand prints and yards of archival curiosa related to Shakespeare and to his times. From these beginnings, important beyond measure even then, the Folger Shakespeare Library has become a major center of Shakespearean scholarship.

And with the collection's importance, not only as a resource for scholarship, but also as a significant repository of one of the principal jewels in the crown of human achievement, comes the responsibility for its conservation. Recognizing this himself, Folger provided for an in-house bindery to care for the materials. The bindery has evolved into a fully fledged conservation laboratory, funded in part by an endowment from the Mellon Foundation. Conservators have full responsibility for the protection and care of all of the Library's various collections, regardless whether they be tapestries, paintings, Queen Ely's Corset, prints, or books.

Practically speaking, of course, the responsibility is too great. Thus the Laboratory, *per se*, handles only books and materials on paper. Conserving the other materials is arranged by contracting with outside specialists. Responsibility for selecting and overseeing the outside specialists is vested with the Library's Committee on Conservation, on which the Head Conservator sits, *ex officio*.

I learned of the opportunity to study conservation in this environment when I went to the Library several years ago to conduct a workshop on paper marbling. While there I met and talked with some of the individuals who were serving internships in the Library's conservation laboratory. Two years later, when I was

once again in Washington, I met with the Head Conservator, Frank Mowery, asking him whether a two-month period would provide adequate exposure to topics in conservation to make the experience worthwhile. It was a naive question, as I was to learn, because it happens that even a moment's exposure in this Laboratory would help anyone greatly. After these conversations and having been told that I was an acceptable candidate for the internship, I made the necessary preparations so that I could leave my business in the capable hands of my assistant, Judith Johnson, and I went to Washington, D.C., arriving there early in June, 1985. From the first day in the Laboratory, I was assailed with an intimidating array of treatment options, often so many as to make me wonder whether my simple practice in Seattle would ever give me any opportunity to use the treatments to which I was being exposed in the Laboratory.

But far more important than being immersed in this large repertoire of treatments, was being surrounded by individuals used to applying the treatments successfully to conserve significantly more valuable materials than I had ever seen. What this aspect of the experience in Washington, D.C. imparted to me was a keen sense of the need to exercise judgement in the choice of treatment alternatives. But I learned, too, that all the experience in the world informing the best judgement anywhere cannot eradicate the fundamental truth underlying all conservation practice; namely, that any decision is attended by varying amounts of humbling risk. This notion was set in my brain permanently as one document after another came into the Laboratory, was examined, discussed, described, photographed, treated, photographed again, then returned to the collection. It seemed to me then, as I witnessed these documentary procedures, even as now when I consider them afresh, that they were put in place rather more as a psychological means of recognizing the risky nature of that which was about to be undertaken, than as an insurance policy against the largely unknown effects on the document of the proposed treatment. For, no matter how many times a treatment procedure is invoked successfully, there is always the opportunity for it to go awry, as when a full leather binding, treated with potassium citrate exhibited a mysterious—and as yet still unexplained—bloom on its surface several months after it had been completed.

The lesson to be gained from this is, I think, that one must accept risk as an inherent weakness of the practice of conservation and not allow it to intimidate one into inaction.

Inaction! That is the last thing I was allowed to indulge at the Folger Library. The days began early for me because the facility was nearby to my lodgings. And since Mr. Mowery was finishing a private commission in the Laboratory after normal working hours, it was possible sometimes for me to remain there until quite late in the evening, working, reading, absorbing, photocopying. Nor were the weekends any different. When I was not away from Washington, D.C.

conducting workshops on marbling, I was reading or researching topics of interest at the Library of Congress. And when not at the Library of Congress, I had the opportunity to visit other conservation facilities in the city: The National Archives; The Smithsonian Institution; The National Portrait Gallery; and, of course, the laboratories of the Library of Congress.

Resources such as these offer much which is of deep interest. Clearly, however, the quantity of resources to which I refer is not the exclusive fare of Washington, D.C. It exists everywhere, in any location with access to a library where information is either housed (if the library is in a respectably large city) or is obtainable by way of interlibrary loan. Indeed, the vastness of resources is only more visible in Washington because more monuments have been erected to it there. Nevertheless, one does sense a "tyranny of plenty" respecting what Washington has to offer. One senses that a lifetime would be insufficient to engorge all the informative morsels which adorn the tables of conservators in the city.

But more about this "tyranny of plenty" as I have termed it. It makes one vulnerable when faced with choosing a single treatment among so many possible treatments. Interestingly enough, this tyranny becomes a useful tool in overcoming this intimidation because it aids in assessing the quality of the mass of information that gives rise to the tyranny in the first place. How? You see, once one recognizes the aspect of *quantity of resources*, one is in position to go on to the next logical step and recognize that vastness of quantity is not the same thing as *best of quality*, and one must be sorted from the other.

Being armed with this insight, however, is insufficient equipment with which to conduct a meaningful selection. Something more—a template, a gauge, a model—is needed, first to detect the good within the vastness of resources and then to measure the value of the good itself once discerned.

The gauge took form for me over time while I was at work on the materials sent to the laboratory from the library's collection. The collection is rich in book material embracing a significantly long period in the history of bookbinding practice. It contains, as well as those things needing treatment, many items which exemplify sound solutions to the structural problems which have always confronted bookbinders. On several forays into the library's stacks (or, stated in other words, into bookbinding's past) and guided by Mr. Mowery's knowledge of the collection, I saw large, ancient tomes whose hinges have remained sound after countless flexings. I saw books with laced-in endbands protecting the heads and tails of textblocks. And I felt leathers, tanned with alum, which were still as pliant, as flexible, as *functional* when I touched them as when, in centuries past, they were pasted and laid over beech and oak wood boards.

Now as one after another of these examples passed in review, it came to me that the gauge I needed had been available all along. It had eluded me for a time because it does not exist in the physical world. It is rather a mental concept. It

is, in fact, a composite idea drawn from all the historical examples—both the good and the bad—which I had seen in the stacks.

In giving form to this idea it becomes a working assumption which dictates that the historical examples are the best guides one has when it is necessary to design a repair for a structure that has failed. Interestingly, the assumption has corollaries, too. For example, if a structure (or a material) has failed, there is a reason underlying the failure and an explanation for its cause should be sought. Another corollary—there is little justification for *restoring* a failed structure because the structure was inappropriate in the first place, otherwise, it would not have failed.

All of the above produces an attitude, a state of mind, with which one can approach the work of conservation on all levels, simple and complex. This is what my experience in the Conservation Laboratory of the Folger Shakespeare Library afforded me. I count the time well spent in learning lessons well taught, not only by Mr. Mowery, Book Conservator, and by Ms. Claire Hoevel, Paper Conservator (now in Indianapolis), but by hundreds of their predecessors, the able and the unable as well.

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Don Guyot is a paper marbler and conservation bookbinder who taught himself either by teaching others or by learning whatever he could at itinerant workshops. He lives with his wife and daughter in Seattle, Washington where he operates Colophon Hand Bookbinding and makes supplies for marbling and bookbinding available through mail order catalogs. Currently, Don serves the Guild as its Vice President-at-Large.



THIS ISN'T A BUSINESS, IT'S A LIFESTYLE / *Leah Maneaty, Louise Kuflik & Ursula Hofer (Book conservators in private practice in Suffern, New York).*



Left to right: Louise Kuflik, Ursula Hofer and Leah Maneaty.

We met while working for Carolyn Horton. By the time we thought of going into business together we had a pretty good idea what to expect from one another and what our strengths and weaknesses were, both personally and professionally. We decided to do it anyway.

We sought out and received excellent advice before we formed Sky Meadow Bindery. We were told that business partnerships are like marriages. So, given the high divorce rate among couples, we thought it best to structure our business as a *ménage à trois*.

When we went to the Executive Volunteer Corps on 42nd Street in New York City for a free consultation, we were shown into an office by a kindly gentleman who looked into our faces and said, "I have only three questions to ask you." He looked at Ursula. "Are you married?" "No," she said. He turned to Louise. "Are you married?" "No, I'm not." Then he asked Leah, "Are you?" She shook her head "no." Our Executive Volunteer gave us a broad smile. "Then you'll do fine," he said.

"Why?" we asked in unison.

"Because husbands tend to get involved in the businesses their wives have

with other partners and that can cause problems. Now, don't let other family members have a say unless they're specifically asked to give advice and don't allow any outside influences to come between you."

This again sounded ominously like the "let no man put asunder" part of the nuptial ceremony. Other advice?

"Keep your overhead down."

So, unmarried, without children, with supportive families, well-advised, and well-trained, we felt in a position to take a chance. We were fortunate enough to have found a rental house forty miles outside New York City with the rarest species of generous, cooperative landlord who not only encouraged us to turn the two and a half car garage into a workshop, but provided and installed a space-heater as well. We bought the essential equipment and materials we needed to begin and built benches, a drying rack, and a thymol chamber. Someone lent us a small fume hood for solvent work and we eventually acquired a used, tall and narrow pastry rack to house our collection of cloths, scrubbed to within an inch of its grimy life by a set of visiting parents. We pooled our personal collections of books, journals, and catalogues to start a small reference library pertaining to binding, conservation, and materials science.

So we found the premises and had the right preparation. Ursula received superb apprenticeship training in Switzerland and possesses what Mrs. Horton called "the angel's touch." She's also something of a *prima donna* (in the Italian operatic sense of "First Lady"), so we made her President of our Sub-Chapter S corporation. Louise has a forte for paper work of the fill-in-the-form, file, stamp, and mail-it variety in addition to an apartment in New York City which acts as a staging area for our various urban activities. She is also an early riser and arrives with fresh bread and makes the morning coffee. Leah is pressed into service whenever anything longer than two short sentences must be written and has generally devoted herself to correcting the grammar and pronunciation of her partners. She also mentions Italy whenever possible, the place where she received her initial training in book restoration.

Although we are each able to undertake all aspects of book and paper restoration, we do have a tendency to sift through the work and apportion it according to preferences, moods, and challenges and not just based on considerations of work flow or expediency. This is one of the charms of self-employment and one of the ways a business can be shaped by personality and interest.

We try to be more critical of our own work than that of the other person, but when necessary we strive to be diplomatic, if possible. When majority decisions are needed regarding a question of business, we call a vote. Abstentions are not allowed. Unanimous resolutions are frequent and pleasant, but two to one will carry the day. Sulking is not tolerated too long.

One of the touchier requirements of a labor-intensive partnership is that of

estimating on the cost of work. Based on experience and a good deal of educated guessing, we've arrived at a system whereby we each independently examine the material we receive for conservation and make notes regarding proposed treatment, time, and estimated cost. We then have an "estimates meeting" where we hammer out our findings and arrive at our proposals. When muttering is heard at these events, it's usually our President off in her corner saying something rude in Swiss-German about working for free.

Of the many advantages to having more than one person in the business, two or three stand out: (1) one can go away for a few weeks without closing-up shop; (2) difficult clients are farmed-out according to willingness or capability of dealing with the particular case; and (3) there are greater opportunities to brainstorm. The Snoopy Pool Project comes immediately to mind. This was an example of how three minds are more powerful than one. After several days mulling over various ways of washing a group of extremely large and very brittle nineteenth-century architectural drawings, we were standing in the kitchen holding cups of tea, fantasizing about a pond in the area. Suddenly, as if reading cue cards above one another's heads, we envisioned the solution—"kiddy pool," we hummed in three-part harmony. Large, collapsible, inexpensive, and colorful—if you've never had occasion to use one, we recommend a foot pump.

There are many personal requirements for going into private practice, in whatever field—temperament, the willingness to deal with a certain amount of insecurity in order to obtain the greater freedom of dictating one's own terms of employment, and a tendency to bake only from scratch. Along the way you learn to take turns worrying, to push when necessary, and to know when to back off. Above all, you must keep the books balanced and take frequent holidays and little side trips.

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Leah Maneaty received training in bookbinding at the National Library in Florence, Italy, and at Trinity College, Dublin before joining the staff of Carolyn Horton. Louise Kuflik studied bookbinding with Deborah Evetts and then trained and worked with Carolyn Horton. She has an MLS from Queens College, New York and a Certificate of Advanced Librarianship from Columbia University, New York. After completing an apprenticeship in fine bookbinding in Basle, Switzerland, Ursula Hofer joined the staff of Carolyn Horton and was head binder for four years. Lee, Louise and Ursula have been in private practice together since 1981.

The Guild of Book Workers, Inc., 521 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10175, a non-profit organization, publishes for its membership the biannual *Journal*, a quarterly *Newsletter*, and up-to-date lists of supply sources and study opportunities. Its members are also invited to participate in tours, exhibitions, workshops, and lectures sponsored by the Guild. Dues cover the fiscal year July 1 through June 30, and are tax-deductible. Checks and money orders should be made payable in US dollars.

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