

News and Notes

Richard Hopkins

Note to *Amphora* proofreader: please do not correct the following item for the misspellings are deliberate and are meant to demonstrate how much **redundancy** there is **in the English language!**

Aoccdrning to rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mtttaer in what oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoetnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be at the rghit pclae. The rset can be a total mses and you can still raed it wouthit porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe.

Amzanig huh?

By the way, this item drove my spellchecker absolutely crazy and I had to run a few words together in order to keep my software from automatically making corrections. Also I found it damn hard to type all of those incorrect spellings!

Premier Polishes His Image as More Budget Cuts Loom.

The B.C. Liberals have always known that Premier Gordon Campbell's tight-collared Howe Street Image has been a political problem. That's why they've occasionally tried to soften his hard edges with gimmicky repackaging jobs. Remember when they stuck him in a plaid shirt and had him strum a folk guitar?

There was always a phoney twang to it all. Dressing up a made-to-measure right-winger like Campbell in garage-band grunge was like putting Margaret Thatcher in a tube top and hot pants. Wrong, wrong, wrong.

But now, with an election just 15 months away, it looks like the premier's image consultants are at it again. Tues-

day's throne speech, for example, announced the creation of the Premier's Advisory Panel on Literacy.

I have no doubt that Campbell's heart is in the right place — he's a voracious reader. But when you think how public-school libraries have been neglected under the Liberals, it's hard to view the new literacy panel as anything more than political sugar-coating to help the premier's image.

Consider: Provincial funding for teacher-librarians has been cut from one librarian per 400 students to one per 700 students in our school system. "With funding pressures in schools, libraries are often the first thing to be cut," Michael Burris, executive director of the B.C. Library Association, told me yesterday. "You have libraries in B.C. schools that are barely open and not staffed. The budget for books is often non-existent. The wheels are falling off all over the place."

Literacy panels may be good PR for the premier. Too bad genuine support for school libraries is so sorely lacking under the Liberals. (Michael Smyth, *Vancouver Province*)

Fear of Book Assassination Haunts Bibliophile's Musings.

In 1562, a Franciscan friar who had accompanied Spanish troops to Mexico ordered the burning of thousands of Mayan hieroglyphic books, in an attempt to eradicate the repository of local spiritual beliefs and to pave the way for Christianity. In one afternoon, practically the entire record of a civilization had been turned to ashes; only four codices are known to have survived. In 1914, the German Army invaded the Belgian city

of Louvain, a treasure house of Gothic and Renaissance architecture. In an act of no military significance whatsoever, Louvain's magnificent library of 300,000 volumes, which included nearly a thousand irreplaceable illuminated manuscripts, was burned to the ground. ("At Louvain," said a man who watched it happen, "Germany disqualified itself as a nation of thinkers.") More recently, during its psychopathic reign in Cambodia in the mid-1970s, Pol Pot's regime destroyed nearly all of ancient Cambodia's manuscripts and monuments. In its rage against modernity and civilization, the Khmer Rouge went so far as to examine ordinary citizens for marks on the bridge of the nose, the telltale signs of reading glasses – which was enough to bring down a death sentence.

(First paragraph of Andre Bernard's review of Nicholas Basbanes *A Splendor or Letters: The Permanence of Books in an Impermanent World* in the *New York Observer*)

The Largest Book in the World.

From cars to aircraft to skyscrapers, someone has to make the largest of any man-made thing, and now someone has made the largest book in the world, right here in Boston. Not longest – largest. Guinness World Records has certified that *Bhutan*, a photographic journey across that Himalayan country, is the world's largest published book. It measures 5-by-7 feet when opened, and many of its dazzling photographs are full-page. The book is also among the priciest. Each hand-bound copy costs \$10,000, but it is not exactly for sale. A \$10,000 contribution to a non-profit, charitable company, Friendly Planet, will get you a

copy. All monies raised go to the American Assistance to Cambodia project.

The book was developed at the MIT Media Lab and produced at Acme Bookbinding of Charlestown, Virginia, a family firm that took a leap of faith on what may be the most unusual book project since Gutenberg. The enormous and stunningly beautiful pages are emerging from four printers. MIT photographer Michael Hawley and Acme designers came up with a way to bind the book, fan-folding the pages by hand and attaching them with a special stitching process. It takes two people most of the day to bind one book. It has 112 pages and weighs more than 100 pounds. Hawley says the paper and inks will last for 100 years. To frame the journey, the endpapers show a map of Bhutan designed by illustrator David Macaulay. (Extracted from an article by David Mehegan from the *Boston Globe*)

Two items of note for those who take delight in **punctuating and citing** their writing in a highly meticulous way:

Menand, Louis. "The End Matter: The Nightmare of Citation." *The New Yorker*, October 6, 2003. (available online at http://newyorker.com/critics/books/?031006crbo_books1)

Truss, Lynne. *Eats, Shoots & Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation*. London: Profile Books, 2003.

Also another **related item** in my possession that might be of interest to some of you:

Zerby, Chuck. *The Devil's Details: A History of Footnotes*. Montpelier, Vermont: Invisible Cities Press, 2002.

The third annual Book History at A&M Workshop will take place May 16-21, 2004, in the Cushing Memorial Library and Archives, Texas A&M University. This five-day workshop provides an intensive, hands-on introduction to hand press era printing and its allied technologies — typesetting, papermaking, bookbinding, illustration, and ink-making. Students will have the opportunity to cast type in a hand mould. They will also set type, impose formes, make paper, and print on a replica common press. The workshop is intended for librarians, archivists, students, teachers, collectors, private individuals and others who work in areas related to or who have an interest in the subject. The workshop also includes a series of evening lectures by scholars active in the field of book history. To register, find out more, or see photographs from last year's workshop: <http://lib-oldweb.tamu.edu/cushing/bookhistory/2004.html>

For its 28th annual conference, to be held at the University of Delaware, September 30-October 1, 2004, the **American Printing History Association** (APHA) seeks papers which fit into the rubric of "The Art and Technique of Illustration." Illustration may be defined as the printed reproduction of pictorial matter. Especially welcome are submissions which deal with the methods and techniques of illustration, such as woodcut, engraving, etching, lithography, photography, and digital imaging. We also encourage papers relating to publishing and printing of illustrations and to illustrators. There are not geographical or chronological limitations, and the subject of papers may be national

or regional in scope, biographical, analytical, technical, or bibliographical in nature. We seek proposals that use new methods of study or interpretation, that benefit from newly available primary sources, or that treat overlooked or forgotten persons, techniques or design elements.

Speakers need not be academics, and we welcome participation by illustrators, printers, artists, design professionals, and other practitioners of the book arts, as well as librarians, curators, independent scholars, and collectors. All papers are limited strictly to a reading time of twenty minutes.

Proposals should be sent to: Mark Samuel Lasner, Vice-President for Programs, APHA, P.O. Box 4519, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163. EMail: programs@printinghistory.org Deadline for submission of proposals is May 1, 2004.

Book Expo Canada, June 11-14, 2004 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. Book Expo is the meeting place for Canada's book industry where industry professionals come together to network, learn and conduct business. It is a showcase of books in all formats, sideline merchandise and other products for bookstores. It is an education forum that looks at the business of books from many viewpoints. The conference includes author breakfasts and lunches, showcases, educational seminars, bookselling school, booksellers'/publishers' forum, education programs for campus and specialty booksellers, and awards. For more information visit the exhibition website at www.bookexpo.ca or call 1-888-322-7333, Ext. 232.

Univ. of Virginia, Rare Book School

Selective list of courses at the RBS:
June 7-11, 2004 – History of European Handwriting – Nicolas Barker

July 5-9, 2004 – Type, Lettering and Calligraphy – James Mosely

July 12-16, 2004 – Donors & Libraries – Susan M. Allen and William P. Barlow Jr.

July 26-30, 2004 – Seminar in Book Illustration Processes – Terry Belanger

For a complete list of courses for the 2004 calendar year see: <http://www.virginia.edu/oldbooks/rbs/schedule.html>

The Center for Book Arts Archive Project

now has 100 exhibitions documented, 1974-2002. There are still 40 or so exhibitions to be added. Eventually they will all be searchable in an online database. The first complete catalogue is now online for the 1990 exhibition of Book Arts in the USA: <http://centerforbookarts.org/archivedev/showdetail.asp?showID=81>

This catalogue was much in demand by librarians, but was unavailable domestically because it was originally printed by the USIA for distribution abroad (a cultural presentation of the United States of America). This exhibition circulated throughout Africa and Latin America for two years. The online catalogue is scanned from the original, and is in French and English. The online catalogue can be read sequentially by starting with the cover and using the arrows, or by clicking the thumbnail images to see a particular page.

This posting is a catalogue announcement of a new catalogue of various How-To manuals available from Oak Knoll

Books. They have compiled an electronic-format-only catalogue composed of just how-to manuals for the various book arts. The different sections of the catalogue cover Design, Illustration, Bookbinding, Calligraphy, Papermaking, Printing and Typography. Once in a section you can visit the other sections if interested by using the links at the top of the page. The books listed are both new and previously owned:

<http://www.oakknoll.com/catalogues/manuals/design.html>

<http://www.oakknoll.com/catalogues/manuals/illustration.html>

<http://www.oakknoll.com/catalogues/manuals/bookbinding.html>

<http://www.oakknoll.com/catalogues/manuals/calligraphy.html>

<http://www.oakknoll.com/catalogues/manuals/papermaking.html>

<http://www.oakknoll.com/catalogues/manuals/printing.html>

<http://www.oakknoll.com/catalogues/manuals/typography.html>

The Book Club of Washington

was founded in 1982. Its aims are similar to those of many predecessors such as The Club of Odd Volumes (Boston, 1887), The Rowfant Club (Cleveland, 1892), and The Book Club of California (San Francisco, 1912) but its activities reflect the varied interests and tastes of admirers of the book worthy and the book beautiful in Washington state.

Keepsakes and kindred spirits are watchwords of The Book Club of Washington. Its members gather regularly for meetings, lectures by distinguished speakers, exhibitions, special presentations by crafts workers, auctions, and gala dinners at which Washington authors,

printers, artisans, and curators are given public recognition due (and sometimes overdue) for their achievements and contributions to the art and study of the book. Also, The Book Club of Washington seeks to contribute to Washington's bibliographic and typographic heritage through publication of significant works of regional history, as well as by the creation of printed keepsakes and memorabilia for *gratis* presentation to its members and a limited circle of its friends.

Annual regular membership requires dues of only \$25 US. Sustaining membership costs \$50 US annually. To join or for further information contact The Book Club of Washington, 1211 East Denny Way, Seattle, Washington, USA, 98122.

We welcome the following new members to the Alcuin Society:

Kimberley Hintz, Vancouver BC
Lee Trentadue, Vancouver BC
John Burtniak, Thorold ON
Robert Currie, Vancouver BC
Michael Price, Peterborough NJ
Stewart Denholtz, Palm Beach FL
Barbara Smibert, Ancaster ON
Chester Gyski, Toronto ON
Sam Motyka, Edmonton AB
Scott Polzen, Vancouver BC
Richard Coxford, Gloucester ON
Jeff Lee/Amanda Goodman, Van. BC
Sharon Burrows, Vancouver BC
Gayle Switzer, St Mary's ON
Rebecca Morin, Vancouver BC
Marilyn MacPherson, Vancouver BC
Terry Rutherford, Port Moody BC
Tom McQuaid, Seattle, WA
Gwasg Gregynog Press, Newton Powys
Wales

The Art of the Book '03 exhibit is coming to the McPherson Library Gallery at the University of Victoria, B.C., from October 9 to 27th, 2004. Organised by the Canadian Bookbinders and Book Artists' Guild (CBBAG), it is their fourth juried exhibit and celebrates the 20th Anniversary of the Guild. It covers the whole field of book arts including Fine binding, Artists' books, Box making, Fine printing, Paper making and decoration, and Calligraphy. Comprising 72 pieces by 67 book workers from Canada, the U.S.A and the United Kingdom, the work ranges from traditional to contemporary, including new technologies.

The exhibit opened in Toronto in September 2003 and now travels to seven other locations across the country until the end of 2005. It offers an opportunity to see the finest work being done by the Canadian book arts community as well as CBBAG's distinguished foreign members.

More information from Susan Corrigan or Sheila Smith, the CBBAG curators, at cbbag@web.net or Caroline Riedel, University of Victoria curator at criedel@uvic.ca.



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