

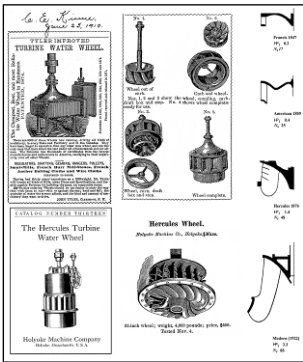
Aldus Society Notes

Autumn 2008

Volume 9, No. 1

Trade Catalogs in October

The Aldus Society's October meeting will explore trade catalogs of manufacturers, retailers and agricultural interests and their place in American decorative arts, the history of design as well as trends in various industries. These catalogs show product specifications, prices and types of material used in the manufacture of the items being sold through a catalog. They also provided a reference book for wares that a merchandiser could show customers who were called upon.



The Ohio State University recently received the trade catalog collection of long-time Aldus Society member Ivan Gilbert, who assembled a collection of over 10,000 of these items over the course of a decade. Dr. Gilbert will briefly explain how he came to assemble his collection while Geoff Smith, Head of the OSU Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, will comment on representative examples that show the

breadth and depth of this collection, and will further explain how researchers can use the collection in their research.

This program will be held Thursday, October 23, 2008, at 7:30 PM at the Thurber Center, 91 Jefferson Avenue, Columbus, OH. Socializing begins at 7:00 PM.



November is Spy Month



In November, Nicholas B. Scheetz, Manuscript Librarian for the Lauinger Library at Georgetown University, will present a program entitled "Spy Time: Intelligence Holdings at Georgetown University".

The core of this collection was put together by a former chemical engineer and technical analyst at the Central Intelligence Agency, Colonel Russell J. Bowen, who donated it to Georgetown. This non-fiction collection contains some 14,000 volumes dealing with intelligence, espionage, covert activities, cryptology, signals intelligence, tradecraft of all kinds and the application of technology to intelligence gathering. This is one of the largest collections of its kind in the country and includes many exceptionally rare titles such as the first edition (1699) of Matthew Smith's *Memoirs of Secret Service*.

In addition to the non-fiction collection, Georgetown also received a fiction collection from Colonel Bowen. This is a separately maintained collection of more than 3,500 titles in the spy fiction genre. Mainly English-language in content, it includes such rarities as *The Algerine Spy* published in Philadelphia in 1787. This collection – taken as a whole and in context – documents Anglo-American readers' taste for espionage thrillers in the post-James Bond era.

Other holdings at Georgetown include the papers and personal libraries of former CIA Directors William E. Colby and Richard Helms, along with the papers of such authors as Edgar J. Applewhite and Anthony Cave Brown.

This program will be held Thursday, November 13, 2008, at 7:30 PM at the Thurber Center, 91 Jefferson Avenue, Columbus, OH. Socializing begins at 7:00 PM.



Aldus Society Calendar

Dates and topics are subject to change. Check the Aldus Society web site for up-to-date information.

October

23 (Regular Meeting) — Ivan Gilbert and Geoff Smith on Trade Catalogs

November

1 (First Saturday) — Nobel Laureate John Steinbeck

13 (Regular Meeting) — Nicholas Scheetz – Spy-related material

December

8 (Special Meeting) — Holiday Dinner and Silent Auction at *La Scala*

January

8 (Regular Meeting) — Jack Salling – Collecting early medical books

February

12 (Regular Meeting) — TBA

March

12 (Regular Meeting) — Aldus Collects

April

9 (Regular Meeting) — Richard West – The comic weekly, "Light"

May

14 (Regular Meeting) — Scott Brown, California bookseller and former Editor of *Fine Books & Collections* magazine



The Aldus Society

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Trajectories

Ron Ravneberg

Normally, Bill Evans would be sharing his thoughts at this point, but October has been an awkward month for old Bill, what with marrying off his daughter and the general financial collapse of the world. Nothing that a professional financial counselor like Bill can't handle, of course, but adding a newsletter column on top of everything else was just a bit too much. So here I am.

As many of you know, in recent months I've had to come to grips with personal health issues that have drastically altered my approach to books and book collecting. Like many of you, for years I have collected in my areas of interest, thinking nothing about the eventual disposition of the items that joined my library. Times have changed, and now where my books end up is very important.

There's the usual debate between donation of intact collections and redistribution of individual volumes through sale or auction, of course. After all, a collection can be an entity in its own, and sometimes it's a shame to break one up. On the other hand, if nobody redistributed his/her books, then the current collector would have nothing available to collect.

I never knew which approach I'd embrace when the time came, but now I do. Donation? Resale? For me, the answer is a qualified "yes" to both. And then some. I've concluded that each book has its own trajectory. Some "need" to be donated, some sold, and others simply handed on to friends.

I have the greatest respect for the Rare Books and Manuscripts Library at Ohio State and the work being done there by Geoff Smith and Eric Johnson. For that reason, I've decided to donate the bulk of my Captain Cook collection to OSU. It's an area in which OSU has minimal holdings, yet it relates to several of their other collections. And because I'm not a "high-spot" collector, much of what I have represents perfect background material for a research library like OSU.

Over the years, however, I did manage to acquire three Cook-related publications that appear to be unique. Just dumb luck maybe, but good dumb luck. Are those items going to OSU? Nope. They're very specialized, and contribute little to a general research-based collection. But they can add to major Cook collections around the world. One has been sold to the State Library of New South Wales (the Mecca of Cook researchers), and one to a high-end collector of materials related to Joseph Banks. The other has not yet been offered to the market, but will no doubt follow a similar path.

Then there's the third category, which is the most fun. I've discovered that some of my books belong in the collections of friends. You know, ... "Here's a book you need." In recent weeks I've had multiple occasions where someone has mentioned a book or item that he/she was seeking that I had in my collection and had no clue what its ultimate destination would be (until it was mentioned, that is). And they're varied ... an autobiography of an 18th century bookseller, a collection of essays on amateur astronomy, a facsimile of the German edition of the Nuremberg Chronicle, an 18th century allegorical novel, a hard-to-find edition of a southern hemisphere astronomical observing guide, even a reproduction of a 16th century mariner's astrolabe ... all safely in their new homes.

Which makes me a very happy camper.



Aldus Society Meetings

Regular meetings of the Aldus Society are held at 7:30 PM on the second Thursday of the month at

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

☞ Socializing Begins One-Half Hour Before ☞



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

Barry Moser's Don Quixote Print: The Perfect Holiday Gift!



Artist and author, Barry Moser has generously donated his time and talent to create a special printed edition of his image of *Don Quixote* in support of the Thompson Library Renovation.

Moser, whom Nicholas Basbanes calls “the most important book illustrator working in America today,” was hosted by the Aldus Society and the Friends of the OSU Libraries when he was a featured speaker at our 2004 *Celebration of the Book* in Columbus. It was during his visit that Barry offered to authorize an edition to help with the renovation project.

The image, which has never before been the subject of a printed edition, was released at the end of 2005 to coincide with the 400th anniversary of the publication of the first part of *Don Quixote de la Mancha* by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra. The Talfourd P. Lynn Cervantes collection in OSU's Rare Books and Manuscripts Library is one of the world's most significant collections of publications by Cervantes, and includes a copy of the extremely rare first 1605 Madrid printing of *Don Quixote*.

Moser's *Don Quixote* is printed on Mohawk Letterpress Superfine, off-white, eggshell finish 80# stock. The print size is approximately 12.5" x 19" and the centered image is approximately 8" x 12.5".

The print is available in a signed and numbered edition of 100 prints at \$250 each. An additional 125 unsigned prints are available for \$150 each. Both versions are available exclusively through the Aldus Society and the Friends of the OSU Libraries. Proceeds from the prints will benefit the Thompson Library Renovation Campaign.

Several Aldus Society members have already added the print to their collections. If you are interested in acquiring one or more print(s), please contact the Aldus Society at (614) 457-1153 or at AldusSociety@aol.com. You can also contact Friends of the OSU Libraries office at (614) 292-3387.



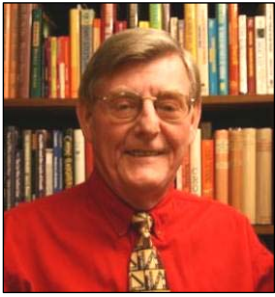
Don Quixote de la Mancha and his faithful horse Rocinante, a limited edition print by Barry Moser, available exclusively through the Aldus Society and the Friends of the Ohio State University Libraries. All proceeds will benefit the renovation of OSU's Thompson Library.



A Bookstore-y

George Cowmeadow Bauman

A Hat with a History



An older man entered Acorn by the side door, wearing a snazzy green felt hat, which I complimented him on right away.

"This is a hat with a history," he smiled, taking it off and looking at it as he came over to the counter, stacked high with books I had just bought from someone who sal-

vages stuff from houses to be sold or demolished. We see such scavengers several times a year, mostly with decrepit books, and we frequently have to break the news to them that that the stinky mildew saturating that 1878 book kind of takes the glow off anyone wanting to buy it, including me.

"I was up in Alaska," the man with the weathered, outdoorsy face continued, unbidden, "fly fishing on the Yukon River. A gust of wind blew the hat into the river, which was running pretty strong. The hat was gone!" he exclaimed, throwing out an arm with a flip of his hand in a throwing-the-Frisbee kind of motion to indicate his hat sailing off.

"The next day my buddy and I were fishing downriver, next to a native village, and believe it or not, we found this very same damned hat! It had floated downstream and looked a lot worse for the wear, but it turned out that only the leather band had shrunk. I dried the hat out and brought it home. I stitched in a new leather headband, and now it's nearly as good as new...and it has a history!"

As we later traded stories about our world travels, I noticed he was missing several fingers on his left hand. Which made his statement about being retired, yet still active in his business, rather darkly humorous: "I still like to keep a finger on the business."



A Call for Donations

Laralyn Sasaki

Please donate your books and book-related items for inclusion in the third annual Aldus Society Silent Auction, to be held during the Aldus Society Holiday Dinner on Monday, December 8, 2008. Proceeds will benefit Aldus Society programming and other book-related good works. The dinner and auction are becoming an annual highlight of the season, and we depend on donors – and bidders! – to make the evening a success.

Donated items may be dropped off before November 30th at Acorn Bookshop, 1464 West Fifth Avenue, in Grandview, during business hours, Tuesdays through Saturdays. If you are unable to drop off your items at Acorn, please e-mail

Laralyn Sasaki at laralynsasaki@yahoo.com to arrange for pickup by Aldus volunteers.



Book Hunting Notes

Bill Rich

A Visit to the Library of Congress

I visited the Library of Congress this August. Despite growing up in the Washington, D.C. area, and a rather bookish lifetime, this was a first visit. What is essentially the founding collection of the library are the books Thomas Jefferson sold to the nation in 1816. The remains of this

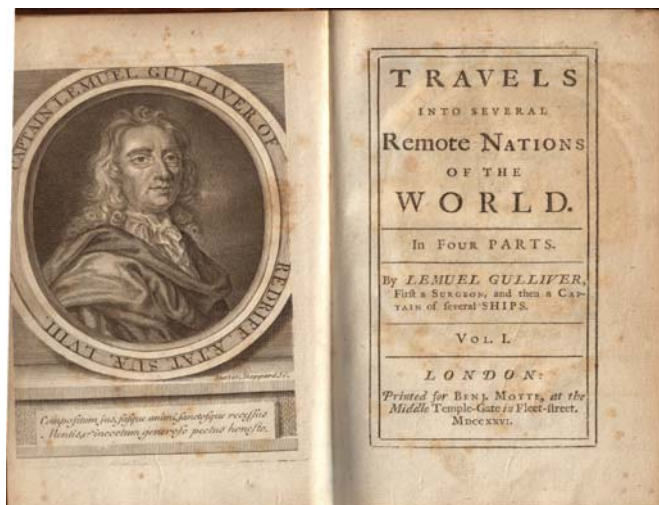


collection are the subject of a spectacular display. In addition to seeing this, I also had a minor research mission. My copy of *Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World, by Lemuel Gulliver*, 2 volumes, London, 1726 is a first edition of Swift's masterpiece, and is in contemporary paneled leather bindings. The books have an interesting 18th Century heraldic bookplate in each volume. As shown in the third image, the bookplates proclaim the ownership of one "Jeremiah Dixon." When I bought the books (from Heritage Books in Los Angeles before their recent, much lamented demise), the name didn't mean anything to me. But a visitor to my home, while looking at these volumes, asked me if these were the plates of "the Jeremiah Dixon." Now, I have been assured that the proper reply to such a question, if I were a dealer eager to make a sale, would have been "Very likely, we are researching this at present." But, in all ignorance, my reply was "who's that?" My visitor told me that *the* Jeremiah Dixon was the Dixon of the Mason-Dixon Line survey, and a rather prominent English surveyor and explorer. Eager to establish a possible interesting provenance for my *Gulliver*, I



immediately undertook to research the issue. I found out that there were actually two well-known individuals in early 18th Century England with the name Jeremiah Dixon. The second was of a wealthy family, and became, among other accomplishments, the mayor of Smeaton, a prominent Midlands marketing town. The two Jeremiahs are often confounded. But which owned my book? The coat of arms on the plates would be the obvious indicator, but no heraldic reference or book plate index in Columbus provided any clue. I learned there was one extensive genealogy of the family of

the Mason-Dixon Line Jeremiah, but the only copies in this country were in the Library of Congress (LOC). The LOC on-line catalog showed that they had three copies of this book, but none were available for inter-library loan. So, taking advantage of a trip to D.C. that I had to make anyway, my wife Bea and I found ourselves emerging from the South Capitol exit of the D.C. Metro, walking towards the massive buildings of the LOC.



Now, mid-August is not the absolute best time for two 70-year-olds using public transportation to visit the Mall area of the nation's capital. Temperature and humidity were both in the 90's. While the Metro exit we used was the corner nearest the library buildings, each of these three colossal structures seemed to occupy the equivalent of a few normal-sized city blocks. Across the street was the Capitol – but a damn long walk away, actually. And, north of the LOC, are the Supreme Court, and the much smaller Folger Library. Husbanding resources, we decided to confine ourselves to the LOC, this trip, anyway. Not wanting to hike around all the buildings, we sought immediate directions, and were fortunate to find a uniformed guard walking toward us. He was courteous and informed, and our first contact with the extreme helpfulness of all LOC staff. If we wanted to do research, we first had to go to an office in the Madison Building, and, yes, get a library card. And, hallelujah, we were standing next to the Madison building.

After a long hike down the halls in the bowels of the Madison Building, but with cheerful guidance from several of the many bustling staff, we reached the proper office. We joined a small number of applicants who were completing the application procedure. Two pieces of ID, one with a picture, is all it took. At another desk, the library cards were being issued. A sign politely asked that only genuine research applications be made; they didn't issue LOC library cards for mere souvenirs. We were asked for what period would we want the card to be valid – our answer was two days, and the card was issued (I *am* keeping it as a bookish souvenir, of course). We were then passed on to a last desk, over which a sign said "research consulting". An honest-to-God librarian sat at this desk, a librarian who seemed genuinely interested

in our little research problem. He spent some time discussing my efforts to find out who my book's Jeremiah Dixon was. Since I was looking for a particular book, the Dixon family history, he advised me to go to the "Genealogy and Biography" Reading Room, rather than to the Main Reading Room. While any book in the LOC could be brought to my desk in either place, my advisor suggested a book in this area might be brought in sooner in Genealogy. So, thanking my advisor, we were off to Genealogy, in the Jefferson Building, the oldest structure in the LOC. There, almost every hall was a marble-clad splendor. Sort of makes you proud to be an American taxpayer.



Taking a desk in the Genealogy Reading Room, I filled out and turned in the request forms for all three copies of the Dixon genealogy I wanted, and was told that copies came up in 45 to 60 minutes. Sure enough, about 50 minutes later, all three printings were brought to my desk. Not bad for pulling 3 books out of more than 100 million items. But, though the operation was a suc-

cess, the patient died anyway. Nowhere in this genealogy did the coat of arms of my bookplate appear. I was beginning to think my "Gulliver" had belonged to the other, less distinguished Jeremiah Dixon. But, it getting late, we decided to look at some of the more acclaimed parts of the Library, and hastened off to the Grand Hall, and the Main Reading Room. I have always held that almost every library is a win-some thing, but the LOC is among the grandest. When the Jefferson Building opened in 1897, it was proclaimed, with all the bravado of late 19th century America, to be the "largest, costliest, and safest" library in the world. Well, it is knock-your-eyes-out gorgeous. And the Main Reading Room, where we were entitled to a desk by virtue of our card, was equally splendid. The room is circular, with a vast dome. The reading desks are arranged in semicircles; at each individual reader's station, these days, you can connect your laptop and have Internet access. Around and under the dome, all is gilt and white marble. I can quote from the LOC brochure: "Eight giant marble columns each support 10-foot-high allegorical female figures representing characteristic features of civilized life and thought: *Religion, Commerce, History, Art, Philosophy, Poetry, Law and Science*. The 16 bronze statues set upon the balustrades of the galleries pay homage to men whose lives symbolized the thought and activity represented by the female figures" Why go on – you

get the idea. It is reminiscent of Panizzi's great reading room in the old British Library – said to be the only large room in the world in which truly creative literary work was done. But I like to think much great scholarship has also occurred in the LOC. In addition to the British Library, I have visited some great libraries – the Laurentian in Florence, the Vatican, the Bibliotheque Nationale – the LOC is certainly among them for grandeur – and it does have the largest holdings. Not necessarily the greatest library in the Western World – each of the aforementioned libraries would rank higher in my estimation (and, after all, Michelangelo designed the Laurentian) – but the LOC is a library to rank among the greatest. And what a worthy aspiration it is for the U.S. is to have the greatest library.

We hastened to look at the founding collection of the LOC – Jefferson's books, which are displayed in a room by themselves, off the Great Hall. When the congressional library in Washington was burned by the invading British army in 1814 (revenge for our deliberately burning the Canadian library in Ontario the year before!), the U.S. was left without a library in the Capital. As a replacement, Thomas Jefferson offered his private library from Monticello, being willing to sell it to Congress at cost. At the time, Jefferson's library was probably one of the largest in North America, and had 6,700 volumes. Jefferson, of course, was the greatest polymath ever to be a U.S. president, and was fluent in several European languages, as well as being a good classicist, able to read (and write) in Latin and Greek. His library contained books in all these languages, and they were constantly used for his reading, study, and delight. I am reminded of when John Kennedy hosted a dinner at the White House for all the American Nobel Laureates. He made a little welcoming speech with his typical grace, and noted that the White House seldom had such a gathering of talent and intelligence at dinners, "except, of course, when Thomas Jefferson dined here alone."

The sale to Congress was not a smooth transaction. The books were valued at \$23,950 – an enormous enough sum in 1815. Congressmen debated the purchase, and the rednecks were there in force to object. It was noted that many of the books were in languages that at least "90% of the members of Congress could not read!" (This percentage is no longer, of course, accurate. Times have changed. The number now is certainly above 99%). A further objection was that a great number of the books were certainly immoral, anti-Christian, and full of revolutionary ideas by atheistical philosophers and historians – Rousseau and Voltaire were especially mentioned with horror. Nevertheless, although it was a near thing, Congress did eventually buy the books. Even then, they were not kept safely. A fire in the 1850s destroyed more than 3,000 of these books. However, Jefferson's own catalog of the collection exists, and in recent times, there has been a determined effort by the LOC to restore the whole collection, buying copies of the original editions, whenever these become available. It is the surviving original books, together with the replacement copies, that are displayed today. These

are in a circle of glass-fronted illuminated cases, maintaining Jefferson's original cataloged order. There are marker volumes to indicate those books for which replacements are still being sought. In front of each case, there is a computer screen. The viewer can select on the screen a volume from the case above, and turn the pages of the chosen book. This is first rate museum curatorship. A visit here is something of a sacred pilgrimage for an American bibliophile.



After all of this, Bea and I were running out of steam. I again expressed my disappointment that my Jeremiah Dixon search had been rather fruitless, and Bea suggested giving one last try to the resources in the Genealogy Reading Room. This we did, and had a look at the books on English Heraldry that were shelved in the room. And a look in *Burke's Peerage and Baronetage* did the trick. Later Dixons (the family of the Smeaton Dixons, alas), were ennobled, and their current coat of arms is clearly a descendent of the arms on my bookplate. Oh, well, in book hunting as in fishing, the pleasure is in the search.



Roy Willis: A Columbus Bookseller

Jay Hoster

Longtime Columbus book dealer Roy Willis passed away recently. To honor his memory, we are reprinting Jay Hoster's story for the Dispatch, which was run when Roy retired from over 25 years having an open bookshop.

For everyone who approaches a secondhand bookstore with a spirit of adventure, whether in search of new reading experiences or in dogged pursuit of a favorite book, Saturday marks the passing of an era.

Roy Willis plans to lock up his store at 3510 N. High St. for the last time. He'll still be a bookseller, of course – once the business gets in your blood you never really leave it – but he'll be purveying his wares at shows and by appointment only.

For the first time in a quarter of a century he won't be running an open shop.

Over that span, Willis has led a nomadic existence as a sort of Bedouin among booksellers. When Columbus book lovers get together, the first thing they often bring up is the location where they first met him.

I feel lucky because I remember his biggest store in the mid-'70s, the three floors of books he had downtown at 19 E. Town Street. It was called The Book Store, although the simplicity of the name occasionally led to some confusion with the adult bookstore across the street.

Part of having the longest-running secondhand bookstore in town means that you occasionally feel a little ancient. Willis says that people often tell him, "When I was a kid, that's where I got my start collecting books."

His store then featured an eclectic mix of publisher's close-outs, "stripped" (coverless) paperbacks at 10 cents apiece, hardcover fiction and nonfiction, magazines and even comic books. During this period, Willis also sponsored a comic book convention four times a year.

This was the heyday of the large downtown secondhand bookstore; among similar stores, now gone, that book hunters speak fondly of are Acres of Books in Cincinnati and Kay's in Cleveland.

As a young person growing up in Columbus and Logan, Ohio, Willis was always an avid reader, but the path that brought him into the book trade was a circuitous one.

After a stint in the Navy, he got a job as a meter reader for a Columbus utility. The book-collecting bug hit him, and he still remembers the first rare book he ever bought. A collector in Chillicothe, Ohio, had a first edition of *Moby Dick* for sale at \$150. Willis sprang for it, but the steep price induced trepidation. "I was so nervous, I was shaking," he recalled.

He also discovered the store on Town Street, which was then known as The Book Sale.

"When I got done with my route, I'd hang around the store," he said. "I knew the place better than the people who worked there."

At the time, it was part of a chain of 13 stores ranging from Syracuse, N.Y., to St. Louis. David Bunis, who started the chain in the 1930s, decided that he wanted to sell off some of his stores. As the Columbus store's most avid customer, Willis was a natural for a part-time job there. Later, he was offered the position of manager, which ended his meter-reading days. Willis and his wife, Tina, then contracted with Bunis to buy the store by making time payments, and changed the name to The Book Store.

Bunis continued as a supplier, and Willis recalled, "It was almost like Christmas every time a load came in. I'd stay overnight just going through the stuff."

On Town Street, the Willises were blessed with something book lovers never seem to have enough of – space. Willis could absorb acquisitions of 5,000 books at once, and he remembers the time a department store was looking to buy books for decorative purposes. Willis cut a deal to sell 1,000 volumes at 10 cents apiece. A nattily attired junior executive in a light-colored suit came to the store. He was directed to the basement and began going through boxes. He later emerged, dusty and sweaty, but he got his books.

It was the construction of City Center (originally called Capitol South) that sent Willis and his volumes packing, although not quite all of them. He estimates that he left behind 3,000 to 5,000 volumes in the basement. Presumably they're waiting for discovery by some enterprising archaeologist of the future.

Willis moved into a former shoe store at 97 N. High St. At that store you had to be willing to do some digging to find stuff in the back room, because the deep shelves were originally designed to store shoe boxes.

In 1983, believing that fewer people were going downtown, he trekked up to N. High Street near Cooke Road. Three years later Willis moved to 195 Thurman Ave., where he stayed nine years, before heading north once again two years ago.

Willis has always enjoyed sharing his expertise, especially with people getting started in the business. Ed Hoffman, owner of Hoffman's Bookshop at 211 E. Arcadia Avenue, said that when he was first starting out, "The first book I ever sold was to Roy."

"It was a nice introduction to the trade," Hoffman said. "All my interactions with Roy and Tina have always been positive and very friendly."

Hoffman noted, however, that you have to get up pretty early in the morning to beat the Willises to a good tag sale.

"I've stood in line at many a house sale behind them," he said.

For all of the books he has sold over the years, Willis has kept reading them, too.

"I try to read a book a week," he said, noting that his son, Rhu, who started working at the store when he was in high school, goes through three or four a week.

Willis pointed to three bookcases filled with books that aren't for sale – at least not yet. They are all books that he plans to read.

Willis is, however, offering for sale that copy of *Moby Dick* that seemed so outrageously priced at \$150.

A collector in Chicago is currently considering buying it, but this time the price tag is \$2,500.



The Famous Echo in the Reading Room of the British Library

Peter Spargo

The following item was submitted by a member of the Society of Bibliophiles in Cape Town, South Africa, one of the international affiliates of FABS and a sister society to the Aldus Society.

In the 1950s Gerard Hoffnung, that wonderful cartoonist and humorist whose family had fled Germany to Britain in 1938 and who was later to be expelled from the Hornsey College of Art in London for bad behavior, made a number of humorous presentations that were to become famous. In one of these, delivered at the Oxford Union in 1958, he listed some of the things that foreign visitors should remember on a visit to London. Four of these have become legendary: ‘On first entering a carriage on the London Underground it is customary to shake hands with all the other passengers in the carriage’; ‘It is easy to identify brothels in London because they all have a blue lamp outside them’; ‘Never attempt to tip a London taxi driver’ and, perhaps most memorably, ‘Have you ever tried the famous echo in the Reading Room of the British Museum?’

Some years ago, just before the British Library moved from the British Museum to its new home in St. Pancras, I was working late. As the call came to vacate the Reading Room, it suddenly occurred to me that this was almost certainly my last opportunity to test Hoffnung’s thesis. Packing up very slowly I made sure that I was the last reader to leave that huge and glorious room. Near the printed catalogues, i.e., close to the centre of the room, I met one of the guards. ‘Do you mind if I check to see whether the Reading Room really does have an echo?’ I asked him with a completely straight face. He looked at me rather strangely, hesitated for a moment, and then said ‘Well, all right ...’ Before he could change his mind, I clapped twice very sharply and let out a loud yell. To my great pleasure both produced the most magnificent echoes. Surprisingly, I was neither questioned nor detained by any of the other guards and, like the Ethiopian eunuch in the Book of Acts, I went on my way rejoicing. Not many days’ work end on such a high note, I reflected.

As I left I also couldn’t help wondering what another previous regular occupant of that great room, Karl Marx, would have thought if he had happened to observe the incident. I would like to think that even he, extremely serious as he was, would have managed a smile!

Anyway, I am sure that, up there where past great humorists gather, Hoffnung must have chuckled happily. The next time I visit London I must check Hoffnung’s advice concerning fellow travelers in railway carriages as well, of course, as buildings with blue lamps outside them.



Book-Buying, Gift-Giving and Penny-Pinching

Laralyn Sasaki

Gas prices and grocery bills continue to rise. Birthdays and holidays present bigger challenges. We search for ways to stretch a dollar and pinch a penny. Half-priced cards at dollar stores and factory card outlets ease the pressure somewhat, but for many of us, giving actual gifts is something we will not sacrifice to our foundering economy.

In addition to budget considerations, children who grow from tots to teens – and others whose tastes are increasingly difficult to match – may lure us into the easier default mode of giving generic gift cards at trendy or chain locations. It may surprise you to find out that, in addition to delighting the gift recipient, finding the “perfect” gift can rekindle the joy of gift-giving for those of us who bridle at these sometimes obligatory exchanges.

I would like to encourage all of us to look close to home for the gifts we feel obliged or eager to give. Even within the membership rolls of the Aldus Society, we have many talented people who either create or commerce and would be delighted to help fellow Aldus-ites (Aldussians?) find affordable, special gifts.

At the risk of destroying any remaining shred of surprise for those on my gift-giving lists – yes, everyone on my list always gets a book! – I’d like to share some of my book-bargain-shopping tips.

First and foremost, I look to our local used, rare and antiquarian booksellers, most of whom are Aldus members. Every used bookstore in town is staffed by folks who take pleasure in helping customers find the right item for their own or others’ enjoyment. In addition to offering the tried and true classics for dedicated readers of fine literature, these stores offer gently used (and sometimes unread) books and book-related items for every taste and interest.

Have you experienced the special joy in passing on your favorite books to new readers – *Good Night, Moon* for new mothers or *The Dark is Rising* series to older children or *Gift from the Sea* for women in reflection – and maybe later even discussing what’s been read? And when you give a gift that meshes with the specific interests or needs of the recipient, you not only offer information but you tacitly tell that person, “I’ve noticed what makes you happy or sparks your interest.” This is an unspoken way to strengthen bonds of friendship and show respect.

Don’t assume that used bookstores won’t carry recent best-sellers. Voracious readers often buy new books, read them quickly and then turn them in for cash or credit. Space constraints force booksellers to choose to carry certain genres, but that doesn’t mean they won’t keep their eyes open for books that might be offered to them for resale if you have a special request.

If a new book is a “must buy” for someone on your list, I urge you to look first to our local independent bookstores. Cover to Cover children’s books and the Bookloft in German Village are delightful options. The Bookloft especially offers sales and specials, particularly for those on their e-mail lists.

We are fortunate to have Borders and Barnes and Noble available in Columbus, as well, as their access to broader inventories might help fill a hard-to-find gap in your gift-giving list, including those last resort gift certificates for those who might prefer music or munchies. But for personal attention, books from your childhood or unexpected finds, you can’t do better than our used bookstores.

To cut costs further, some shoppers are patronizing online stores – an area of commerce in which our local booksellers already shine. Call to find out how to access your favorite bookstore’s inventory online. You may be able to avoid shipping if you pick up your purchase.

And here’s a challenge for those who really want to beat the budget game – trade in your used books for store credit and then use that credit to purchase gifts for yourself and others. This successful conversion of unwanted items to needed gifts helps local book businesses, has a neutral effect on your personal budget and scores a big win for recycling on a whole new level.

Wondering where to begin?

Here are a few suggestions – all “book matches” that I’ve made with success:

- *The Wealthy Barber* by David Chilton, *Your Money or Your Life* by Joe Dominguez and *Simple Living* by Frank Levering and Wanda Urbanska – for recent collage grads and others getting their financial bearings
- *84 Charing Cross Road* and *The Duchess of Bloomsbury* by Helene Hanff – for an aunt who loves reading and books
- *Term Limits* and other Vince Flynn books – for friends who enjoy Tom Clancy novels
- *Notes on Love and Courage* by Hugh Prather and *The Prophet* by Kahlil Gibran – for reflective relatives
- *The Eyre Affair* by Jasper Fforde – a literary romp for fun-loving readers
- *Amazing Gracie* by Dan Dye and Mark Beckloff, *Love That Dog* by Sharon Creech and *Sight Hound* by Pam Houston – for those who’ve had special dogs in their lives
- *Tales of a Female Nomad* by Rita Goldman Gelman, *A Walk Across France* by Miles Moreland and *An Embarrassment of Mangoes* by Anne Vanderhoof

Need more suggestions? Ask a bookseller near you! Here are local booksellers who are Aldus members:

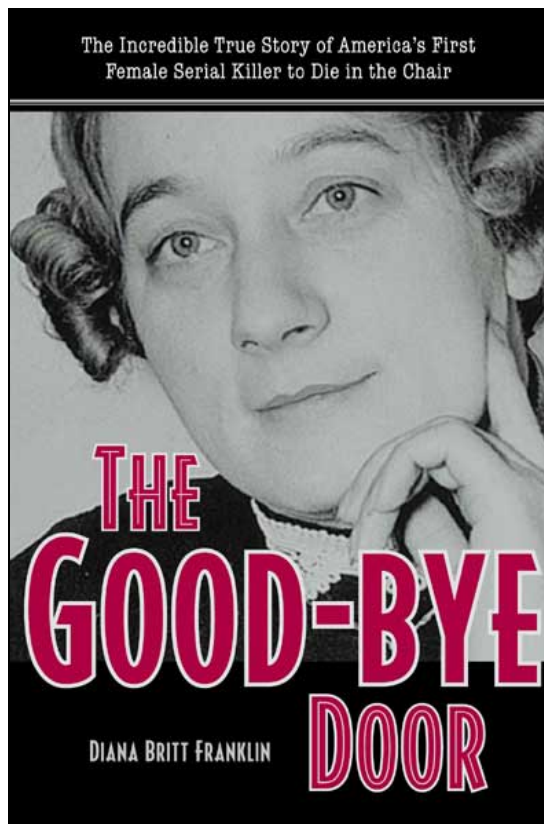
- Acorn Bookshop
1464 West 5th Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43212
(614) 486-1860
acornbookshop@aol.com
George Bauman and Christine Hayes

- Emerson-Hoffman Rare Books (by appointment)
4167 North High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43214-3011
(614) 262-0059
ehoffbk@aol.com
Ed Hoffman and Bob Emerson
- The Little Bookshop
58 East Main Street
Westerville, Ohio 43081
(614) 899-1537
Bill Radloff
- Tri-Village Book Company (by appointment)
1124 Goodale Boulevard
Columbus, Ohio 43212
(614) 299-9985
bookshigh@aol.com
booksonhigh.com
Jay and Genie Hoster



Diana Franklin on the Circuit

Aldus Society member Diana Britt Franklin will be speaking about the research and writing of her recent true crime book *The Good-bye Door* at the Cincinnati Library on Saturday, November 8, at 1:00 PM. The program is in advance of a television series called “Deadly Women” which will be shown on Investigation Discovery channel at 10:00 PM EST November 13, 2008. The program, which was filmed last April in Cincinnati, will highlight the book.



A Treasure Trove

Ron Ravneberg



A few years ago, I wrote an article for the newsletter of the Captain Cook Society, *Cook's Log*, entitled *Stories of the Voyages*, in which I discussed the role 18th century books have played in our understanding of Captain Cook. In that article I discussed the official accounts issued by the Admiralty, secondary accounts published by other crew

members, and Cook bibliographies. I then went on to say,

So what's a Cook fan to do if he or she is attracted to original and antiquarian books about Cook's voyages; but: (1) is not a diehard book collector; (2) cannot afford original 18th century accounts of the voyages; and (3) gets little thrill out of reading bibliographic descriptions?

There actually is an answer, and it's the one chance those of us with more interest than income have to take advantage of the great collections of Cook material – specialized catalogs produced by auction houses and antiquarian booksellers.

Book collectors come in all types, but there is a very small group that has the means and interest to develop specialized collections of rare and valuable books. When such collections are ultimately passed on to others, it is usually by one of two pathways: (1) donation to or acquisition by libraries; or (2) the sale of individual books to others through auctions or specialized antiquarian book dealers.

While the great research libraries of the world offer amazing resources to those in search of information, they seldom produce non-scholarly listings of their specific collections that can be enjoyed by the casual collector. That's an area where the auction houses and booksellers have an edge.

Those words stand as true today as when I originally wrote them, and bookseller catalogs continue to delight the casual collector of books related to Cook. Without doubt, the finest such catalog to come along in my memory was recently published by Hordern House (<http://www.hordern.com>), a Sydney-based antiquarian bookseller with a long history of handling some of the “best of the best” of the early publications related to Cook. The catalog in question is entitled *Captain James Cook: The Greatest Discoverer*, and describes the collection of Robert and Mary Anne Parks.

About the same time I wrote the article referenced above, I was fortunate enough to spend an evening with Bob Parks in his beautiful home in the suburbs of Detroit, Michigan. Bob and I had previously communicated for several years, but this was the first opportunity we had had to meet.

Bob and I share a common passion for antiquarian books about Cook and my evening in his home was absolutely delightful. As I entered his home, I was immediately struck by the wonderful assortment of familiar images I knew mostly

from books – Joseph Banks, the Death of Cook, beautiful aquatints of the South Seas. The difference was, of course, that the images I was seeing were the original prints and publications, not reproductions from other books. And each item was tastefully and archivally framed, whether it was hanging on a wall or resting on a dedicated easel. The overall effect was stunning.

But the real fun began when we went into his nearby den to see the books. And what books they were!

There, lined up in a row, were titles and books I knew from sources like Sir Maurice Holmes' *Captain Cook – A Bibliographical Excursion*, one of the classic bibliographies of works related to Cook. But that was really no surprise, as Bob had previously told me that he used Holmes' work as an informal collecting list. It's one thing to hear, but a completely different thing to actually see!

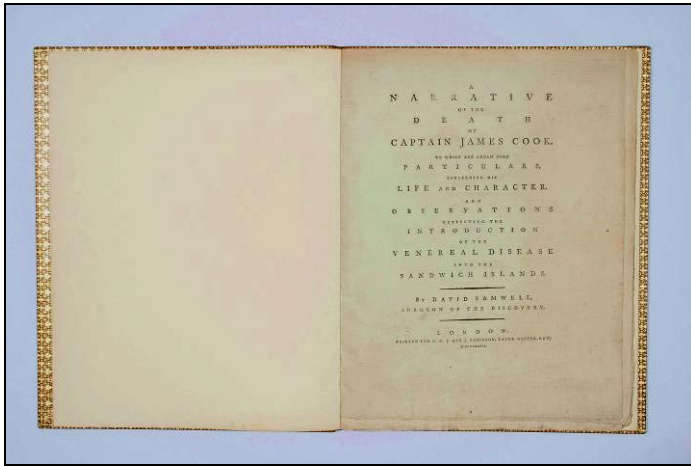
For the next few hours, Bob and I talked Cook, books and collecting, all the while examining the treasures that small room held. A few stand out in memory ...

The Shaw (Item 83 in the Parks Catalog) – As we continued reviewing the wonderful volumes on his shelves, Bob handed me a rather unimpressive looking volume that at first glance seemed much “rougher” than the other books. As soon as I opened the covers I knew why; the book was filled with samples of tapa cloth. One of the almost unobtainable goals of even the most well-heeled Cook collector is to obtain a copy of Alexander Shaw's 1787 album of tapa cloth samples that were actually collected on Cook's third voyage. I now held a copy in my hands. This book was truly different from the others; it wasn't *about* the history of the voyage, it *was* the history of the voyage.

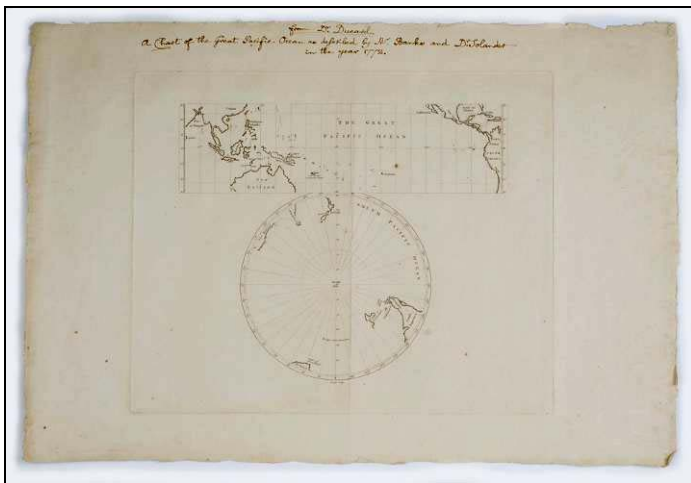


The Samwell (Item 100 in the Parks Catalog) – After handling rarity after rarity, I was beginning to get a little numb. It was simply overwhelming to see so much depth in any field, let alone my own collecting area of Cook. But I hadn't seen one item (and really didn't expect to see it) – *Discovery* surgeon David Samwell's extremely rare description of the death of Captain Cook. It was the next book Bob handed to me. Published in 1786, Samwell's description provided many particulars not included in the official account of the voyage.

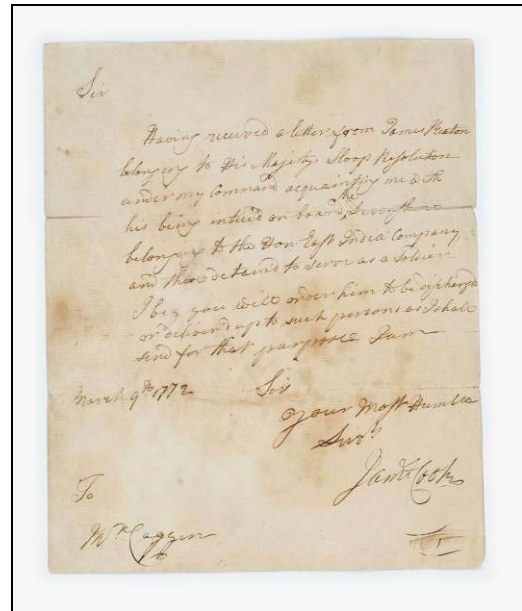
But I was aware of only one copy that had come up at auction for decades and it sold to an anonymous buyer. I said so to Parks and he simply nodded toward the slim volume in my hands. “Who knows you have this?” I asked. “You do.” He replied.



The Banks and Solander Map (Item 7 in the Parks Catalog) – Later in the evening, while sitting and enjoying a glass of wine, Bob began talking about the earliest map to show the discoveries of Cook on his first voyage. It was a proof pull of a map prepared in 1772 at the request of Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander that was never published. Parks cited documentation stating that only one copy of the map was known and it was in the British Library. As such it was the rarest of all publications relating to Cook’s voyages. He then smiled and commented, “The second copy is at your feet.” Looking down, I noticed for the first time a medium sized map nicely framed and resting on the floor under the coffee table in the center of the room.



The Cook Letter (Item 34 in the Parks Catalog) – We finally got to one of Bob Parks’ favorite items from his collection – a letter written and signed by Cook seeking the return of one of the *Resolution*’s men who had been press-ganged into the English East India Company’s service. It was not written by a ship’s clerk, but by the great captain himself, and this personal interest in his crew was what made the item so special to Parks.



My evening with Bob Parks and his books was completely amazing. Never before (or since) had I encountered so many significant Cook publications, and certainly not in one place. And to top it off, I was encouraged to explore whatever I chose, to handle the works, and to simply enjoy myself. I’ll not forget that evening, and Bob and I have continued to stay in touch ever since.

Few book collectors will be in a position to own such treasures or even to share the kind of experience I had that evening in Detroit. However, interested individuals can acquire the Parks catalog itself, and with that single addition to their libraries they will come as close as they can to enjoying and appreciating the wealth of early published material about Cook I saw that night.

The catalog is stunning and is more likely to end up as a coffee table conversation piece than tucked away on a dusty bookshelf. It is hardbound with a color dust jacket and measures approximately 8.75” by 11.25”. Between its covers are detailed 133 items, including full descriptions and color illustrations. And it’s all about Cook. With its price of AUD\$45 (US\$30), it’s about as inexpensive an introduction to the richness of the Cook literature as one is likely to find.

So if you want to have your own instant collection of the most significant works on Cook without spending many hundreds of thousands of dollars you should certainly consider acquiring a copy of Hordern House’s catalog of the Parks collection, *Captain James Cook: The Greatest Discoverer*.

Oh yeah, Bob Parks’ collection of Bligh and Bounty material was pretty interesting too. If anybody ever asks you about the only document that contains the signatures of both William Bligh and Fletcher Christian ... I’ve held it!

But that’s another story.





The Aldus Society

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Captain Cook Comes to OSU: A First Saturday Review

George Cowmeadow Bauman

Twenty booklovers attended Aldus' "First Saturday" program for October, featuring Ron Ravneberg – past president of the Aldus Society.

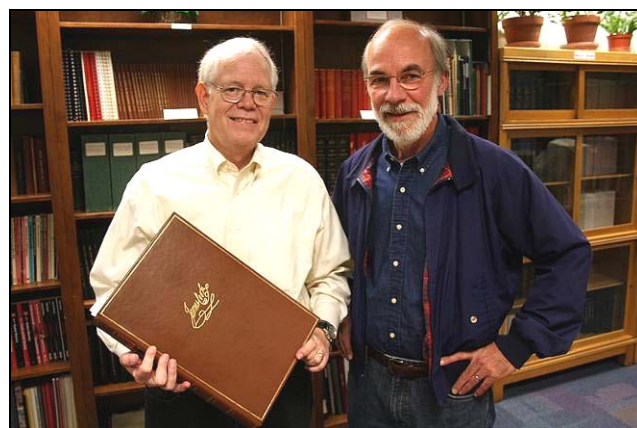
Ron is very generously donating to OSU many items from his internationally-respected collection of works relating to Captain James Cook. With Ron serving as navigator, we explored the fascinating journals, books, maps and other Cook material which will have a home in the new OSU library next year. Some of the highlights in a collection of highlights:

- A set of the first editions of the official accounts of all three of Cook's voyages (1773, 1777, 1784) plus the first biography of Cook (1788). We marveled that they were all collected by the same person, someone who had the means and access to this marvelous set when the volumes each came out, before second printings were launched soon afterwards.
- G.W. Anderson's folio edition that was issued in 80 parts between 1784 and 1786 which describes Cook's voyages and those of other navigators of the time.
- A 1773 account of Cook's first voyage prepared from the notes of Sydney Parkinson, one of Joseph Banks' artists on the voyage
- Reference works covering the maps, charts, and coastal views prepared during the voyages
- Books describing the artwork prepared on the voyages

- Numerous bibliographies and other supporting research materials covering various aspects of the voyages.

A number of the donated books have been rebound by OSU's book-conserving/rebinding/restoring wizard, Harry Campbell. Ron's and Harry's collaborations have produced magnificent volumes.

Geoff Smith, head of the Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, stated during his introduction of Ron, "OSU is indeed very fortunate to have such a fine collection of Captain James Cook material donated to us. We owe a great deal of thanks to Ron for this thoughtful gift."



October 2008 – Ron Ravneberg (left) and Harry Campbell (right) along with the newly-rebound copy of G.W. Anderson's folio edition of Cook's Voyages, issued in 80 parts between 1784 and 1786.