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Cover art: Large 2-page spread, smaller title page spread (l) and book housed in clamshell box (r) from the *Raven* Book series, courtesy Nancy Culmone. See related article on page 16.

GUILD OF BOOK WORKERS 2010 - 2011 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Events in the Chapters

Check out the "Regional Chapters" link on the Guild of Book Workers Web site <www.guildofbookworkers.org>

and scroll thru the various Chapters' Web sites or Blogs.

Lone Star:

A workshop for members: *How Do I Make it Stick?* on April 2, in Dallas, TX with Tish Brewer. Contact: Cindy Haller, >sourceart@comcast.net< or 281.474.7100.

Chapter exhibition for members only for *The Thread That Binds* with bindings due April 1, 2011. Contacts being made direct to members with further information. First venue at DeGolyer Library, SMU Campus, Dallas, TX, with opening reception on Friday, June 3, 2011, co-hosted by the Book Club of Texas. Second venue TBA soon.

Midwest:

Traveling exhibition of members' work, currently and to March 15, 2011. Venues at University of Illinois – Urbana/Champaign, Michigan State University, and Iowa State University.

Chapter Annual Meeting, April 29-May 1, 2011, Indianapolis, IN, including lecture and workshop on American Scaleboard Bindings, taught by Julia Miller.

New England:

Upcoming exhibition for members only for *Pictorial Webster's Dictionary*. See details under "Call for Entries". Digital images and entry forms by February 1, 2011. Selected entries due March 1, 2011. Exhibition will be first shown during 2011 Standards Seminar in Boston, MA.

Rocky Mountain:

Several bookbinding, book arts, calligraphy workshops offered by the Chapter and/or Chapter members were noted in their recent newsletter, in Colorado, Utah, New Mexico. Contact one of the Chapter Chairmen, for details at <rockymountain@guildofbookworkers.org>.

Catherine Burkhard
as of 1-4-11

Potomac Chapter Shows Grit

DECEMBER 10, 2010

Outdoors seemed like an unlikely place to host a Holiday party and annual meeting on the coldest night of the year. With wind chill temperatures estimated at 8°, most Washington DC natives wisely chose to spend the evening huddled inside, venturing out only as far as their pre-warmed cars. Guild of Book Workers Potomac Chapter members, however, are nothing if not game. Over twenty people proved their mettle in Chapter President Renate Mesmer's backyard on that fiercely cold night, with the help of mulled wine, hot chocolate, rum, and peppermint schnapps. Members feasted on grilled bratwurst, vegetarian "chicken" nuggets, sauerkraut and chocolate cake as they kept warm next to three small bonfires. General chapter news and events were quickly reviewed, then results of the recent chapter elections were announced to cheers and applause. Dan Paterson was re-elected as Vice Chairperson, Vicki Lee as Treasurer and Marlan Green as web master. Green barely managed to escape setting the fuzzy ball at the end of his stocking cap on fire, and some members (the author included) were spied dancing a heavily bundled rendition of the *Can-Can* around the fire. Despite the frigid conditions, warm spirits prevailed and a good time was had by all.

Christina Amato

EXHIBITIONS

Currently: “Bind-O-Rama”, an online exhibition of Pamela Leutz’s *The Thread That Binds* at <<http://www.philobiblon.com/bindorama10>>.

Currently and through March 1, 2011: *New Views: Recent Work by Members of the Midwest Chapter, GBW* at University of Illinois-Urbana/Champaign, Michigan State University, and Iowa State University. Check Guild Web site for dates.

Currently and through March 20, 2011: Guild of Book Workers traveling exhibition of 50 works with a theme of *Marking Time* at Darmouth College, Hanover, NH. Catalog available. Information and order form at: <<http://www.guildofbookworkers.org/gallery/markingtime/>> (Next Guild Exhibition will have theme of *Horizons*. Details to be on Guild Web site soon.)

Currently and through April 17, 2011: *The Book: A Contemporary View*, in the Carole Bieber and Marc Ham Gallery, The Delaware Center for the Contemporary Arts, Wilmington, DE. Consists of work by 48 artists. The 2011 Gretchen Hupfel Symposium to be March 25 & 26 on “The Art of the Book in the 21st Century”, featuring lectures by many artists who are presenting work in the exhibition. Information at <www.thedcca.org/exhibit/book-contemporary-view>.

February 18-April 6, 2011: 1) *Ceramic Soliloquies*, main gallery, abecedarian gallery, Denver, CO. Narrative ceramic sculpture and bookworks. <www.abecedariangallery.com>; and **2) *Libri Bianchi***, reading room in abecedarian gallery. Sculptural books by Italian artist Lorenzo Perrone.

Exhibitions for 2011: The Walters Art Museum, 600 N. Charles St., Baltimore, MD 21201, 410.547.9000 or >www.thewalters.org<. Contact: Amy Mannarino, >amannarino@thewalters.org<

CALL FOR ENTRIES

By Date to be Announced, with Entries Due in Early 2012: *The 2012 Helen Warren DeGolyer Book-binding Competition*, Bridwell Library, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX. Design to be submitted for the *Imitation of Christ*, a text penned in the 15th century by Augustinian Canon Thomas a Kempis. More information at ><http://www.smu.edu/bridwell/degolyer2012.htm><.

WORKSHOPS, LECTURES & OTHER EVENTS

February 6-9, 2011: The CODEX International Book Fair and Symposium, campus of University of California, Berkeley – “Third Biennial Codex International Book Fair” in Martin Luther King Student Union; the “Codex Foundation Symposium: Borders & Collaborations”, Berkeley Art Museum Theater. <www.codexfoundation.org/symposium.html>

February 7 to March 2, 2011: Courses offered at North Bennet Street School, Boston, MA:

Feb 7-11: *Cloth Case Bookbinding*

Feb 23-25: *Limp-vellum Bookbinding*

Feb 26-27: *Travel Journals*

Feb 26-27: *Uncial Lettering*

Mar 5-Apr 2: *Hand Lettering – Five Styles*

Full course descriptions, tuition info, etc. are online at <www.nbss.com>

February 25 to March 6, 2011: Workshops at John C. Campbell Folk School, Brasstown, NC, 800.FOLK.SCH, <www.folkschool.org>, as follows:

Feb 25-27: *Something New: Kohaze and Strap Bindings* with Joyce Sievers

Feb 27-Mar 5: *Completely Captivating Coptic Binding* with Annie Fain Liden

Mar 6-12: *Making Paper Without a Studio* with Claudia Lee

February 28-March 4, 2011: *A Week with Monique*, with Monique Lallier, at Center for the Book, San Francisco, presented by the Hand Bookbinders of California. Register at <www.ahhaa.org/academy-bookbinding> or Judy Kohin at <aab@ahhaa.org> or 970.728.8649.

March 1, 2011: Lecture at The Art Workers Guild, 6 Queen Sq., London WC1, *Equivalents – Approaches to Making* with Jen Lindsay, 6:30 p.m. <lectures@designerbookbinders.org.uk>

March 21 to May 23, 2011: Classes, The School for Formal Bookbinding, Plains, PA with Don Rash, <www.donrashfinebookbinder.com>. Contact: <sfb@donrashfinebookbinder.com> --

Mar 21-25: *Introduction to Leather Binding*

Mar 28-Apr 1: *Full Leather Binding*

Apr 16-17: *Introduction to Paper Repair*

Apr 25-29: *Foundations of Hand Bookbinding*

May 2-6: *Introduction to Case Binding*

May 13-15: *Enclosures*

May 23-27: *Two Structures*

April 29-May 1, 2001: Midwest Chapter Annual Meeting, including lecture and workshop by Julia Miller on American scaleboard bindings. For info contact Laura Larkin <llarkin@illinois.edu> for details

July 10 -16, 2011, and July 17-23, 2011: Wells Book Arts Summer Institute, Aurora, NY, <www.wells.edu/bookarts>, or Nancy Gil, 315.364.3420, <ngil@wells.edu>, as follows:

Choices for Session I – July 10-16:

Introduction to Typesetting and Monotype Composition with Michael Bixler

Beyond the Basics: The Book as Eloquent Object with Julie Chen

Engravers' Script: Pointed Pen Elegance with Cheryl Jacobsen

Intuition & Chance: A Playful Approach to Printing Books on the Vandercook with Barbara Tetenbaum

Choices for Session II – July 17-23:

Backwards & Forwards: Adobe InDesign within the Long Shadow of the Book with Mark Argetsinger

Stitches in Time: Historical Bindings/Contemporary Context with Julia Leonard

The Mystery of Letterpress Printing: Joy of the Vandercook with Steve Miller

Contrasts in Calligraphy: New forms & textures with the ruling pen, broad edged pen and brush with Julian Waters

October 6-8, 2011: 30th Annual Seminar on Standards of Excellence in Hand Bookbinding, Boston, MA.

A Publication Announcement from OAK KNOLL PRESS



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Monique Lallier

A Week With Monique · February 28 - March 1
San Francisco

Renate Mesmer

Basics in Paper Conservation · April 25 - April 29
Sewing Structures · May 2 - May 6
Telluride

Brenda Parsons

Restoration of Cloth and Leather Bindings
May 9 - May 13 · Telluride

Don Glaister

**Fundamentals of Bookbinding/
Intermediate Fine Binding**
May 16 - May 27
Leather Box Making · May 30 - June 3
Telluride

Timothy C. Ely

A Field of Play or Thinking Outside the Slipcase
June 6 - June 10 · Telluride

For more information and to register contact:

American Academy of Bookbinding

PO Box 1590 · Telluride, CO 81435

970-728-8649 · aab@ahhaa.org

www.ahhaa.org

STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

Be sure and check the "Workshops, Lectures, Events" section of the Calendar for specific offerings.

American Academy of Bookbinding

Join the AAB on two campuses in Ann Arbor, MI and Telluride, CO. Intensive courses are offered for beginner to advance students in conservation, fine leather binding and related subjects. Degree programs available. Contact: >www.ahhaa.org< or contact AAB program coordinator, Judy Kohin at 970.729.8649.

The Book Arts Program at the J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah

For more information on all events, contact Amber Heaton at >amber.heaton@utah.edu<; 801.585.9191 • >www.lib.utah.edu/rare/BAP_Page/BAP.html<

Bookbinding Workshops – United Kingdom

Courses in book structures and Paper Engineering
Paul Johnson and Lori Sauer
<<http://www.bookbindingworkshops.com>> •
<bookbindingworkshops@gmail.com>

John C. Campbell Folk School

One Folk School Road, Brasstown, NC, 828.837.2775, x196
>marketing@folkschool.org< • >www.folkschool.org<

The Canadian Bookbinders and Book Artists Guild

CBBAG/60 Atlantic Avenue, Suite 112 Toronto, Ontario M6K 1X9
Fax 416.581.1053 • email: >cbbag@web.net< • >www.cbbag.ca<

The Center for Book Arts New York City

212.481.0295 • >www.centerforbookarts.org<

Center for the Book - San Francisco, CA

415.565.0545 • >www.sfcbook.org<

Creative Arts Workshop - New Haven, CT

A community arts and crafts school for adults and children.
Classes and workshops in the Book Arts.
>www.creativeartsworkshop.org< • 203.562.4927

Garage Annex School

One Cottage Street #5, Room - 503 Easthampton, MA 01027
The Garage Annex offers workshops in traditional and non-traditional book arts, printmaking, and the conservation of books.
>contact@garageannexschool.com< • >www.garageannexschool.com<

Green Heron Book Arts

503.357.7263 or email >bookkits@aol.com<

Hollander's Workshops

Visit >www.hollanders.com< for the full schedule of workshops in Ann Arbor, MI.

Hollander's also partners with the American Academy of Bookbinding and hosts their workshops. Contact >staff@ahhaa.org< for AAB information.

North Bennet Street School

Check ><http://www.nbss.org/workshops/schedule.asp>< for current and future bookbinding classes or call 617.227.0155 x102

Old Way

Workshops with Jim Croft, Santa ID
>oldway@imbris.com< • ><http://www.traditionalhand.com/oldway/><

Oregon College of Art & Craft

See *Workshops, Lectures* section for fall classes
Portland, Oregon • >www.ocac.edu<

Paper Dragon Books

330 Morgan Avenue #301, Brooklyn, NY 11211
>www.paperdragonbooks.com< • >info@paperdragonbooks.com<

Penland School of Crafts

For more information and complete listing of courses: 828.765.2359
• >www.penland.org<

Pyramid Atlantic Art Center

301.608.9101 x.105 • >www.pyramidatlanticartcenter.org<

School for Formal Bookbinding

Ongoing instruction in the German tradition learned from Fritz and Trudi Eberhardt.
For detailed descriptions of all the classes, tuition, and housing information, visit:
>www.donrashfinebookbinder.com< or call 570.821.7050.

Seattle Center for Book Arts

>www.seattlebookarts.org/classes/class_2008q2_paper.html<

Studio-on-the-Square, NYC

Intima Press & Studio-on-the-Square, 32 Union Square East, #310, NYC.
>www.StudioOnTheSq.com< • >www.IntimaPress.com< • 917.412.4134

Page 5 – Calendar Information for 2-11 GBW Newsletter

The University of Alabama MFA in The Book Arts Program

in the School of Library and Information Studies, >www.bookarts.ua.edu<

Wells Book Arts Institute Classes and Workshops

>www.wells.edu/bkarts/info.htm<

Women's Studio Workshop

For a complete listing of upcoming workshops, see >www.wsworkshop.org< or call 845.658.9133

Catherine Burkhard
as of 1-4-11

In Memoriam

– Jane Greenfield – Teacher, Mentor, Friend. 1916-2008

Jane Greenfield, a GBW member since 1981, and an honorary GBW member since 1991 died at her home in New Hampshire in July 2008 at the age of 91.

Jane mastered many professions; bookbinder, conservator, teacher, author, illustrator, researcher and many more.

During her tenure as Conservator at Yale University Library, Jane not only took care of the usual problems, deteriorating books, environmental problems, numerous floods etc., she also was part of the team that decided on using a nontoxic method of eradicating a bookworm infestation in the Rare Book Library by deep-freezing.

Jane was a quiet person and a great teacher and mentor. She taught many students, who were interested in different areas of her expertise: bookbinding, conservation and restoration. Nevertheless, she always stressed the importance of the care and handling of books.

I still remember the first job she asked me to do as her apprentice; to clean the spine of an old whaling log and quietly she added: but do be careful, it is unique and quite valuable. She and I worked together on many individual objects, including early illuminated manuscripts, Western Americana and materials of the 20 th Century. It was a great partnership, as each of us did what we could do best.

She always encouraged research into history, materials, structures and new conservation methods, in order to find the best and safest way for restoring the artifact at hand. Her number one rule was to do as little as possible and retain as much as possible of the original.

After retiring from Yale, Jane stayed on as consultant for the Conservation Studio for many years.

Her great joy was doing research on the structures of books and unique bindings in the stacks of Beinecke Rare Book Library.

Jane loved to spend as much time as possible on Kent Island, her family retreat in Squam Lake, NH. That's where she spent her vacations, her summers (after retiring) and the last years of her life.

From time to time, she invited my husband and me to stay with them and catch up with events in our lives, pick wild

blueberries and spent quiet evenings listening to the calls of loons and the waves lapping against the beach and we became close.

Jane died on her beloved island on July 20, 2008, surrounded by her family.

I miss her, and will always treasure the memories of my good friend Jane.

Gisela Noack

Jane Greenfield attended the School for Applied Design for Women and the Art Students' League in New York. After her return from several years in Peru where she got interested in bookbinding, she studied with Paul Banks and Laura S. Young in New York. She opened the Greenfield Bindery in 1965 in New Haven. In 1973, Jane was invited to set up Yale's Conservation Studio and she served as Head Conservator there until her retirement ten years later. She also taught bookbinding in the graphic design program at the Yale School of Art for 22 years.

Jane was a passionate researcher on the history of bookbinding and a talented illustrator. When I returned from three years in Europe and showed her how to do the Greek and the Italian Renaissance endbands that I had learned in Italy, she was enthusiastic and said we should write an article. For about 2 years I spent wonderful hours with her studying pre-1600 bindings in Beinecke, and the article turned into our book *Headbands, How to work them* (1986). She wrote and illustrated several other books and articles on bookbinding: *Books, Their Care and Repair* (1983), an expansion of the series of pamphlets on simple repairs published by the Yale University Library thanks to a NEH preservation grant; *The Care of Fine Books* (1988); *Binding Structures of the Middle Ages - a translation and annotation of Berthe van Regemorter's most important articles* (1992); *ABC of Bookbinding* (1998); *Notable Bindings - a description of 25 bindings in the Beinecke Library*, originally published as a series of articles in the Yale U. Library Gazette (2002).

During her last years she researched and worked on a history of Kent Island on Squam Lake in New Hampshire where her family spent vacations since the early 1900s.

Jenny Hille

The Book Protector: a novel conservation innovation from the 1960s

James Reid-Cunningham and Rebecca Smyrl

In 2009, the Boston Athenaeum received a gift of books printed by Harry Crosby at the Black Sun Press in Paris during the 1920s and 1930s. One title, D. H. Lawrence's *Sun*, was housed in an unusual enclosure. The box was a slip-case marketed under the name "Book Protector," made of Masonite, painted bright yellow, with fake bands and leather labels on the spine. The fore edge wall could be removed to access the book inside; a small round closure fits into the rear wall to keep the box closed. Another example of the Book Protector, now at the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin, is medium brown in color, and opens from the top with a sliding lid.



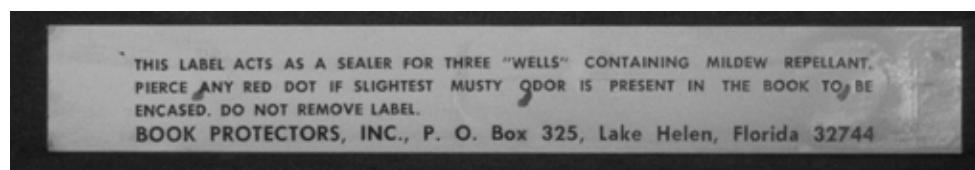
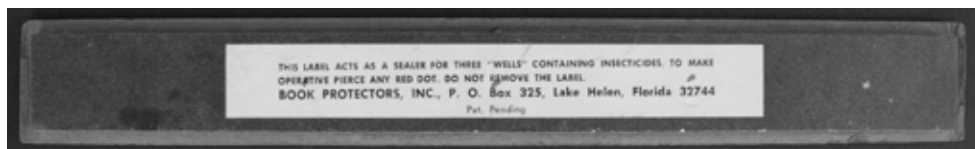
On the inside of the fore edge wall of the Boston Athenaeum enclosure, there is a label which states: "This label acts as a sealer for three "wells" containing insecticides. To make operative pierce any red dot. Do not remove the label." The interior of the spine wall of the enclosure also has a label: "This label acts as a sealer for three "wells" containing mildew repellent. Pierce any red dot if slightest musty odor is present in the

book to be encased. Do not remove the label." During manufacture, shallow holes had been drilled in the walls, and filled with insecticide and mildew repellants. The "wells" were covered over with labels marked by hand in red pen to indicate where to puncture the label, allowing the chemical fumes to help preserve the book. Including chemicals such as insecticides and mildew repellants inside a conservation enclosure certainly makes the Book Protector one of the more unique inventions in the history of book conservation.

In late-1960's Florida, a rare book collector established Book Protectors, Inc., to produce Masonite boxes incorporating anti-mildew agents to combat mold growth in the damp Southern climate.¹ Hal Iverson, one of three partners in the business, supplied a brief history of its active years, which lasted from about 1968 to 1971.² Book Protectors was a small operation, with each box made by hand. Though the founder had anticipated that the enclosures would prove appealing to Floridians, local response was meager. After advertising in the *New York Times Book Review* and the *Atlantic Monthly*, however, he discovered a client base among Northeasterners. The Book Protectors advertisements instructed clients on how to measure their books; clients would send measurements and shortly thereafter receive in the mail a custom-made Book Protector.

The insect repellent remains unidentified. Even when pressed Iverson could no longer remember what anti-mildew agent the wells contained, though he knew that it had been commercially available at the time; a conservator hypothesized thymol.³ Among fungicides, as of 1997 "thymol continues to be the best known and is still widely used in fumigation and humidification chambers and in starch paste adhesives."⁴ Though we may never know for certain if it is the substance contained in the mysterious anti-mildew wells, it seems the most logical guess. In the late 1960's the proprietors of Book Protectors, Inc. would not have known that, when experimentally subjected to thymol, "Apparent degradation of the paper support, watercolor binder, and iron gall ink indicates that exposure to thymol damages their structures"⁵. Lisa Hall Isbell's tests strongly suggest that thymol can play a major role in accelerating the decay of assorted paper and media. In the process of protecting books from mold, the anti-mildew wells may have subjected them to a slower, but equally grave, form of damage.

Masonite, a type of hardboard, "is practically a 100% wood product, converted to fibers that are bonded permanently under heat and pressure" when "The lignin of the fibers in a hot press acts as the natural bonding in the board."⁶ It may also contain "small



amounts of waxlike petroleum materials, and sometimes small amounts of phenol-formaldehyde resins.”⁷ Clearly, hardboards would have seemed a good choice for boxes, since “they were celebrated as being stronger than wood given, their density and structure of interlocking fibers.”⁸ They also would have presented appealing working properties: “Masonite is homogeneous, having no grain unlike wood panels, yet having the advantage of not swelling or shrinking like a panel (Wehlte 1975)...Masonite is not as sensitive to climatic changes as wood.”⁹ Yet in spite of its superior strength and protective capabilities, Masonite, as a wood-based material, should not be placed in contact with paper-based materials due to its potential for imparting its acids into the paper. Ironically, “Like all wood products, fiberboards are susceptible to biological attack”¹⁰; boxes specifically designed to eliminate the threat of harmful growths could actually attract them. The strong adhesive used to construct the Book Protector remains a mystery that merits further investigation. Unfortunately, Iverson could no longer identify the glue in question.

Iverson attributed the short-lived nature of the anti-mildew box to several factors: the death of the founding book collector, the departure of the second partner, and his own lack of interest in continuing the project. In addition, the boxes had begun to fail; they would come apart, he explained, because the glue was stronger than the Masonite, and the board would give under stress.

Despite the promise of the theory behind the Book Protector, it provides an example of an enclosure whose protective virtues created more problems than they solve. Most conservators queried for this article had no familiarity with the Book Protector, which is not unusual given the short period when it was in production. We are interested in locating other examples of this novel enclosure. If anyone knows of other surviving examples of the Book Protector, please contact us by email at reid-cunningham@bostonathenaem.org

(Endnotes)

- i An English firm called “Book Protectors & Company” was founded in 1969 and is still in business, selling items such as plastic sleeves for books. The firm has no connection to the Florida company which manufactured the Book Protector box.
- ii Inverson, Hal. Telephone interview. 16 Oct. 2007.
- iii Pavelka, Karen. Personal interview. 13 Oct. 2007.
- iv Lisa Hall Isbell. “Effects of Thymol on Paper, Pigments, and Media.” *Abbey Newsletter* 21.3 Sept. 1997: 39.
- v Isbell 43.
- vi Alexander W. Katlan. “Early Wood-Fiber Panels: Masonite, Hardboard, and Lower-Density Boards.” *JAIC* 33 1994: 301.
- vii Ann Brooke Craddock. “Construction Materials for Storage and Exhibition.” *Conservation Concerns: A Guide for Collectors and Curators*. Ed. Konstanze Bachmann. New York: Cooper-Hewitt National Museum of Design, 1992: 26.

viii Carol Gould. “Masonite: Versatile Modern Material for Baths, Basements, Bus Stations, and Beyond.” *APT Bulletin* 28.2/3 1997: 65.

ix Katlan 304, referencing K. Wehlte. *The materials and techniques of painting*. Trans. Ursus Dix. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1975. 10 Gould 66.

James Reid-Cunningham is the Chief Conservator of the Boston Athenaeum, and served as president of the Guild of Book Workers from 2006-2010.

Rebecca Smyrl works as a book conservator at the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts in Philadelphia.

NEW - Member News Section

NOTE: *All* notices for the Newsletter re: upcoming GBW, Chapter or school activities should be submitted on a timely basis to <secretary@guildofbookworkers.org>

Space permitting, a member featured in an exhibition, magazine or book will be welcome. A *very* short blurb, perhaps with an attached photo is appreciated. Contact <newsletter@guildofbookworkers.org> for specifics and possible inclusion in upcoming newsletters, referring to the deadlines on page 2 of this newsletter. - NEWSLETTER EDITOR

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— GBW Exhibitions —



Marking Time

Marking Time at its final venue in New Hampshire

The Guild of Book Workers *Marking Time* exhibition is on view at The Dartmouth College Library in Hanover, New Hampshire until March 20, 2011. The Dartmouth College Library is the final venue for the *Marking Time* exhibition. Please check with the venue when making your travel plans.

Exhibition catalogs are still available, including a very limited number of unbound copies in sheets. The exhibition is online at www.guildofbookworkers.org, along with catalog order information.

A very special thanks to Karen Hanmer for all of her time and effort in creating such a successful exhibition for the Guild.

Planning is underway for the next national juried members' exhibition. If you would like to see the exhibition in your region, please send venue suggestions with contact information to the exhibitions chair at exhibitions@guildofbookworkers.org.

Horizon

Upcoming GBW Exhibition

It is not too early to begin thinking about entering our next juried members' exhibition. Be on the look out this spring for more information on how to submit your work.

Set to open in the fall of 2012, the Guild of Book Workers' next traveling exhibition will explore the idea of the horizon. Whether by contemplating the apparent horizon, personal horizons or the horizon of the book as a binding or an object, this exhibition will showcase the current work of the members of the Guild of Book Workers while also offering a glimpse into what is just beyond.

A full prospectus is now available to potential venues.

If you would like to see this exhibiton in your region, please send venue contact information to the exhibitions chair.

Questions/comments: exhibitions@guildofbookworkers.org

Amy LeePard
Exhibition Chair

2010 GBW Membership Directory

by Eric Alstrom, Communications Chair

The membership directory, as was announced last newsletter, has been published online. It is in PDF format and can either be viewed online, downloaded to an individual's computer or even printed and bound (a leather-bound membership directory looks quite handsome on any GBW member's bookshelf!).

Those members who list an email address in the directory were sent instructions on how to access the directory. There is both a username and password which must be entered on a webpage that is not linked to anywhere else on the website. In some ways, this might be more secure than having 850 paper copies floating around!

We have taken every precaution we can so the general public CANNOT view or download the directory. In order to keep our membership directory secure, please do not give your username and password to others or upload the directory to other websites. From a recent discussion on GBW Listserv, access by non-members was the top concern of publishing the directory electronically and it is GBW members who can best prevent this from happening.

For those without an email address, there are two options. If you do have computer access, please let me know and I will supply you with the username and password (since the Newsletter is available to the public, we are not publishing it here). That way you can view/download it from the GBW website. If you do not have a computer, please let Cris Takacs, Membership Chair, know and she will arrange to send you a paper copy.

Please note that we are not sending a paper copy to anyone who asks. The reason for publishing our directory online is to help save the GBW money. With these savings, we can continue to publish a paper copy of this Newsletter and the GBW Journal as well as maintain our webpages and carry on the many other services the GBW offers.

If you have any questions (or did not receive the email with instructions on how to access the online directory), please contact me at <communications@guildofbookworkers.org>. If you have other concerns, feel free to contact me or Andrew Huot, GBW President, at <president@guildofbookworkers.org>.

The Marbling Tray

by Iris Nevins

Something different for this issue - checking out these marbling related websites:

Iris Nevins passes on the following websites for your enjoyment. Copyright issues preclude us from reprinting without permission, but log onto the following for information on Norma Rubovits (marbler), a recent exhibition and some insights into the marbler and her art:

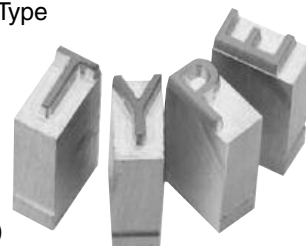
<http://www.chicagotribune.com/entertainment/ct-books-1009-newberry-exhibit-20101008,0,2758305.story>

<http://www.newberry.org/exhibits/rubovits10.html>

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Book / DVD Reviews

BOOKBINDING IN PICTURES: A Beginner's Guide to Bookbinding by Angela Sutton, illustrated by Peter Bryenton, CD, Pantothen Books.

Reviewed by Sandy Cohen

As a long-time teacher of bookbinding in the U.K., Angela Sutton not only knows her craft but knows what beginning students need to learn about it (sometimes two very different things.) Her written instructions in this book-like DVD are clear, precise and easy-to-follow for any beginner in the craft, from layout to lettering. The illustrations (mostly color photographs) by Peter Bryenton, are clear and first class, and probably the best of any beginner's guide on the market. The photos showing how to tie the weaver's knot, for example, are illustrated with two different colors of thick yarn, and even the most incredibly uncoordinated beginner can easily learn to tie that knot following these instructions and photographs. In clarity of instruction and format, this is the best beginner's book to come out in years.

Except that in two essential ways, it is not: First of all this is not a book, but a sort of do-it yourself project. What you purchase is a DVD of the PDF of the book, with the helpful hint that you should print it yourself, preferably on slick, coated paper (and, we presume, bind it using the clear instructions in the book). If you do not print it out, the text is hard to maneuver through, and difficult to follow.

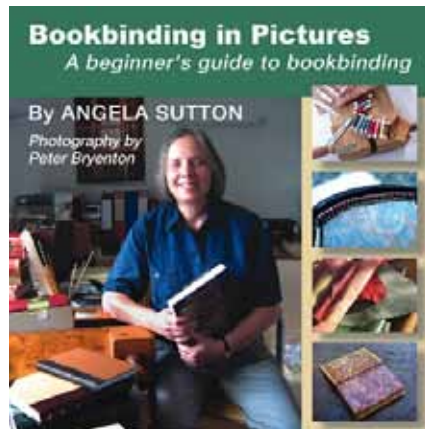
The second problem is that, especially in the first three-quarters of the book, Ms. Sutton seems to assume that beginners have access to as well-appointed a bindery as she has, with thousands of

dollars worth of heavy equipment, such as iron nipping presses, ploughs, guillotines, board shears, etc., to say nothing of backing hammers, handle letters, brass type and so forth. Though she does suggest much later in the text how to make a beginner's sewing press, for example, much more along this line should be added to the next version of the DVD if this is to be truly a beginner's guide.

The instruction is obviously geared only toward beginners in the U.K., with too many terms such as "bank paper" for example, that most beginners in the United States will find bewildering. Plus, not one equipment or materials suppliers outside of England is listed.

If you would like to order the DVD or see a few sample pages from it, or listen to Ms. Sutton explain a thing or two in her own voice, and you have access to a computer, you can find it at >www.Angelasutton.eu<.

If you have no access to a computer, plus your own ream of high-gloss paper and (preferably color) printer, this is not the guide for you. One hopes an already printed version will be made available.



REVELATIONS
by Sandy Cohen. All Things That Matter Press, 2010.

Although not a book on book related subjects, our main book reviewer, Sandy Cohen, has added to his body of writing with this

offering. You can read more about this book and Sandy's other books on >Amazon.com<

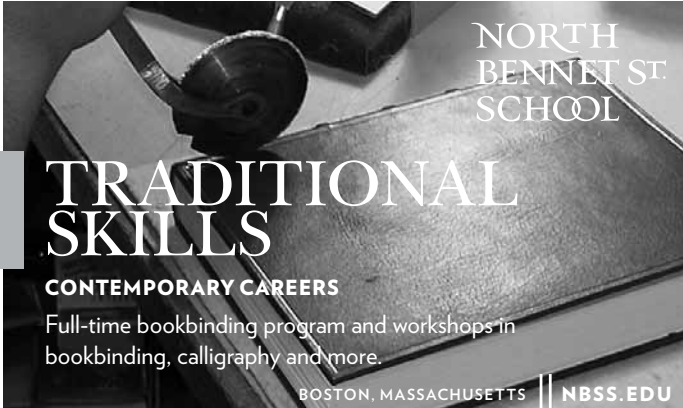
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Membership Report - February 2011

Here are the changes and additions that have come in since the GBW Membership Directory came out in December. The Membership Directory is available online at the GBW webpage with a password. If you cannot download it and require a paper copy, let me know by e-mailing Membership@guildofbookworkers.org, sending a postcard to Cris Takacs, Membership GBW, 112 Park Ave. Chardon, OH 44024. You can also call my cell phone and leave a message, 440-226-1051.



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MINUTES

Annual Meeting

Guild of Book Workers, Inc.

OCTOBER 15, 2010

The Annual Meeting of the Guild of Book Workers, Inc., was held on Friday, October 15, 2010, at 5:00 p.m. MST, at the Radisson Suites, Tucson, AZ, during the 29th Annual Seminar on Standards of Excellence in Hand Bookbinding.

President James (Jim) Reid-Cunningham called the meeting to order and welcomed all present. A printed agenda was distributed. The minutes of the October 30, 2009, Annual Meeting were approved as published in the February, 2010 Guild Newsletter. The elected Officers, Standing Committee Chairmen, and Chapter Chairmen who were present were introduced. Outgoing Exhibitions Chairman, Karen Hanmer, was presented a commemoration of appreciation. Jim expressed thanks to all the members of the Board.

1) ANNUAL REPORTS

Annual reports for the 2009-10 fiscal year, submitted by the members of the Board, were printed and available online for Guild members prior to this meeting.

Motion made and seconded that the 2009-10 annual reports, available to members on the Guild Web site, be accepted as presented.
MOTION CARRIED.

Updates to these reports were provided, as follows:

- a) **Journal** – Cara Schlesinger brought display copies of the 2009 issue, mailed earlier this month, but not yet received by all members. The issue continues the new format with thanks to Paula Jull, typesetting by Chad Johnson, along with an editorial and proofing group. The 2010 and 2011 issues are underway and will be out soon, with the 2008 still only one-half complete. Cara asked for members to consider contributing articles for future issues.

- b) **Communications** – Eric Alstrom reported the Guild's Web site changed a year ago with a new server and has been redesigned with many helps and additions along with plans for more, as follows:

- membership form and a Guild Blog available
 - 2009-10 Annual Reports available;
 - link for a calendar of various Guild activities and Chapter events;
 - past Standards Seminar handouts, if available;
 - 2010 Membership Directory to be online as pdf file in secure site for members only;
 - orders for Guild merchandise to come soon, as well as a "members area" and memberships paid online
 - archives of Guild Listserv items being worked on.
- The site continues as a work in progress.

- c) **Standards Seminar** – Chris McAfee reported the 2011 Standards Seminar will be October 6-8 in Boston, MA at The Boston Park Plaza Hotel & Towers, 50 Park Plaza at Arlington Street. Presenters will be Yasmeen Kahn (*Islamic Binding*); Todd Pattison (*Conservation Techniques for Publishers' Bindings in Circulating Collections*); John DeMerritt; and Daniel Essig. The 2012 Seminar will be in Salt Lake City, UT. Chris expressed thanks to this year's Host Committee Chairman, Mark Andersson, who with his team has worked hard to keep the costs very low.

- d) **Treasurer** – Alicia Bailey called attention to her report in the 09-10 Annual Reports and presented an update as of September 30. The membership revenues were recorded low in the annual report, but have now increased due to an influx of renewals received after June 30 – \$20,000 of which was for the 2009-2010 fiscal year.

In response to questions, Alicia stated that the Board of Directors is committed to the annual Standards Seminar, the Guild's Journal, the Web site, and exhibitions. She discussed costs related to these, most of which cannot be guaranteed as to precise figures. The Board has done a good job of reviewing all administrative costs and cutting back where possible; also it continues to work towards keeping the Cash Reserve balance up. Chapter monies and other funds were discussed as well as how to increase membership, which is the main source of the Guild's funding.

Jim reported the results of the 2010 Election of Officers with Andrew Huot as President, along with Standing Committee Chairmen Amy LeeParad (*Exhibitions*); Eric Alstrom (*Communications*); Jane Meggers (*Library*); Cindy Haller (*Newsletter*); and Chris McAfee (*Standards Seminar*). Jim introduced Andrew who presided over the balance of the meeting.

2) REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Andrew reported the following:

- With the Vice-president position vacant following the election, the Board sought nominees and by a two-thirds vote appointed Anna Embree to fill the vacancy of one year.
- Thanks go to Jim for moving the Guild forward, in spite of challenges, especially with the new Web site, redesigned Guild Newsletter, better communications, and attention to financial matters.
- Each Guild member should work towards recruiting new members.
- He is excited about the future of the Guild and challenges each member to give what they can to the organization.

continued next page

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ATTENTION

Nominations for Officers Needed

The 2011 Election of Officers for the Board of Directors
will be held this coming June!

Offices up for election:

Vice-president
Secretary
Treasurer
Librarian
Membership
Journal

Please submit nominations as soon as possible and

NO LATER THAN APRIL 1 to:

James Reid-Cunningham
10 Harrington Road
Cambridge, MA 02140

>reid-cunningham@bostonathenaeum.org<

**Job descriptions are being updated and will be provided to
all nominees interested.**

Continued from page 14

On behalf of the Board, Andrew expressed appreciation to Jim for his
years as President, and presented him with a commemoration.

3) COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

Highlights of comments and questions from those present:

- The Guild needs to be more aggressive about the organization.
- There is much information, knowledge, and publications of
which members are not aware.
- A list is needed as to of where book arts are being taught.
- There should be more information in the Guild Newsletter from
international groups.
- The Guild has several electronic communications.
- The Wall on Facebook could show snippets of Guild publications.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Catherine Burkhard
Secretary

2010 Awards were presented during the Banquet on Saturday, October
16, to:

Frank Mowery - Laura Young Award
Gary Frost - Lifetime Achievement Award

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Raven Books - process & techniques

This series of Raven books begins with a winter encounter. While cross country skiing on new snow across the high plains near Mosquero, New Mexico, I notice a Raven gliding on my right, wings glinting in the sun. The sunlight strikes the Raven's left wing and reflects into my eyes, blinding me for an instant. I was stunned.

I began working on a poem inspired by this experience. A year later I reworked the poem and began the research for the books. My sources included The Old Testament, three compendiums of Native American mythologies, Joseph Campbell's *"The Masks of God"*, Berndt Heinrich's *"Mind of The Raven"*, and Jan Tschichold's Article *"Non-Arbitrary Proportions of Page & Type"**, the Oxford English Dictionary.

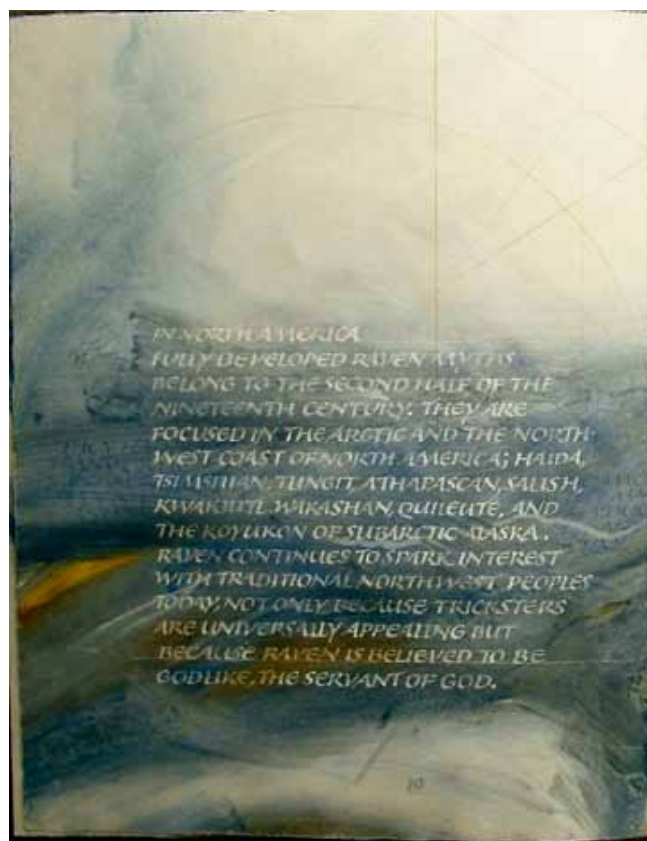
In my studio I began experimenting & searching for a visual vocabulary to communicate my experience. I knew I wanted to paint the pages with a cooked wheat-paste/Golden high load acrylic mixture and to work on Arches Text Wove papers because of their versatility. For 3 months I worked and while I painted many beautiful pages (& some ugly ones) none of them seemed right for the project. I was very discouraged and I gave up. But I kept going to my studio daily & finally, something did begin. A palette of White, Paynes Grey, Ultramarine Blue with touches of Raw Umber and Yellow Ocher developed and the work began to flow. I later incorporated touches of gold and paladium leaf. I was painting pages using gestures suggesting rushing wind, flight & wing beats.

I began writing and drawing on the unpainted pages. I wrote many of the texts and constructed all or parts of the layout diagrams using Acrylic inks, and wax based colored pencils on the bare pages. I drew images of ravens using the wax based colored pencils. These drawing media made it possible to reveal the imagery and lettering to a greater or lesser extent through the paste paint as I worked. The finished pages have 2 to 4 layers of paste paint and while most of the texts are written clearly on the surface of the painted pages**, fragments of text, layout diagrams, and Raven drawings are also glimpsed through layers of paste paint.

In many tribal mythologies Raven is known as a "shape shifter" with power to change form. So the page layouts shift from traditional to non-traditional text and image. The texts include: lists of the native tribes and their words for Raven, an excerpt from the story of Noah, Elijah being fed by ravens, a bit about the God Oden with his 2 sacred Ravens and my poem. The text choices vary slightly in each book.



Summary of mythologies from N.W. North America & Alaska



Detail from mythology two-page spread



Two-page spread with fold-out section

When Cindy Haller asked me to write an article describing my work process, I chose this series of 8 unique variants because it is my largest book project to date. It was Don Glaister & Suzane Moore who urged me to do a series after seeing the first book. Number 3 was included in the GBW 100th Anniversary Exhibition and number 8 was completed in July 2010.

*Tschichold is credited with reconstructing the

form canon used to lay out pages in many medieval manuscripts.

**I used antique ruling pens for the diagrams & pointed and broad metal pens or hand cut turkey quills for the texts. Winsor & Newton gouache mixed with glair was the writing liquid.



Enlarged view of fold-out section from above two-page spread

Ed. Note: I hope that members have seen one of the book variations in person or in exhibition catalogs. Unfortunately, these reproductions, both in color and in black and white, do not adequately show the color values, subtle techniques and technical renderings in the original work.

Nancy Culmone

Nancy's childhood loves of lettering and drawing were pursued at The Cooper Union School of Art studying painting, print-making, and calligraphy and later as a graduate student at Syracuse University.

She taught at Massachusetts College of Art, The DeCordova Museum School and directed the Ghost Ranch calligraphy seminar for 13 years. She has taught at most International Calligraphy Conferences.

She continues to teach these disciplines as a language of creative expression in the United States, Canada, and Europe. Her unique, hand lettered & painted manuscript books are in major collections including The Houghton Library, Harvard University, Duke University, Reed College, The Rochester Institute of Technology and The Marriot Library, University of Utah.

She now lives and works in a remote area of New Mexico, where the vast sky and landscape offer endless inspiration.

Call for Papers

GUILD OF BOOK WORKERS JOURNAL

The *Guild of Book Workers Journal* seeks submissions of articles addressing those fields represented by the Guild's membership including but not limited to:

BOOKBINDING (descriptions of techniques and how-to articles; discussions of particular structures, both old and new)

CONSERVATION (treatment techniques; what does or does not work; innovations; history)

ARTISTS' BOOKS (new structures and contexts; examinations of an artist's body of work)

TECHNIQUES (calligraphy; marbling; paper-making; printing; design; tools and toolmaking)

HISTORY (little-known events, figures, or movements; particular periods or developments in the history of the book and book arts)

INNOVATIONS (new thinking about the book; new avenues for the book arts)

BOOK REVIEWS (substantive discussions of new publications, in the style of *New York Review of Books* articles)

PROFILES (interviews with artists, practitioners, conservators, collectors; profiles of institutions)

WORLD VIEWS (discussions of communities, movements, traditions, artists around the world)

We also welcome proposals for photo galleries. Queries should include a description of the proposed gallery, representative images, and either a completed introductory essay or a description of what such an essay would discuss.

All articles submitted to the *GBWJ* will be peer-reviewed. Authors of accepted articles must format their articles and images according to our style guidelines, available at <http://guildofbookworkers.org/resources/journal/journal.php>

Submissions are accepted on a rolling basis. Send queries and electronic submissions (RTF, DOC or PDF) to journal@guildofbookworkers.org

Cara Schlesinger
GBW Journal Editor

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Twenty-five Years and Going Strong

North Bennet Street School - Boston, Massachusetts

In the 25 years since the bookbinding program was established at North Bennet Street School (NBSS) in 1986, much has changed and much remains the same.

The two-year, full-time bench program was established to offer training in hand bookbinding and the objectives of the program have changed little over 25 years. The program curriculum is designed to provide a foundation in the historic craft of bookbinding for students seeking a wide range of related careers. NBSS bookbinding graduates are well-prepared for positions as hand bookbinders in custom shops, production shops and university or institutional conservation labs. Many graduates become self-employed as bookbinders and book artists.



photo courtesy Eric Roth

tion, non-adhesive bindings, cloth and paper bindings of various styles, edition binding and an introduction to book repair and conservation. Conservation and repair projects include the repair of cloth and paper binding, basic paper repair, making boxes and enclosures and documentation. Leather bindings are introduced toward the end of the first year.

The second year curriculum provides a comprehensive examination of leather bindings, decorative tooling and finishing and re-backing and repair of leather bindings. Students make models of binding structures from medieval to modern. They treat leather bindings and explore a variety of board reattachment techniques and have the opportunity to repair additional bindings if they wish to focus on repair and conservation. Advanced paper treatments including washing and deacidification and other conservation procedures are also addressed in the second year.

While the focus on traditional skills and historic bindings has changed little over the 25 years, what has changed is the resources available to students, the size of the program and the ever-increasing network of graduates working in bookbinding fields. Notable changes include the move to a bigger bindery workshop at North Bennet Street School's downtown Boston campus and

the increase in students enrolled each year from 5 in 1986 to eight today. Students come from across the country and around the world to attend the program.

Guest bookbinders and conservators visit the program regularly to provide master classes and share their experiences with students. In October 2010, Dominic Riley spent a week at the school teaching in the second-year class and sharing his work in a public lecture. Riley is an award-winning bookbinder who teaches workshops for the Society of Bookbinders and Designer Bookbinders in the UK, is a

visiting instructor at the San Francisco Center for the Book and an accredited lecturer with the National Association of Decorative and Fine Art Societies. Regular guest teachers include Jeff Peachey on tool sharpening, and Regina and Dan St. John from Chena River Marblers on paper marbling. Many guest teachers also offer courses through our workshop program. A series of intermediate and advanced workshops with recent guests included Renate Mesmer on conservation and Katherine Beatty on Islamic Bookbinding. NBSS, in collaboration with the American Academy of Bookbinding, hosted a master class with the classically-trained French finisher H  l  ne Jolis. Workshops are open to the public in addition to being attended by full-time students.

To complement the bookbinding workshops, NBSS has developed a comprehensive lettering arts workshop program including a three-month calligraphy and illumination intensive taught by Maryanne Grebenstein. Collaboration between the manuscript and bookbinding departments enriches both programs. A study-trip to Europe, organized by Grebenstein is in development.

Field trips and internships provide students with opportunities to see historic museum and library collections and commercial binderies, meet professional bookbinders, book artists and book conservators, and, work in the field in some of the best facilities in the country.

Field trips throughout New England are common and



photo courtesy Craft in America

“You very quickly feel the culture of the school. This is serious work. It is very professional. It is also so supportive.” Colin Urbina (student)

“Learn the rules before you break them.” Jeff Altepeter (faculty)

continued on page 20



photo courtesy NBSS



photo courtesy NBSS

yearly trips to more distant locations provide wonderful study opportunities. Students and faculty members have traveled to Washington DC, New York City and, a biannual favorite, England. (Editor... note that you might refer to a previous GBW article about the England trip written by Bexx Caswell)

Internship opportunities have expanded dramatically over the years. Summer internships; one-day, weekly internships in the last semester of the program; and, post-graduate internships and fellowships are common.

The program has ongoing relationships with many New England institutions. The Museum of Fine Arts Boston, Boston Athenaeum, Dartmouth College, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston Public Library and Boston College are some of the many institutions that work with interns. Institutions and binderies outside New England also welcome interns, including Haverford College, John Hopkins University, Folger Shakespeare Library, The Newberry Library and The New York Academy of Medicine.

NBSS is participating in a pilot program for book conservation in partnership with the art conservation program at Winterthur and the library program at Simmons University-



photo courtesy Romana Vysatova

ty. NBSS's contribution to the program focuses on its strengths as a bench training program. The initial course provided by NBSS is tentatively titled 'Bookbinding for Conservators' and will be taught by a NBSS graduate, Chela Metzger, Adjunct Professor and Conservator for the Library Collections at Winterthur Museum.

"You can look at a binding that was made in the 1200's and it's still working. I like it that these books have been around for a long time. I like being a part of something that's larger than me, making things that will be around after I'm gone." Fionnuala Gerriety (student)

Jeff Altepeter, the head of the bookbinding department, is a 2003 graduate of the American Academy of Bookbinding and an alumnus of the NBSS program. After completing the NBSS program in 1999, Jeff worked at Harcourt Bindery and Harvard University's Tozzer Library. He serves as the chair of the New England Chapter of the Guild of Book Workers and operates a bindery in Somerville, MA specializing in leather bindings and boxes.

Martha Kearsley, a 1995 graduate of the program, joined the faculty in 2009. Martha teaches part time and is a Portland Maine bookbinder with extensive experience in book conservation. She works as a conservator for Harvard University's Weissman Preservation Center, the Houghton and Baker Libraries and the library of Northwestern University. Jeff and Martha's complementary expertise and interests combined with guest experts ensures depth and breadth in the bookbinding program.

North Bennet Street School celebrated its 125th anniversary in 2010. The school has a strong reputation of serving Boston communities and a long-standing commitment to teaching employable trades. The bookbinding program is one of eight professional training programs currently offered at the school. Cabinet and Furniture Making, Carpentry, Jewelry Making and Repair, Locksmithing, Preservation Carpentry, Piano Technology and Violin Making are also available.

For more information about North Bennet Street School and the bookbinding program, visit www.nbss.edu.

Miguel Gómez-Ibáñez, President

North Bennet Street School

Color Matters

Color matching and toning can be one of the most difficult tasks to master, and one of the most time-consuming skills to hone. But aesthetic integration of new materials to old can be an important step in our treatment process for many reasons, and there are endless ways this can be approached. For this brief article, I'll leave the ethics discussion aside, and outline a few of my go-to methods for toning and inpainting.

When working with large and/or numerous areas of loss, toning large swatches of Japanese tissues or other mending/fill papers is useful. Use Pyrex dishes or photo trays to mix acrylic paints into water, making a thin wash of the desired color. Try several variations of color mixtures as well as paper supports, so you will have a large array of tones to choose from once the sheets are dry. The slightest change to or addition of color can drastically change the outcome, so it's better to make more than less, especially because already toned papers are handy to have around the studio for future treatments. After mixing a wash of color, pull a sheet entirely through the bath and then out. Be sure the solution is well stirred before introducing a sheet of paper, as the acrylic paint tends to sink to the bottom, and multiple colors will separate. Hang the small sheets of just toned Japanese tissue from the sides of a table to dry them quickly, and the gravity will help to dry them flat as well. For more saturation, repeat the process once toned sheets are dry.

On the subject of toned papers, the variety of those made for conservation and already beautifully colored is vast. Just remember that if you are molding some with adhesive into a fill for a deep loss, perhaps on the spine of a book, the adhesive may cause the paper to dry a little darker, especially if there are several wet layers involved. When the fill is still barely damp, it can be burnished smooth or worked with tools to create texture. Once fully dry, it can be sanded to create tooth for adhering another material, or to mimic wear and tear. If adding tone over a colored paper fill with acrylic paints, sanding just a bit to reduce adhesive on the surface will help the paper accept the paint.

Acrylic paints are often used for toning book cloth, usually to blend worn or light bleached edges and corners, or disguise loss due to insect grazing. In many cases, this approach is acceptable, but where conservation is a concern I have turned to employing colored pencils for matching tone and reintegrating worn areas of cloth. The effect is less severe and can take more time, but the change is slow and therefore easily controlled. Appearance of color will depend upon sharpness of the pencil, and saturation grows with each layer. Colors can be mixed by applying in layers to adjust tone, and texture can be mimicked by cross-hatching lines or using similar drawing techniques. Color pencils can be used in combination with a toned fill material to achieve greater detail (and perhaps opacity). They are also frequently used to inpaint media loss on

paper supports, my preferred pencils being a large box of Prismacolors.

My favorite media for direct inpainting are Schmincke Aquarelle watercolors, in solid cakes. The quality is great and the colors are strong. They can be a little on the pricey side, but will last for ages, as just a little goes a long way. Watercolors work well for direct toning of Japanese tissue too, but this is better to be done before the mend or fill paper is adhered, so pigment does not collect at the meeting of new and old materials, and so mistakes in color or application do not warrant removal of a structural repair you've just made.

Finally, for leather repair on a book where stabilization and conservation are important, and to improve aesthetics when the object is not being disbound, I learned a nice trick years ago from an ethnographic conservator. This is particularly fitting for objects going on exhibit that will not be handled much: Goldbeater's skin toned with leather dyes makes a beautiful repair that can be adhered slightly on top of existing leather to disguise a hole or other damage. It is slightly transparent, like onion skin, so the repair never appears heavy. It takes leather dye well, but also works nicely undyed when repairing parchment. Goldbeater's skin shapes well around curves or across joints, and can be stretched a little before it will break. It is sold in different thicknesses, and can also be found alum tawed if you need something with a bit more opacity.

The Light of a New Year

Last year at this time I wrote a column for the GBW Newsletter concerning the challenges of living and working during the short days of a northern climate. In particular, I find intellectual work difficult during the darkest period of winter so instead, find comfort in doing repetitive work, sewing, sorting, organizing – anything to keep my hands busy (In Hibernation, winter notes from Maine, Newsletter 188, February 2010). After that column I heard from several empathetic members who experience the same difficulty working during the darker months of the year.

I enjoy reading about creativity and the brain. And, as the days increase in length (at the agonizingly slow rate of 30 seconds per day here in Maine) I bring your attention to a thought provoking opinion piece written by neurologist, Oliver Sacks, for the January 1, 2011 issue of the New York Times entitled, “*This Year, Change Your Mind.*” The by-line cheerfully reads, “Don’t leave learning to the young. Older brains can grow, too.”

In the article Sacks tells us that the cerebral cortex of our brains continues to develop throughout our lives. The cerebral cortex

is the outer layer of gray matter, which surrounds the cerebrum – what Agatha Christie’s character, ‘Poirot’ called, “the little gray cells,” while pointing to his head. It controls language, thought, reasoning, memory, sensory, and motor functions. Neurological patients after losing hearing or sight often experience their other senses becoming more heightened. A blind person may develop an extraordinary ability to visualize objects by touching or experience a greater sensitivity to sound. Sacks writes that people with physical and mental challenges, “- learn to do things in new ways, whether consciously or unconsciously, to work around those deficits.” I am buoyed by Sacks’ statement, “Every time we practice an old skill or learn a new one, existing neural connections are strengthened and, over time, neurons create more connections to other neurons. Even new nerve cells can be generated.” Is it possible that as our eyesight fades with age that our sense of touch or power of thought will boost through the rewiring of neurons?

As we move into the light of a new year, may we keep our minds open to the miracle of “neuroplasticity – the brain’s ability to create new pathways” and continue to grow from working with our hands and minds.

Check out the Oliver Sacks article at http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/01/opinion/01sacks.html?_r=1 or visit his website at <http://www.oliversacks.com>.

Thank you for reading this article. I look forward to hearing from you.

Nancy Leavitt

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April 2011 Newsletter
March 1, 2011**

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The Guild of Book Workers Newsletter is published bi-monthly by the Guild of Book Workers, Inc., 521 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10175. Claims for issues paid for but not received will be honored without question. Back issues and copies of all Newsletters are available for \$5.00 per copy, postage included.

Items for Publications should be sent to:

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**Deadline for the April 2011 Issue:
March 1, 2011**

Items for the Calendar should be sent to:

Catherine Burkhard / 6660 Santa Anita Drive, Dallas, TX 75214
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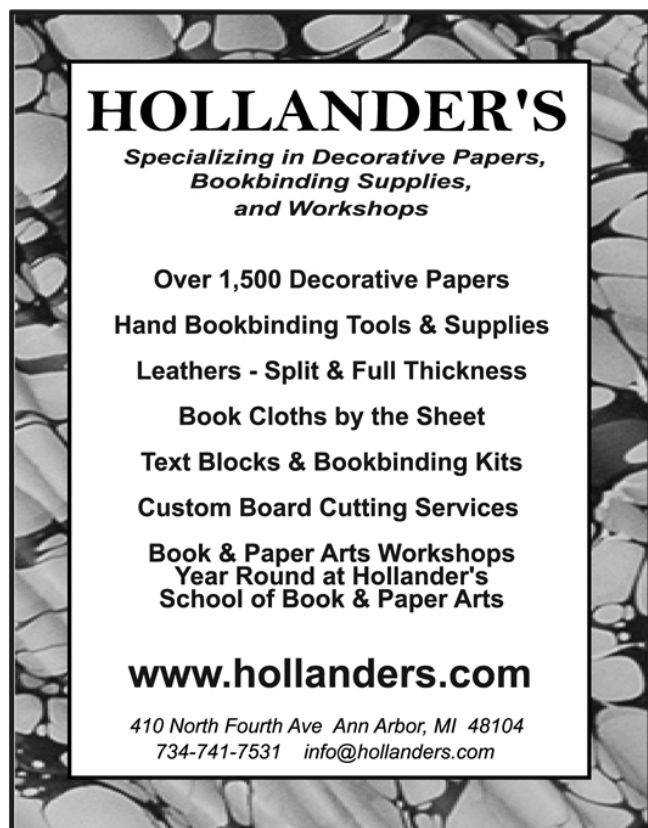
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