



OXFORD GUILD OF PRINTERS NEWSLETTER

May 2019

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MEETING RECALL

Miles introduced Matthew Haley as not only Head of Bonhams Auctions of Rare Books and Manuscripts but also – as a celebrity – adviser on books for the BBC's *Antiques Roadshow*.

Matthew gave an overview of how rare book auctions have adapted over the years from the earliest in the 16th century. He explained the role of the auction in providing a consensus of what an item is worth at a particular time. From the start the sales were organized by lot numbers so that deputies could be appointed to bid, and from the start there were problems with defaulting buyers. Vendors' commission was 15-20% (buyers' premium was not introduced until the 1970s). Ploys such as "chandelier bidding" emerged to inflate sales with phantom bids from some indeterminate part of the auction hall.

The three major British auction houses date from the 18th century. Interestingly the founders of both Sotheby's and Bonhams starting life as booksellers, while Christie's made up the third.

The sale of the Duke of Roxburghe's library in 1812 brought a sea change in values. When a 1471 Boccaccio sold for £2260, the "the spectators stood aghast". By the late 19th century New York had become a centre for book auctions, to be fuelled by collectors such as Pierpont Morgan, Folger, and Huntington.

In the early 20th century the emphasis moved from early manuscripts to first editions of literary works. Telephone bidding introduced in the 1960s made auctions international: Bonhams now have book buyers in 55 countries. In the 1970s pre-sale estimates were introduced, though the unreliability of these was demonstrated by Matthew's example of an early 20th century book on Oman and the Gulf, estimated at a few hundred pounds and subsequently selling for £40,000. The auctioneer's job seems full of the unexpected and we were privileged to hear from Matthew an insider's view on this mysterious and enthralling territory.

Michael Daniell

GUILD MEETINGS

Unless otherwise noted, meetings will be held at The Oxford Retreat in central Oxford at 7:30 for 8:00pm. There is parking nearby in Worcester Street or Gloucester Green Car Parks, with easy access to buses, trains, and the Park & Ride buses.

3rd June: Graham Moss: 'Mind your effs and tease : the language of letterpress.'

1st July: Sophie Mortimer: 'Sophie's Sketchbooks.'

Sunday 28th July: Picnic at chez Richard Lawrence (see over for details).

August: No meeting.

2nd September: Paul Kershaw: 'Grapho Editions.'

7th October: Ed Maggs: 'An object that will stand and will not move.'

Saturday 2nd November: Wayzgoose: see over for details.

2nd December: A.G.M.

3rd February 2020: Simon Lawrence: '40 Happy Years at the Fleece Press.'

Other speakers planned for 2019/20: Richard Falkiner, Graham Twemlow.

NOTES FROM MEMBERS

Richard Lawrence has been offered, by a Hurst Street resident, two copies of Monotype's 'Lord's Prayer on a 12 pt em' publicity pieces and one explanatory brochure for any member who would like them. Contact Richard to see if you're first in line:
ZRLawrence@aol.com

WAYZGOOSE INFO

Nick Gill of the Effra Press & Typefoundry has just created a new website to help us all keep track of the Wayzgooses happening both within the UK and abroad. Anyone can submit a new event and there's a link to support the website if you find it useful. Sponsors are featured on the site.



CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Peter White: I discovered the time of Peter's funeral only the night before and had no time to alert other Guild members. The first thing I appreciated was what a staunch supporter of the Guild he really had been for the drive to Berkhamsted needed a degree of determination that I suspect few of us might have mustered. Over 200 people I would guess; a large family man, woven coffin and a surprise to discover that this sprightly fellow was only three months short of his eightieth birthday. One always discovers more: he was a Samaritan and the perpetrator of other good works; he was a flautist, playing in his local orchestra. Of particular delight - if that's the right word - to me was the story that he had once found himself on holiday in the very resort that Jacques Tati had used to film *Les Vacances de Monsieur Hulot* and during lunch in the hotel found that the door still squeaked...

Gloucester Typesetting Services: Stan Lane is looking for an apprentice. Any of you who have used his services or even just seen him at work will understand me when I say that I regard Stan's Monotype operation as one of the seven wonders of the industrial-revolutionary world. He both holds a resource and retains an expertise that is second to none. Any one interested - or if you can think of anyone who might be - should get in touch with Stan directly: gloucestertypesetting@gmail.com

Meeting recall: My request to members to volunteer, even at the last minute when you *know* you are going to come to the meeting, has been disappointing. I'm grateful to those who have volunteered so far but the Doodle poll is almost empty for the remainder of the year.

Wayzgoose: There are still tables available for the Wayzgoose on Saturday 2nd November. I went to the FPBA Book Fair at Oxford Brookes at the beginning of the month. Overflow tables were in *side rooms or even upstairs*. Late-comers: you have been warned! Contact Miles to book your table: miles.wigfield@btopenworld.com

A Show of Hands: Of the Guild members who have apparently shown an interest in submitting to the exhibition ten have replied to me, seven positively agreeing to contributing to my suggestion of an OGP bundle to share amongst ourselves. This is less than a third of the potential. I hope more will rally to the cause. The deadline is 31st May. The committee have decided to join with others in sponsoring this exhibition and have pledged the sum of £200.

Picnic: Richard Lawrence has kindly agreed to host a Picnic this year on **Sunday 28th July** at his home at 15, Rectory Road, Oxford OX4 1BU. Usual form: 12pm onwards bringing some sort of food or drink to share. (I have recently found one of the *best* pork-pies *ever*). Richard explains that his swimming pool is not yet completed and there are no lawns as such, but the Guild watch-word is Bonhomie and that should suffice.

List of Members and Ephemera on Show: Phil Treble has printed letterpress a cover of *verve* and *panache* for the Membership List. *My thanks to him. Thank you too to the ephemera printers who have contributed to the bundle this year. Both should be on their way to you later this month.*

OBITUARY: BARBARA PARKER

Many OGP members will remember Barbara Parker, who died peacefully in the Albany Nursing Home on 30 March 2019 at the age of 94. She was not a printer, but a librarian by profession (like a good many Guild members), and was a regular attender of meetings in the 1980s and 1990s, and a great friend and supporter of our former Chairman Tom Colverson.

Paul W. Nash

TYPE TWOFERS

I'm doing a little research into something I'm sure many of you will be familiar with - "type twofers" - wood type that has had a character hurriedly carved into its foot by the printer/comp when "out of sorts". Aside from seeing other printers' examples (on Instagram, there is a hashtag #typetwofers) - does anyone know if anything has ever been written about this phenomenon, and, if so, where one might find it? Please contact Simon Good, London Centre for the Book Arts by email: simonalangoode@gmail.com

PRESSING MATTERS

Issue 7 of *Pressing Matters* is now available online via the website:

www.pressingmattersmag.com

This issue explores the different places we look for inspiration for our printing projects. Contributors include Jon McNaught, Nice Art People, Craig Keenan, and Marine Rivoal & Claire Sichez.

SHIPLEY WAYZGOOSE

The 2019 Shipley Wayzgoose will take place on Saturday the 8th of June in the Kirkgate Centre in West Yorkshire from 11:00-4:00pm. The only event of its kind in the North, this is the third year that it's been run and should prove to be the busiest yet. Along with all the usual letterpress paraphernalia there will be tea, coffee, cake, and beer available all day. Free entry.

NEW WORK WANTED

Members are reminded that they are encouraged submit any new work to Phil Treble for inclusion on the Guild's website.

NEW MEMBER SNIPPET

As a child I was lucky enough to make frequent visits to Eye Manor in Herefordshire. Christopher and Lettice Sandford, who lived there, still had many editions from their time running The Golden Cockerel Press and, along with Lettice's wonderful wood engraving, I was introduced to a method of printmaking which I still love today. I very much wanted to make wood engraving the focus of designs chosen for my card company and although alas they are not hand printed with an Albion Press, they are printed locally in Thame. Sarah Eddie - Stone Pine Design www.stonepinedesign.co.uk