

## THE ALCUIN SOCIETY

THE ALCUIN SOCIETY was formed in 1965 in Vancouver. It was the idea of its founder, Geoffrey Spencer, and other founding members were Basil Stuart-Stubbs, Bill Duthie, Sam Black, Bill McConnell, Dale Smith and Sam Fogel. The initial aim of the Society was to promote a wider appreciation of finely wrought books among book lovers around the world. It is the only non-profit organization in Canada dedicated to the entire range of interests related to books and reading. Through *Amphora*, the Society's quarterly journal, topics covered include authorship, publishing, book design and production, the history of the book, libraries, ephemera, bookselling, book buying and collecting and the book arts of typography, type design, printing, binding, paper-making, marbling, calligraphy and illustration.

The name Alcuin was chosen to honour the memory of Alcuin of York (c. 735 to 804 A.D.). Alcuin was a man who cared deeply about books and literacy. As Charlemagne's "Minister of Culture" and a respected teacher, Alcuin encouraged the study and preservation of ancient texts and helped establish numerous schools and libraries. He also selected the most legible script of his day and gave it official blessing. Known as Caroline Miniscule, it ultimately led to our modern lower case alphabet.

To further its aims, The Alcuin Society engages in a wide range of educational activities—lectures, workshops, exhibitions, field visits, many in collaboration with educational institutions such as the Canadian Centre for Continuing Studies in Publishing at Simon Fraser University, University of British Columbia, Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design and the University of Victoria.

The Alcuin Society Annual Awards for Excellence in Book Design in Canada is the only national competition that recognizes and celebrates the art of book design in Canada.

