



Aldus Society Notes

Spring 2005

Volume 5, No.3

Series to Explore Early Arabic Manuscripts

Thursday, April 14th — Michael Zwettler, Associate Professor, Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at the Ohio State University will present the seventh chapter of the Aldus Society History of Text & Image series when he speaks on early Arabic manuscripts in a presentation entitled “Writing, Reading, and the Book in the Arab World During Late Antiquity and Early Islam.”



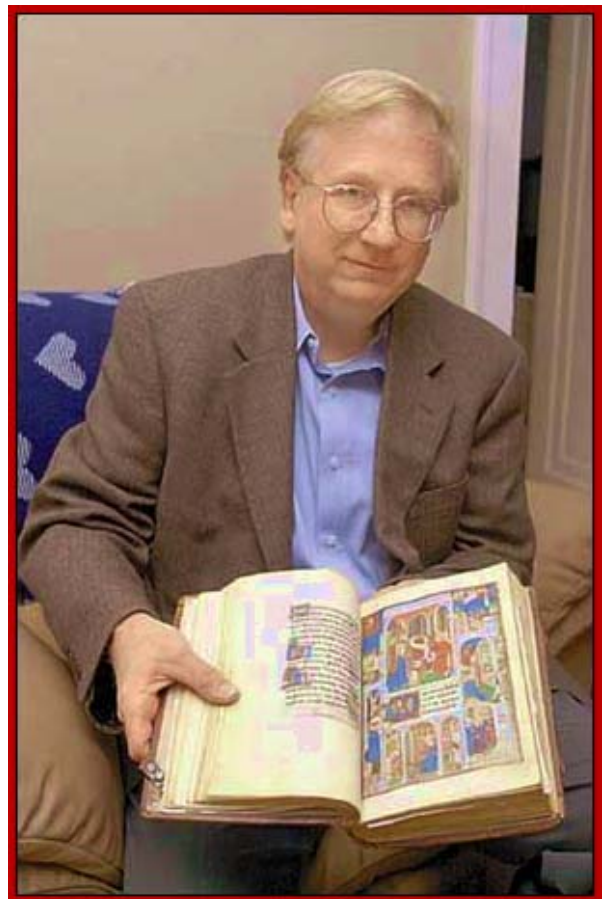
His presentation will cover topics such as early Arabic epigraphy, the importance of the Qur'an in enhancing the indispensability of literacy and “book learning”; and early development of Arabic literature. Among other topics, Zwettler will also address the primacy of the codex, the growth of book-dependant genres and disciplines, and the “book business” in Baghdad and elsewhere.



John Lawrence to Speak on Illuminated Manuscripts

Thursday, May 12th — In the final Aldus Society meeting of the program year, internationally known collector John M. Lawrence, will speak about his passion for illuminated manuscripts. Lawrence, who became interested in illuminated manuscripts three decades years ago when he was studying at Indiana State University and purchased his first manuscript for \$10, now has an extensive collection of manuscripts and an even greater knowledge base.

Our May meetings are special meetings, and this one promises to continue that tradition.



John Lawrence with one of the illuminations he collects
(Anne Peltier photo)



Regular meetings of the Aldus Society are held at 7:30 PM at:

**The Thurber Center
91 Jefferson Avenue
Columbus, Ohio**

☞ Socializing Begins One-Half Hour Before ☞



The Aldus Society

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Aldus Society Notes is published quarterly by the Communications Committee of The Aldus Society. If you have submissions or ideas for articles, please contact Ron Ravneberg at (614) 457-1153 or AldusSociety@aol.com.

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Paper Chains

Ron Ravneberg

Book lovers are a lucky bunch. Our hobby is small enough that we can get to know fellow bibliophiles from all over. After many years of collecting books of various kinds, I have finally found that for me the most enjoyable part of booking is the people I have met along the way.

I liken those friendships to individual links in the paper chains we all made as children. Remember?



Cut a strip of paper and paste it in a loop. Then add another. And another. Soon you have a chain. However, as we all discovered, one person's chain usually doesn't get very long until it is linked to another's. That's when the fun begins and the chain really starts to grow.

My current experience with chain building began five years ago when I read an article in the *Columbus Dispatch* about a new book club called the Aldus Society. Little did I realize that the article would set into motion a series of events that would add many local links in my chain of friends and forge new ones in places far from Ohio.

At the time I read the article I knew nothing of the local book community, so the individuals described were simply names in the newspaper. Since that time they have become friends, colleagues and links in my chain.

Through them I have had the opportunity to draw upon their chains and meet other book people in Columbus and other book clubs affiliated with the Aldus Society. Those links introduced me to the wider world of antiquarian booksellers, rare book libraries and librarians, book clubs and book collectors. Chain joining chain.

The chain formed as a result of that original article in the *Columbus Dispatch* continues to grow and now drapes around the book world like a garland on a Christmas tree. Like Jacob Marley, "I wear the chain I forged in life. I made it link by link, and yard by yard." But unlike Marley, my chain is no burden. In fact, the longer my chain gets, the lighter it is.

When I'm asked if the wonderful books I've had the pleasure to enjoy are the best part of my booking experiences, I respond that the books, although most impressive, are secondary. More important are the activities that bring me into contact with those special book people who have become the links in my chain — socializing with attendees at Aldus Society meetings, chatting with booksellers on a rainy Saturday afternoon, visiting book clubs around the region, attending book fairs, and visiting others' homes to see their collections.

One of the fun things about paper chains is that no two people make them the same. My chain has links of one kind; yours has links of another. What our chains have in common, however, is that we each invested the time and effort to make them, and that's the important thing.

Unlike the paper chains of our youth, chains of friends are alive and require attention to stay strong. Toward that end, we must each continually invest in the people and activities that help our chains grow.

Aldus Society members have lots of opportunity to work on their chains this spring — meetings, exhibits, informal gatherings, field trips, social events ... they're all there and they all lead to new links. The issue of *Aldus Society Notes* you're reading describes a number of opportunities to help you create your own paper chain.

Let me know if you need some paste.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ron'.

The Amenities of Book Collecting

Aldus Society Notes periodically includes items about books that are no longer under copyright, but have moved to the public domain.



A. Edward Newton

Book-collectors are constantly being ridiculed by scholars for the pains they take and the money they spend on first editions of their favorite authors; and it must be that they smart under the criticism, for they are always explaining, and attempting rather foolishly to justify their position. Would it not be better to say, as Leslie Stephen did of Dr. Johnson's rough sayings, that "it is quite useless to defend

them to any one who cannot enjoy them without defense"?

I am not partial to the "books which no gentleman's library should be without," fashionable a generation or two ago. The works of Thomas Frognall Dibdin do not greatly interest me, and where will one find room to-day for Audubon's *Birds* or Roberts's *Holy Land* except on a billiard-table or under a bed?

The very great books of the past have become so rare, so high-priced, that it is almost useless for the ordinary collector to hope ever to own them, and fashion changes in book-collecting as in everything else. Aldines and Elzevirs are no longer sought. Our interest in the Classics being somewhat abated, we pass them over in favor of books which, we tell ourselves, we expect some day to read, the books written by men of whose lives we know something. I would rather have a *Paradise Lost* with the first title-page, in contemporary binding, or an *Angler*, than all the Aldines and Elzevirs ever printed.

That this feeling is general, accounts, I take it, for the excessively high prices now being paid for first editions of modern authors like Shelley, Keats, Lamb, and, to come right down to our own day, Stevenson. Would not these authors be amazed could they know in what esteem they are held, and what fabulous prices are paid for volumes which, when they were published, fell almost stillborn from the press? We all know the story of Fitzgerald's *Rubaiyat*: how a "remainder" was sold by Quaritch at a penny the copy. It is now worth its weight in gold, and Keats's *Endymion*, once a "remainder" bought by a London bookseller at fourpence, now commands several hundred dollars. I paid three hundred and sixty dollars for mine but it was once Wordsworth's and has his name on the title-page.

But it is well in book-collecting, while not omitting the present, never to neglect the past. "Old books are best," says Beverly Chew, beloved of all collectors; and I recall Lowell's

remark: "There is a sense of security in an old book which time has criticized for us." It was a recollection of these sayings that prompted me, if prompting was necessary, to pay a fabulous price the other day for a copy of *Hesperides, or the Works both Humane amid Divine of Robert Herrick, Esq.*, a beautiful copy of the first edition in the original sheep.

We collectors know the saying of Bacon: "Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed and some few to be chewed and digested"; but the revised version is, some books are to be read, others are to be collected. Mere reading books, the five-foot shelf, or the hundred best, every one knows at least by name. But at the moment I am concerned with collectors' books and the amenities of book-collecting; for, frankly,

I am one of those who seek
What Bibliomaniacs love.

[Newton, A. Edward. *The Amenities of Book-Collecting*.
Boston: *The Atlantic Monthly Press*, 1918. pp. 5-8.]



Rare Book Review

The Aldus Society has been approached by the publishers of *Rare Book Review*, a United Kingdom-based publication about rare books. Among other things, they have broached the subject of discounted subscription members of Aldus Society members.

Although *Rare Book Review* is sold all around the world, one of its strongest international readerships is in the USA and a lot of our content reflects this. Their next issue, for example, features bibliographic features on Mark Twain, John Bunyan plus a full report from the San Francisco Book Fair and our usual international news and auction previews, reports and diaries.



If you would be interested in subscribing to the magazine, please let Ron Ravneberg know at (614) 457-1153 or send him an e-mail at RRavneberg@aol.com. If enough people show interest, we'll open further discussions with the publishers.

If you would like more information on *Rare Book Review*, you can visit their website at:

www.rarebookreview.com



While We're on the Topic ...

If you're one of those people who have been looking around for a magazine to feed your bibliomania ever since *Biblio*

folded, you might also want to check out *Fine Books & Collections*.



Fine Books & Collections is the bi-monthly successor to *OP*, and runs articles covering the many facets of the fine book trade. The magazine also includes other book news, auction reports, and catalog reviews. Regular columns include “Fine Presses”, “Beyond the Basics”, and “How I Got Started”.

Among its other features, *Fine Books & Collections* also features a standing column entitled Gently Mad by Aldus Society friend and guest speaker at last summer’s Celebration of the Book, Nicholas Basbanes.

If you would like more information on *Fine Books & Collections*, you can visit their website at:

<http://www.finebooksmagazine.com/>



And Then There’s ...



Book Source Magazine has been around since 1985, and serves both buyers and sellers of second-hand, out-of-print, and rare books.

Regular *Book Source Magazine* features include “Specialists Directory”, “Letter from England”, “Ephemera Bits”, “Directory of Private Collectors”, “Catalogues Received”, “Book Exchange”, and the occasional “Book Sale Calendar”.

If you would like more information on *Book Source Magazine*, you can visit their website at:

<http://www.booksourcemonthly.com/>

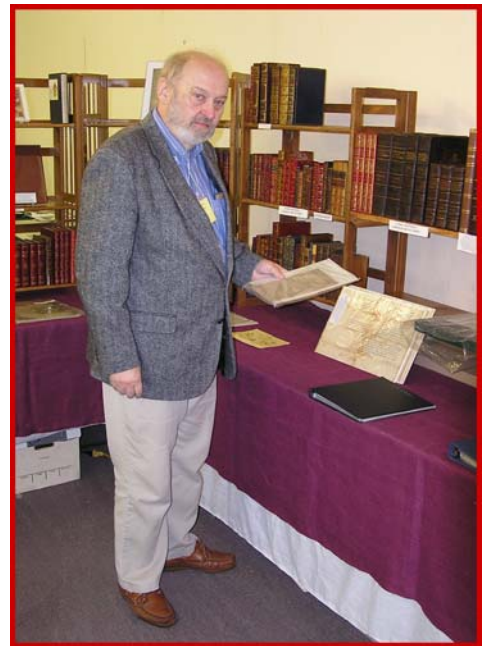


NOBS Book Fair

March 25th and 26th were the dates for the 23rd Akron Antiquarian Book Fair, sponsored by the Northern Ohio Bibliophilic Society (NOBS). The event was held at the Emidio & Sons Exposition Center in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, and brought together more than 60 book dealers.

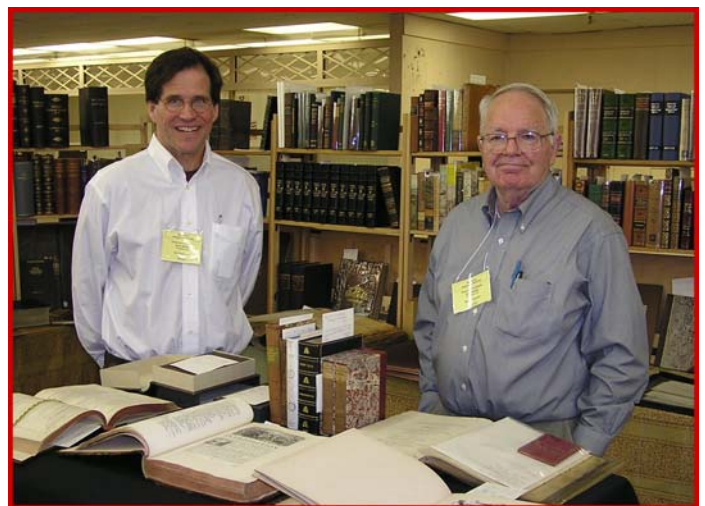
The venue for the event is getting quite shabby, but the inadequacies of the site were more than made up for by the warmth of the many dealers present and their wonderful wares.

Books shown at the Akron show run the gamut from the mediocre (only a few) to the relatively high-end (also only a few). Most of the dealers displayed the kinds of books that the casual collector wants and can afford, but can seldom seem to find. That makes it a good book fair.



Jim Richards of Duck Creek Books (St. Clairsville, Ohio)

Probably the best represented areas were Ohioana and Civil War materials, but those whose concentrations run to topics like Samuel Johnson, the history of science, children’s books or modern firsts would have little trouble finding books and materials of interest.



Columbus booksellers Ed Hoffman and Bob Emerson with some of their treasures on display

More information about NOBS and its programming (to which Aldus Society members are always welcome) can be found on their website:

www.nobsweb.org/



Aldus Society Directory

If you haven't yet renewed your Aldus Society membership for 2005, now is the time to do so. Not soon ... now!

The Aldus Society is about to release its 2005 Membership Directory, which is scheduled to be provided to all current members during April. So is your membership current? Here's the list of current members as of March 31st:

Diane Abel	Nathan & Wilma Hanson	Bill Radloff
Roger Baughman	Christine Hayes	Ron Ravneberg
George Bauman	Nicole Hayes	David Reiff
John Bennett	Shirley Hyatt	Donald Rice
Robert Bennett	Robert Jackson	Bill Rich
Harry & Nancy Campbell	Martin Jamison	Laralyn Sasaki
Mildred Chavous	Kay & John Jones	Ann Saup
Richard Cheski	Michael & Betty Klapper	Stephanie Shaw
Wilkie Cirker	Jean Labuhn	Geoff Smith
Norman Clerman	Helen Liebman	James & Aurallee Smith
Charles Cole	Bill & Carol Logue	Lois Smith
Thomas Corbin	Marilyn Logue	Harold Stevens
Scott Cummings	Laura Masonbrink	William Studer
Jeff Davis	Bruce McKittrick	Jean Teteris
Bill Evans	Ted Messner	James Tootle
Dareth Gerlach	Michael & Deb Packer	Donald Tritt
Carol Gilbert	James Patterson	Evelyn Walker
Emerson Gilbert	Joe Perko	Brendon & Jane Ware
Ivan Gilbert	Marcia Preston	Paul Watkins
Grazyna Grauer		

A downloadable membership form is available at the Aldus Society web site, or you can call Ron Ravneberg at (614) 457-1153 to get a copy mailed to you.



The Art of the Book

On Sunday, March 20th, a number of Aldus Society members and friends met for an informal outing to the Columbus Museum of Art to view the Claude Raguet Hirst exhibit of still life paintings of books.

The group arrived in time to buy lunch at the Palette Café in the museum, but because of limited seating in the Palette, carried their food up to the Derby Court. There everyone pulled their tables together for friendly conversation before moving on to view the exhibit.



Highlight of the afternoon, of course, was Hirst's wonderful series of still life paintings — particularly those that featured books.

According to the exhibit materials, Hirst was the only acclaimed woman to work in the highly realistic style of painting known as *trompe l'oeil* ("fool the eye"). She transformed still life painting by creating works that appealed to both men and women. Hirst's intimately scaled oils and watercolors display her dazzling skill for rendering the surfaces and textures of objects.

The paintings will be on exhibit through April 10th.



Friends of the Ohio State University Libraries Book Sale

It's once again time for the Friends of the Ohio State University Libraries semi-annual book sale. As with previous sales, this spring's book sale will offer thousands of books covering all subjects, including:

- Scholarly, Reference, and Technical works
- Art, Literature, and History
- Popular Fiction
- Textbooks
- Much much more!

The book sale will be held May 4th through 6th on the OSU campus at the William Oxley Thompson (Main) Library, 1858 Neil Avenue Mall. Room 122 features individually priced collectors' books; Room 001 features a wide variety of books with all hardbacks priced at \$2, paperbacks at \$1.

Cash and checks with proper identification are accepted, but they don't accept credit or debit cards. Proceeds from the sale benefit the William Oxley Thompson Memorial Library renovation campaign.

The best time to find those very special bargains is during the Friends Preview Night, which for this sale will be held on May 4th from 6:30 PM to 9 PM. The bad news is that the Preview Night is open only to members of the Friends of the Ohio State University Libraries. The good news is that membership in that group is open to anyone. A number of Aldus Society members are also members of Friends (no surprise there).

Book sale hours on the 5th and 6th are as follows:

May 5th – 8:30 AM until 6:00 PM

May 6th – 8:30 AM until 4:30 PM

Information about joining the Friends of the Ohio State University Libraries can be found at:

<http://library.osu.edu/sites/friends/membership.html>



Aldus 2005 Recap

Here's a recap for those of you who weren't able to attend some of this year's earlier meetings of the Aldus Society:

January 13th — The January program continued a “Show and Tell” tradition started in 2004, with several Aldus members bringing samples from their collections or interesting book-related items to share. Presenters included:

- **Bill Radloff** — Three famous people from Columbus (Elsie Janis, A. G. Fields, and a World War I flyer).
- **Scott Williams** — How he became a collector of overseas tourist materials and travel literature, some current resources and critiques of travel literature and a couple examples of why he finds this genre so fascinating.
- **Allison Cusick** — Philatelic books. Philately is the study of stamps and postal history. Philately books usually have small press runs and are unknown outside the philatelic community.
- **Paul Watkins** — The Grabhorn Press edition of Twain’s *1601*, with a letter from Lt. C.F.S. Wood, the West Point Academy printer.
- **Charley Cole** — His collection of books on his current research project about the earliest authors in Ohio, including books by James Smith, James B. Finley, William McGuffey, James McGaw, David Dorr, John Parker, and Harriet Beecher Stowe.
- **Genie Hoster** — Collecting books and ephemera on graphic themes.

February 17th — Ed Vermue, Head of Special Collections and Preservation at Oberlin College, helped us honor Black



Ed Vermue
(Image courtesy of George Cowmeadow Bauman)

History Month with a presentation about Oberlin’s Anti-Slavery Collection, entitled *The Anti-Slavery Collection of Oberlin College Library: A Monument to “The Town the Started the Civil War.”* Oberlin was a hotbed of Abolitionist sentiment and a major stop on the Underground Railroad. Most of the collection was acquired through the donations of sympathetic local residents and is very much a monument to local history as well as to a national crisis.

March 3rd — The Aldus Society co-sponsored a special presentation by Richard Samuel West in conjunction with “The Sting of the Wasp” exhibit at the Cartoon Research Library of the Ohio State University.

The Wasp was the colorful chronicler of one of the most exciting periods in the history of San Francisco. This exhibit presented some of *The Wasp’s* most powerful and representative cartoons from the private collection of Richard Samuel West.



March 10th — The regular March meeting of the Aldus Society provided attendees with a look into some of the intricacies of the booksellers’ trade when seven Aldus Society members who are booksellers sat as a panel and shared some of their experiences with the audience.



Bill Radloff, Genie Hoster & Jay Hoster
(Image courtesy of George Cowmeadow Bauman)

The panel was composed of Paul Watkins (Student Book Exchange), Ed Hoffman (Hoffman’s Bookshop) Bob Slotta (Admirable Books), George Cowmeadow Bauman (Acorn Bookshop), Bill Radloff (The Little Bookshop), and Genie and Jay Hoster (Books On High/Tri-Village Book Company).



Paul Watkins, Ed Hoffman, Bob Slotta & George Cowmeadow Bauman
(Image courtesy of George Cowmeadow Bauman)

Although the panel members represented different parts of the bookselling trade, their common (and uncommon) experiences made for a lively meeting that was enjoyed by all.



Roscoe Village Event

Aldus Society members interested in crafts, calligraphy and the book arts may enjoy an upcoming creative week-end (April 8-10) being offered at Roscoe Village in Coshocton, Ohio.

For those not interested in classes there are great opportunities to shop for artists’ supplies, special papers, books and original works of art.

More details about this opportunity to spend a pleasant week-end in a historic village are available at:

www.europeanpapers.com



Calligraphy Exhibit

The Calligraphy Guild of Columbus will be hosting an exhibit of fine calligraphy works entitled "The Dance of the Pen" at the High Road Gallery, located at 12 E. Stafford Avenue in Worthington, Ohio from March 30th through April 23rd. Gallery hours are 12:00 – 4:00 PM, Wednesday through Friday and 11:30 AM – 4:00 PM on Saturday.

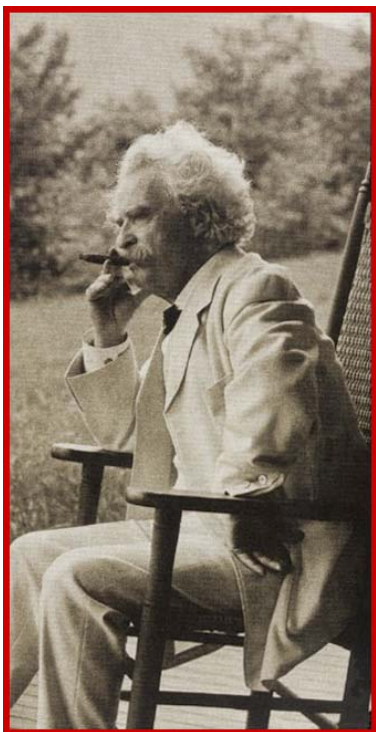


Mark Twain Prints

We still have a few of the wonderful photographic prints of Mark Twain that were so generously donated to the Aldus Society by member Robert Slotta of Admirable Books.

The 8x10 black and white matted prints are available for \$35 each, and 100% of the proceeds will be divided between the Aldus Society and the Friends of the Ohio State University Libraries.

If you'd like one of these prints, be sure to ask at a regular Aldus Society meeting, call Ron Ravneberg at (614) 457-1153 or e-mail him at RRavneberg@aol.com.



Contributors Wanted

If you have ideas or contributions for *Aldus Society Notes*, please let us know. We're looking for articles, columns, opinions or anything else that would be of interest to Aldus Society members. Just call Ron Ravneberg at (614) 457-1153 or e-mail him at RRavneberg@aol.com.



Library of Congress Exhibition & Symposium

The Rare Book and Special Collections Division at the Library of Congress announces an exhibition and catalogue "A Heavenly Craft: The Woodcut in Early Printed Books," on view at the Library of Congress from April 7 – July 9, 2005. The exhibition presents for the first time a remarkable group of more than eighty rare woodcut-illustrated books once owned by C.W. Dyson Perkins and now part of the legendary Lessing J. Rosenwald Collection at the Library. Produced during the first century after Gutenberg mastered printing with movable type, the books represent the evolution of the woodcut during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The exhibition explores developments in technique, composition, perspective, and coloration of the woodcut as it evolved in Western Europe.

The Rare Book and Special Collections Division will also be holding the third Library of Congress Rare Book Forum symposium on Thursday, April 21, 2005 with a program of speakers addressing various aspects of the stylistic development of the Renaissance woodcut in Western Europe from 1480 to 1520. The symposium will showcase some of the most recent scholarship in the field of early printed books.

The symposium is free and open to the public, but if you expect to attend, please contact Daniel De Simone at The Library of Congress by email at d-des@loc.gov or by telephone (202) 707-3402.



Visit the Aldus Society web site for up-to-date information about our programs and activities, in-depth articles about many of our speakers, and links to other book related organizations.

www.AldusSociety.com





The Aldus Society

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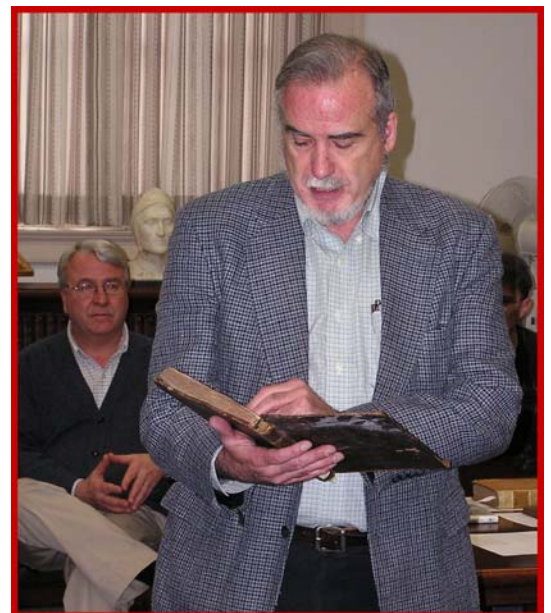
First Saturday Series Takes a Look at Comets

The calendar might have said April 2nd, but it looked more like snowy December when 15 members of the Aldus Society gathered at the Ohio State University Rare Books and Manuscripts Reading Room to help kick off “First Saturday,” the Aldus Society’s newest program series.

The informal sessions, wherein members are invited to the OSU Rare Books and Manuscripts Reading Room to view and discuss several books selected from the OSU collection, are designed to provide attendees with an opportunity to explore books in relative depth with commentary by a subject specialist.

The inaugural “First Saturday” program took a close look at early astronomical works of G.D. Cassini, Christiaan Huygens, Increase Mather, Friedrich Wilhelm Bessel, and others who wrote about comets in the 17th through 19th centuries. In addition, other classical astronomical works by Galileo, Kepler and Hevelius were available for examination. The subject specialist was Robert Wing, Professor Emeritus from the Department of Astronomy of the Ohio State University.

According to Geoff Smith, Head of Rare Books and Manuscripts at OSU, future programs will be held the first Saturday of each month with the exception of OSU home football games in the fall, when the “First Saturday” may be the first Saturday after the first Saturday. Information about upcoming sessions will be published in *Aldus Society Notes* and on the Aldus Society web site, as it becomes available.



Bob Wing describes a 17th century work on comets by G.D. Cassini of the Paris Observatory

