



Aldus Society Notes

January, 2010

Volume 10, No. 1

Aldus Holiday Dinner and Silent Auction is Best Yet

On December 8th, over fifty Aldus members and their guests gathered at LaScala restaurant to celebrate the holidays, to renew friendships built on a love of books, to enjoy dinner, and to bid on a bounty of donated books which delighted Aldus readers and collectors alike.



LEFT: Doris & Donald Tritt, Sid Chafetz

RIGHT: Linda Mizejewski chats with Emerson Gilbert and Paul Watkins

Prior to dinner, we wandered along a dozen tables filled with over 150 donated tomes, penning our bids on the bid sheets. This was also a great time to chat with folks we hadn't seen perhaps since last year...or just last week.

We then sat down to an excellent family-style dinner and conversation with friends old and new. Comfortably sated by food and friends, many folks dashed back to the auction tables to place final bids while others enjoyed dessert. After a brief countdown, Laralyn Sasaki closed the bidding (to various moanings and groanings by those who didn't have a chance to place a final bid on a coveted book).

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January 14th Program Will Feature Challenges to Libraries

Patrick Losinski, Executive Director of the Columbus Metropolitan Library, will present a program, "The Columbus Metropolitan Library: Not Your Father's Library." Losinski will discuss the changes and challenges that are occurring in libraries. These include major funding reductions, the advent of the Kindle and other electronic reading devices, the Google books project and similar events that are resulting in a steady evolution of library services and programs. He will also share the library's story and reveal why the Columbus Metropolitan Library continues to thrive in an age of unprecedented change.



Children's Literature Focus of February 11th Program

Our February speaker, Rudine Sims Bishop, will present a talk titled "African American Children's Literature: Surveying the Hopescape." African American children's literature has functioned in part as witness to Black Americans' progress across what writer Virginia Hamilton called "the American hopescape." This talk will

provide an overview of the development of that literature, a look at some of its prevailing thematic concerns, and a sense of its current status. Bishop, who is Professor Emerita at The Ohio State University, has contributed significantly to the scholarship dealing with African American children's literature.



The Aldus Society

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Ten Years and Growing

by Genie Hoster

This year marks the Tenth Anniversary of The Aldus Society. Central Ohio is so fortunate to have an organization like ours which celebrates books in every context, from their historical, aesthetic, physical and cultural aspects, as well as manuscripts and other original textual and graphic materials.

Jay and I were fortunate to be included with the initial nine people Aldus founder Geoff Smith gathered together in late 1999. Our first few trustees meetings were held in Geoff's house, where his family (both two-legged and four-legged) graciously welcomed us into their living room. We all had so many ideas of what an organization like ours could bring to booklovers in Columbus. And thankfully, we were all on the same page!

After drawing up bylaws in early January 2000 (and electing Geoff as president), we began planning: we initiated our first membership campaign in March, then started scheduling programming. We were thrilled that Robert H. Jackson, past president of the Rowfant Club in Cleveland, agreed to be our first speaker in May. Our first few years of programs were held in the auditorium of the Upper Arlington Library.

Later programs that first year included presentations given by Logan Elm Press director Bob Tauber; local Mark Twain enthusiast Bob Slotta; British book designers

Graham and Cathy Moss, who run Incline Press (*see page 11 of this issue*); and nationally-recognized rare book dealer Bruce McKittrick.

Highlights over the years have included being accepted as a member of the Fellowship of American Bibliophilic Societies (FABS); inaugurating our History of Text series; establishing our holiday dinner/silent auction as our annual December program; organizing A Celebration of the Book, a two-day symposium in 2004, with noted authors and book artists from throughout the nation; taking many field trips throughout the state; and offering hands-on workshops in the book arts.

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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

Ravneberg Memorial Lecture Scheduled for March 11th

David Lilburne, owner of Antipodean Books, Maps & Prints in New York state, will be presenting our second annual Ravneberg Memorial Lecture. The topic of his talk will be "Collecting Captain Cook on a Budget." He said, "There are



plenty of ways of collecting Captain Cook without spending \$70,000 on a first edition." David is immediate past president of the Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America (ABAA).

Ohioana Library Tour to be Held on April 8th

For our April program, Linda Hengst, director of the Ohioana Library, will give us an on-site tour of the wonderful Ohioana Library, which was established in 1929 under the direction of Martha Kinney Cooper, then First Lady of Ohio. Cooper recruited many distinguished Ohioans to assist in gathering a collection of books written by Ohioans and about Ohioans and Ohio.

The collection comprises more than 45,000 books, 10,000 pieces of sheet music, and approximately 20,000 biographical files on Ohio writers, musicians, artists, and others of note. Fiction, poetry, and juvenile literature are areas of particular strength. Additional holdings include scrapbooks, county histories and atlases, pamphlets, original illustrations, and materials pertaining to Ohio women's history. As with all our programs, further details for this meeting will be sent to Aldus members via our listserv.



Miniature Books to be Explored at May 13th Program

Cincinnati book preservationist and book artist Gabrielle Fox will speak on her true passion, miniature books. Trained in England, she is a leading expert and artisan in the binding, conservation and restoration of fine books. She finds her creative outlet designing and producing unique bindings and boxes for miniature letterpress books. She travels from her studio in Ohio to teach intensive workshops on a variety of book subjects, and she cares for books in both institutional and private collections. Her work is currently exhibited nationally. Her talk will include a history of miniature books, and she will share books which she has created.



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Library Calendars Still Available

Acorn Bookshop has received their second shipment of beautiful 2010 calendars which picture the interiors of libraries throughout the world. Just a few are left, and they sell for \$20 each.

George has graciously offered to donate \$10 of your purchase price to The Aldus Society for calendars purchased by Aldus members. He has already set aside \$170 for Aldus. You can contact George at george@acornbookshop.com for more information.

Mayan Archaeology: The Lost Cities of Stephens and Catherwood

by Bill Rich



It was observed previously in "Book Hunting Notes" (Summer 2006) that early "first-discovery" archaeology books are more easily accessible for the cash-challenged than, say, many literary first editions of comparable vintage.

True archaeology, as a science beyond mere antiquarianism, really originated in the 19th Century. The relative abundance of books in the genre is partly due to the preferences of our ancestors. Back in the 1800s, educated folks in both Europe and America had a thorough background in the Greek and Latin classics, and a thorough up-bringing in the Bible. Discoveries that could possibly shed new light on Greek and Roman history, or on the Bible lands of the Near East, found a ready audience.

A similar trend prevailed in America. Here, there was a fascination with pre-European America, and endless speculation on the origins of the more advanced Native American cultures. Books on these subjects often had exceptionally large printings for the times, and can still be found on the shelves of second-hand booksellers, rather than only in the stock of specialist antiquarian dealers.

The ancient Maya cultures of Central America are a fairly easy book hunting quarry for an armchair archaeologist/book collector. For a good number of years, I have casually acquired books on the Maya, and particularly those books dealing with Mayan archaeology and with the related subject of the decipherment of Mayan writing.



Bill's enthusiasm has been piqued by the discovery that the Mayans possessed a quite workable phonetic writing system – an accomplishment not reached by other pre-Columbian cultures.

While perhaps never reaching the obsessive levels of some of my other book collecting interests, my enthusiasm has been piqued by the discovery in my own adult lifetime that the Mayans possessed a quite workable phonetic writing system – an accomplishment not reached by other pre-Columbian cultures. This was used to make books of history, fable, and religion, much in the manner of other civilizations. In addition, they erected monuments adorned with inscriptions boasting of the conquests and ancestry of their rulers, with a style sometimes approaching the bombastic claims of any Egyptian Pharaoh, Hellenistic king, or Roman emperor.

The ancient Maya cultures of Central America are a fairly easy book hunting quarry for an armchair archaeologist/book collector.

But, unlike the accomplishments of these old world civilizations, the achievements of the ancient Mayans has been largely lost to human knowledge, lost even to their modern-day descendants. There were several reasons for this.



To begin with, the glory days of the Mayans were behind them when the first Europeans reached the New World.

The great Mayan cities of the central highlands in Guatemala and Chiapas had been largely deserted by

around 900 AD, and left to the encroaching forests. While some of the Maya were still living in cities in the north, in parts of Yucatan, things had been declining, and town life was a reflection of earlier glories.

Certainly, other civilizations had gone through dark ages, only to revive in later centuries. The Maya, for example, still remained literate when the Conquistadores came, much as Europe remained literate through the Dark Ages.

But in the case of the Maya, they were conquered by a dominant and powerful civilization, with the avowed intention of wiping out all traces of the previous religious and cultural beliefs. The Spanish conquistadores, and, especially the clergy who came with them, were convinced that all Mayan writings (and Mayan religious practices) were clearly the Devil's work. The first bishop of Yucatan, Friar Diego de Landa, was proud to record that he had burned every Mayan book he could lay hands on. In 1562 he wrote an account of his none-too-gentle pastorate when he was accused of a variety of crimes and recalled to Spain. He described this spectacular book burning:

"These people also used certain characters or letters, with which they wrote in their books about the antiquities and their sciences; with these, and with figures, and certain signs in the figures, they understood their matters, made them known, and taught them. We found a great number of books in these letters, and since they contained nothing but superstitions and falsehoods of the Devil, we burned them all, which they took most grievously, and which gave them great pain."



The first bishop of Yucatan, Friar Diego de Landa, was proud to record that he had burned every Mayan book he could lay hands on.

Very successful, indeed, was the good bishop. Today, only three pre-Columbian Maya books remain, together with fragments of a fourth. These books were evidently among those which Cortez and his followers brought back to Europe and presented to their rulers as samples of the treasures of the newly-discovered world. They are now in the museums of various European capitals.



Friar Diego de Landa brought the processes of the Inquisition to New Spain, including tortures and the burning of recalcitrants at the stake.

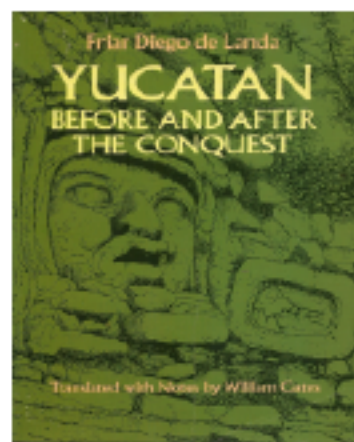
These books, while beautifully illustrated and pictorially wonderful, are devoted only to mythology, divination, and religion. And most knowledge of Mayan "antiquities and sciences" contained in the destroyed books was lost – even the ability to read Mayan writing disappeared. De Landa defended himself well, by the way – he was reinstated, and returned to his diocese. There are statues and shrines to him in present-day Yucatan. And, of course, the Mayan religion was regarded as an abomination by the Spaniards.

De Landa rejoiced in his work to eradicate the rather common practice of human sacrifices – of captives, but also of the general population of men, women and children. So the processes of the Inquisition were brought to New Spain, including tortures, and, in the last resort, the burning of recalcitrants at the stake. While I am unable to tell much difference between burning folks alive and cutting out their hearts, all in the presence and with the blessings of the prevalent clergy, there was no doubt in the minds of the conquerors as to what was the work of the Devil and what was the work of God.

Come to think of it, how would an alien anthropologist from Alpha Centauri distinguish between a legal execution in Ohio, where several executioners work for hours to kill a struggling inmate in the Lucasville execution chamber, all in the presence of clergy, from a human sacrifice? But I digress. Most of the Mayan cultural records perished.

De Landa's defense of his stewardship, his *Account of the Affairs of Yucatan*, remained buried in the Spanish archives in manuscript form for three centuries. Indeed, De Landa's original had vanished; only a written condensation remained. This shortened manuscript was discovered and published by Charles Brasseur in both Spanish

and French versions in 1864. Ironically, this account remains a major source of our knowledge of Mayan civilization as the Europeans found it. There was no edition in English until William Gates published a translation: *Yucatan Before and After the Conquest* (The Maya Society, Baltimore, 1937). Unfortunately, this



The original printing of William Gates' *Yucatan Before and After the Conquest* was limited to only 80 copies. However, it has been widely reprinted, most conveniently, in a Dover paperback.

edition was limited to only 80 copies. However, it has been widely reprinted, most conveniently in a Dover paperback, which is the copy that contents this collector.

By and large, the great, abandoned cities of the classic Mayan period had long been lost in the jungle, and were only vaguely known to the Spanish-speaking inhabitants of Central America. However, in the late 1700s, the rumor of a large, ruined city in the jungle came to the author-

ities in what was then Guatemala. A Spanish army officer, Capt. Antonio del Rio, was sent to investigate; he brought along an artist who was "fairly competent."

Stephens' books were the first international non-fiction best sellers by an American author.

Del Rio uncovered some of the ruins of one of the greatest of the classic cities, Palenque. He submitted an admirably competent report, which, again, languished in manuscript in the archives. However, the report was finally published in an English translation 25 years later, with a title to whet the appetite of any buff of the "lost worlds" genre: *Description of the Ruins of an Ancient City* (Henry Berthoud, London, 1822). This report, by the way, contained the very first published pictures of Mayan stone inscriptions.

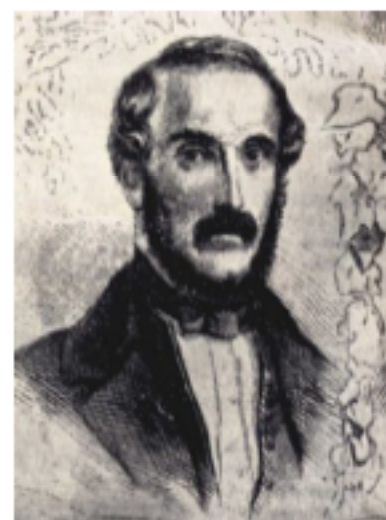
The book, though quite uncommon now, had a profound influence in the English-speaking world. I can only wish for this book, having never seen a copy. *Ruins of an*

Ancient City is not one of the 150 million titles currently listed on www.Bookfinder.com. It is not in The Ohio State University collections, but a look at on-line catalogs shows there are copies in state – at the University of Cincinnati and Case Western Reserve – both non-circulating.

In 1841, the world was finally made aware of the greatness of the vanished civilization in the jungle with the publication of the immortal *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatan*, by John Lloyd Stephens and Frederick Catherwood.

The two volumes of this classic of archaeological discovery were published simultaneously by John Murray in London and by Harper and Brothers in New York. Stephens was an American writer, who had previously published a very successful book on travels to Palestine, and was also a lawyer active in Democratic politics in New York.

John Lloyd Stephens got a brief from the U.S. government as a special representative to some of the newly independent Central American republics. With Frederick Catherwood illustrating their discoveries, they published four volumes detailing sites which they discovered in Central America.



He saw an opportunity to publish another successful book, this time on the Mayan cities; simultaneously he got a brief from the U.S. government as a special representative to some of the newly independent Central American republics.

He then engaged his friend, the English artist Frederick Catherwood, to accompany him and illustrate their discoveries. Fighting dangers in a rather lawless part of the world, facing incredible physical hardships, combating fevers, heat, and the difficulties of clearing many completely jungle-covered sites, they produced a masterpiece of world archaeology. Together, this great partnership made two expeditions to the region, producing not only

the 1841 volumes, but, in 1843, the equally vital *Incidents of Travel in Yucatan*, two more volumes issued by the same publishers. They were the first to report in detail on the sites of Copan, Quirigua, and Palenque in the south, and on Tulum, Uxmal, Sayil, Kabah, and Chichen Itza in Yucatan. In addition, they described several sites which previously had been totally unknown.

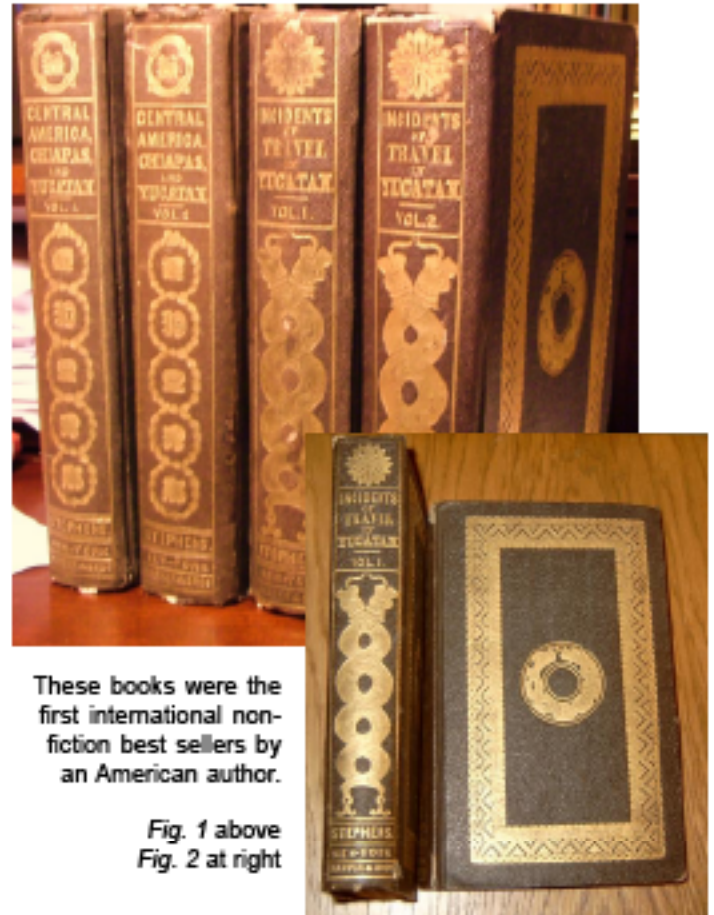
It must be emphasized that these books are scholarly, detailed and extensive studies, not mere “travel books” that were written in great numbers by 19th century gentleman explorers. And they are polar opposites to the “gee whiz” genre of travel and popular anthropology still prevalent today, both in books and televised on the National Geographic and Discovery channels (there, I said it). But the prose is readable and gripping, and the four volumes are among the great true adventure stories.

These books were the first international non-fiction best sellers by an American author. The first two volumes sold 20,000 copies in the three months after publication, a record in the young United States. The second two volumes are somewhat scarcer, but they also had a huge distribution at the time. Neither set is truly rare today, as would be expected with this large printing – despite what is claimed in many a dealer’s catalog.

Catherwood, on his return to England in 1844, published a separate large folio of his drawings from the expedition, suitably colored, and with the additions of picturesque Mayans, including a few topless maidens, amidst the ruins. The hand-colored lithographic plates put this book squarely in the class of English color-plate books, a



hugely collectable genre, and it has entered stratospheric altitudes as far as price is concerned.



These books were the first international non-fiction best sellers by an American author.

Fig. 1 above
Fig. 2 at right

Getting down to my own bookcases, I see I bought my two volumes of the 1841 books from a favorite rural book barn in midstate New York in 1980 for \$100. The two 1843 volumes I found in a High Street bookstore here in Columbus in 1996, also for \$100. All of these are in the original decorated cloth bindings (Fig. 1).

The decorations reflect Catherwood’s fascination with Mayan design. Fig. 2 shows details of the decorations of the 1843 volumes. The spines are the serpent motif from the building labeled the “Nunnery” at Uxmal; the border of the cover is the fretted motif from the ruins of Kabah; and in the center of the cover is the circular serpent-decorated “basket” from the Ball Court at Chichen Itza. These are by any standards beautiful books – and the first exposure of the world to Meso-American design.

Catherwood’s folio volume of hand-colored lithographic plates (example at left) put his book squarely in the class of English color-plate books, a hugely collectable genre, and it has entered stratospheric altitudes as far as price is concerned.

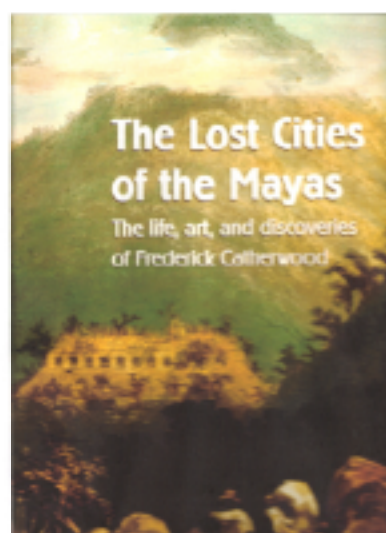
While the prices have gone up somewhat since I acquired my copies, I feel they are still quite under-priced. Ahern's 2002 price guide gives \$1500 for the 1841 volumes alone, but I feel Ahern is very bullish, especially in these deflationary times. Looking at current entries on Bookfinder, it appears that a reasonable set of all four volumes could be assembled today for around \$1,000 – a bargain. (Note that all four volumes are still currently available as paperback reprints from the useful Dover publishers, for around \$50. This info I provide for any Maya buffs who have not been bitten by the bibliophilic bug.)

If we go to the Catherwood folio volume, things are far different. Having recourse once again to Bookfinder, I see eleven copies currently available worldwide, ranging from \$45,000 to \$125,000 – this last from a dealer just off Madison Avenue in midtown Manhattan, who clearly has a humongous rent to cover. In a way, it's a comfort to know that here is a book which, beyond peradventure of a doubt, can never be mine. Since no amount of dining on tube steaks and taking the bus will provide the cost of this one, I have joyfully contented myself with a reprint.

**Catherwood even had hopes
that a still inhabited Mayan city
would be found in the
deep jungle.**

Actually, I recommend a book which, although it reproduces all the Catherwood prints in full color and near full size, is far more than a reprint – it is a biography of Catherwood, and gives much information, and many of his drawings. This is Fabio Bourbon's *The Lost Cities of the Mayas: The Life and Discoveries of Frederick Catherwood* published by Abbeville Press, NY and London, 2000.

I bought this large (10"x14") book new upon seeing it at Hermitage Books in Denver, Colorado, a premier bookstore that is still going strong. Despite the large size, many of the grandest plates are foldouts; it's a book that has given me much pleasure – and cost less than 0.1% of the price of the cheapest of the Catherwood folios in first edition.



I recommend Fabio Bourbon's *The Lost Cities of the Mayas*, which, although it reproduces all the Catherwood prints in full color and near full size, is far more than a reprint – it is a biography of Catherwood, and gives much information, and many of his drawings.

I have told here only the beginnings of the story of Mayan archaeology. But it should be noted that Stephens and Catherwood really pointed true directions. At the end of the first book, Stephens gives some conclusions of a rigorous scholar and field archaeologist, whose basic correctness has become evident in our own times. He correctly concluded that the Mayan cities were not built millennia before his own time, but more recently, and by the ancestors of the present-day Maya people.

He even had hopes that a still inhabited Mayan city would be found in the deep jungle: "If, in consideration that I have not often indulged in speculative conjecture, the reader will allow one flight, I turn to that vast and unknown region, untraversed by a single road, wherein fancy pictures that mysterious city seen from the topmost range of the Cordilleras, of unconquered, unvisited, and unsought aboriginal inhabitants."

But, presciently, he noted that the inscriptions on the monuments, from Copan in the south to Palenque in the north, were in the same, unknown method of writing. He noted that this same writing appeared in the few Mayan books that survived. He expressed the hope and the belief that, in future years, some key to decipherment would be found, and the writings would give the history and achievements of this remarkable civilization.

This has now happened, but only in our own lifetimes, more than 125 years after these intrepid men explored the lost cities.



MARCIA PRESTON

A Fine Collection of Fine Press Books

by George Cowmeadow Bauman



George Cowmeadow Bauman

Ten years ago Marcia Preston became one of the founding members of The Aldus Society. During our formative years, she served two three-year terms as Program Committee chair, and introduced us to many interesting speakers, particularly in the areas of fine press book design and printing.

Marcia recently talked about her collection at her dining room table, covered with carefully stacked examples of recent acquisitions and a few favorites as well. Her primary collecting interests are in miniature books and (of course) fine press books.

Marcia began by defining fine press books: "Press books are designed to present a text in the most attractive way, using fine paper, typography and bindings," she said. "Everything is unique according to the interests and abilities of the printers." She quoted an anonymous source, "A fine print book must be made by craftsmen and artists who are book artists. Fine printing cannot be accomplished with a mass market mentality." She added, "The makers of these books try to make the most beautiful form possible for texts they deem important."

That led naturally to the question of how she began collecting such books, and whether there was a particular moment or book which ignited her enthusiasm for them.

"Indeed there was!" she replied with a smile. "Back in the early nineties, Ann Alaia Woods was my calligraphy teacher and showed me a book that she was hand-

lettering. I was amazed; I didn't know such books existed. It was *A Letter of Columbus* by David Citino, which was going to be published by the Logan Elm Press. The fact that Ann was doing titles and capitals on the press run of 125 books just blew my mind. I immediately fell in love; it was just that sudden, love at first sight!"

Marcia said that she had really wanted a copy of the book Ann was working on, but... "I never knew that books could be that expensive! Finally my husband Dan, knowing I wanted it desperately, said, 'Go get it!'" (We didn't discuss how much she paid. However, *A Letter of Columbus* is now scarce, and sells for as much as \$2500.)



One of the first fine press books which Marcia acquired was *A Letter of Columbus*. The title and capitals were done by her calligraphy teacher Ann Alaia Woods, who then introduced Marcia to this new (for her) art form.

"I then became acquainted with Bob Tauber and Russ McKnight at the Logan Elm Press. I finally spoke up and offered to volunteer there, staying for two or three years. It was wonderful to be associated with those people and have a little to do with the making of those books. I now have many Logan Elm Press books printed at the 'old' press; they're all beautifully designed and printed. Cynthia Ozick's *Epodes: First Poems* was a very special one. And it was a privilege for me to have some involvement in *Chestnut Ridge*.

"When the press closed in 1995 for budgetary considerations, it was a very sad day. We had just started the friends of the Logan Elm Press which grew to 250 members, with big plans to support the press."

When asked if such book-producers were to be referred to as "printers" or "publishers," she answered, "I call them printers, because that's their main job, along with designing the book and bringing different together people involved in the project, like artists and binders.

"Graham Moss of the Incline Press (who was a guest speaker during our first year of Aldus programming) says he loves the mechanical part of the job, but most printers, I would say, are more interested in the artistic development of the book than in the mechanical reproduction.

"Timothy Hawley in Louisville doesn't care about making money. He says, 'All I care about is covering my expenses. My time doesn't count. It's the pleasure of creating these books.'"

Hearing Marcia talk about the nature of these exquisite books makes you realize the achievement of a perfect juxtaposition: the pleasure of the printers in making these wonderful books and the pleasure of those like Marcia who appreciate and collect them.

Marcia has added to her collection of new press books through an organization called the Fine Press Book Association, a clearinghouse and celebration for things relating to such books. "And I take several publications that help me learn about things. There's a tremendous amount of information on the internet with many links and blogs, including www.philobiblion.com. I also belong to the Private Libraries Association in Britain.

"Another way is to subscribe to the books of various printers," she said. "Russ McKnight at Logan Elm saw my interest in these books and suggested I become a subscriber to the books of Kim Merker at Windover Press. Subscribing means that you agree to take almost every book of a printer. Contacting the Windover Press was the beginning of the branching out of my collecting.

"We corresponded for eight years. He'd send me a finished book and I'd send back a comment or question, and I was extremely flattered that a man like him would take his time and write to me.

"I've made an effort to write and compliment the printers on their books after I receive them. I don't think they hear from many people, because they act like it's wonderful I've written. That's how I've established these friendships."

Marcia paused a moment, then said, "That was part of the fun of getting into these books: meeting people like that, and corresponding with them. It reinforces the personal connection with the printers. That's what's so

important. These books represent dedication and love and persistence."

I asked her how many books a fine press prints in an average year. "Not many," Marcia answered. "An important book might be the only one produced in a year, though Incline Press sometimes does several smaller books a year.

"I subscribe to three presses in England: Graham Moss' Incline Press, the Whittington Press, and the Old School Press. I just love their books, and you get quite a discount when you subscribe. It's wonderful to write back and forth to England.

"I receive books from two American presses: the Bird and Bull Press of Henry Morris in Pennsylvania, and from Robert Baris' Press on Scroll Road in Carrollton, Ohio. He makes lovely books.

"I just stick to these few publishers," she summarized, and with a shrug said, "I can't buy everything."

When a book that she will be receiving as a subscriber is in production, Marcia says, "The excitement builds when I know a book is completed about which I have usually known for some time. When that book arrives, it's just wonderful to see the culmination of months of work. I just grab the scissors and open that package up. Sometimes they're packed so well that they're hard to open. It exasperates me when it takes me 15 minutes to open it!"

After talking about her collecting, we began lovingly examining the books which she had set up on the table prior to our meeting. As she handed the first one to me, I noted that she didn't ask me to wash my hands or to put on white gloves. "I don't care," she said. "They're to be used and enjoyed."

Space prevents me from describing all of them, especially with the enthusiasm which Marcia evidenced for each one of them; but here are several worthy of mention on the next two pages.

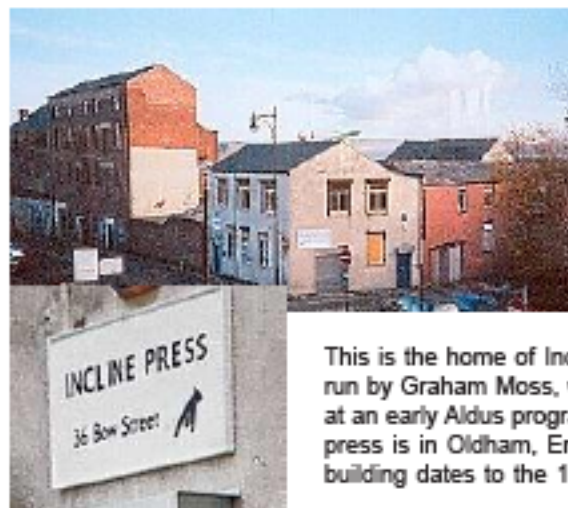
Water from the Incline Press



George Coenraadse Bauman

This book was developed in association with an exhibition by the International Society of Bookbinders at Oxford's Bodleian Library. It was commissioned by Designer Bookbinders and printed by Incline Press for an international bookbinding competition set for June, 2009. A group of the books were sold unbound or "in sheets" to binders throughout the world. Then binders had about 10 months to complete the bindings and send them back to England for judging. The press committed many copies to the Society, but also reserved 150 for subscribers. Each subscriber received a different paste-paper cover of their book.

"There is no other book in existence like this," Marcia explained; she displayed the statement-of-limitation page, which concluded, "This copy was bound for Marcia Preston." She added, "With books like these, you feel that these printers are thinking about you and care about you." "you."



This is the home of Incline Press, run by Graham Moss, who spoke at an early Aldus program. The press is in Oldham, England; the building dates to the 1820s.

Sylvae from Midnight Paper Sales

Gaylord Schanilec, working with Ben Verhoeven, created a fascinating history of his farm as seen through the trees on the property. This magnificent book is bound in boards cut from the farm's trees. Each page illustrates a cross-section image of a tree on their farm, done beautifully in browns and whites.



George Coenraadse Bauman

The two men kept an online diary regarding the process of their research and the press' development of the book, creating great interest among subscribers as they followed the project's progress. Fifty specimens were printed by Schanilec's fine press on hand-made paper and include historical anecdotes and observations.



Portmeirion from the Whittington Press



George Coenraadse Bauman

Located in Gloucestershire, England, Whittington Press is owned by John and Rose Randle. "I knew it was going to be a special book," Marcia grinned, showing me the book about an extraordinary Italianate seaside village on a remote peninsula in North Wales. The book is printed on Venetian hand-made paper, and packaged in an elaborate clamshell box. It utilizes a printing process

called *pochoir*, which achieves its effects by superimposing layers of flat color on top of one another.

"I wrote to John and told him that it looked like a very fine book, and that the *World of Interiors* magazine might be interested. He contacted them, and they were, and this came out," Marcia said, holding up a copy of the magazine, bookmarked to a page she showed me: a review of the book, with photos. "I was quite proud that I was the instigator of this!"

***A House by the Sea* from Whittington Press**

Finally, I asked Marcia if, among all these amazing books, she had a favorite. "Well, you'll be surprised," she smiled, showing me her copy of *A House by the Sea*. "It features stencils by Miriam Macgregor. Miriam is a master at *pochoir*. Her illustrations are hand-done and took her two years to make about 65 copies of this book about these islands off Africa. I think the colors are beautiful."

In conclusion, I asked Marcia how many fine press books she owned. She laughed and replied, "When I gave a program in Lancaster in the Art Space, I knew that question would come up, so I counted my books."



George Coenraad van Blommestein

I have about 350 regular fine press books, not including my miniatures."

After we reviewed perhaps two dozen books, including a couple of her miniatures, Marcia handed me a typed document of about 50 pages, entitled "Memoirs of a Collector."

"I wrote this for my family about my collection and the history of it." Marcia appropriately takes her collection seriously, even to the point of writing about them so that her heirs will have continued access to her enthusiasm for fine press books.



President's message from page 2

In one of his early "President's Messages" in our newsletter, Geoff Smith prophetically wrote: "The Aldus Society is still defining itself and...it will always be in a state of self-definition as the larger culture around us causes us to reassess our goals and values...ideas for programming and events are encouraged from all members and active participation on society committees is equally encouraged. This is *your* society."

And we've never veered from that course.

We've grown from an initial membership of 50 booklovers to nearly 100 members. As you read this, we are seeking new trustees, as several trustee terms are coming to an end this spring. We are always seeking people to join our many committees, including membership, programming and public relations. And we also welcome articles (or perhaps ideas for regular columns) in our newsletter. We recognize that the best way to keep

our organization vibrant is to infuse it with new ideas and people on a regular basis.

Thank you for your support these past ten years. We promise that, with your participation, the next ten years will continue to introduce you to memorable books, interesting people and many unforgettable bibliophilic adventures.



HOLIDAY DINNER AND SILENT AUCTION, CONTINUED...



ABOVE: Ronald Beach bid on...and won...lots of great books
 FAR RIGHT, L-R: Carol Logue, Tony Clark, Emerson Gilbert, Carol Gilbert and Paul Watkins
 IMMEDIATE RIGHT: Bob Emerson and Ed Hoffman



Nearly \$1600 was raised at the silent auction. Highlights of the auction included a signed, numbered publisher's copy of Nick Basbanes's latest book, *Editions and Impressions*, generously donated by Fine Books and Collections; a first edition of *The Bookseller in Paris*; a vintage copy of Cassell's *Doré Gallery*; and a number of beautiful art books. Half of the proceeds will be used to fund our annual Ravneberg Memorial Lecture; the remainder will be used to fund future programming.

We are so grateful for the generosity of our many donors!

Auction Chair Laralyn Sasaki and her committee (Amy Bostic, Kassie Rose, Nancy Campbell, Helen Leibman and Marilyn Logue) put in a tremendous amount of time on this wonderful event, and we owe them volumes of thanks! Treasurer Emerson Gilbert

gave us many good suggestions for our paperwork flow. And we owe a multitude of thanks to Christine Hayes, who planned the dinner and reserved LaScala. She has already reserved LaScala for next year's holiday get-together.



ABOVE: Marcia Evans and Doris Tritt
 ABOVE RIGHT: Bill Radloff toasts Aldus
 ABOVE FAR RIGHT: George Bauman placing one of many bids
 IMMEDIATE RIGHT: Joyce Miller and Laralyn Sasaki had a great time



Thanks to Photographer-at-Large George Cowmeadow Bauman for providing most of the photos for this story, and for our newsletter.



ABOVE BOTTOM: Willkie Cirkner and Deb Johnson examine books

FAR LEFT: Linda Mizejewski, Marcia Preston, Marilyn Logue, Christine Hayes, and Nancy Campbell
 IMMEDIATE LEFT: Ivan Gilbert, Kassie Rose, Amy Bostic, and Don Tritt

Of Unusual Covers, Talking Books, and Autographs from Beyond the Grave

Genie Hoster

You can't make this stuff up. The following book descriptions have recently appeared in internet used book listings, and are reproduced here exactly as they appear on the web, spellings, punctuation, and all!

"Former owner inside front cover."

"Previous bookseller's stick affixed to inside front cover."

"We are a real bookshop, not some doofus with a computer."

"Acceptable. Well it is embarrassing to admit, my greatest strength is I am a fully intact reading copy who is internally free of any markings, soiling, or once dog eared pages, with a binding which has remained snug and spine straight. My soft covers, well, they have just lost that original new luster they originally had showing light creasing to their front upper right corner and spots of

moderate edge wear. Please don't buy books from us! Unless you're frustrated and fed up with rolling the dice on the other dealers."

Hardcover Clean, light wear, foxing on covers, spines darkened. Innards clean & tight w/ name on FFEPs + IFCs.

"Some shelfwear. cover and/or binding is ripped and pages may be dirty or folded, but otherwise in good condition. MULTIPLE QUANTITIES AVAILABLE"

"...excellent condition with slight surface rub...thanks!" (You're welcome!)

"Fine condition Paperback. Not Pretty. Some Staining/Highlighting/Wrinkling/ Frayed Corners/Bent Cover."

I'm waiting for a response from a dealer who is selling an "autographed" copy of Raggedy Ann which was printed in 1988. Author Johnny Gruelle died in 1938.



Field Trip to Baldwin Wallace College A Hit for Aldine Music Lovers

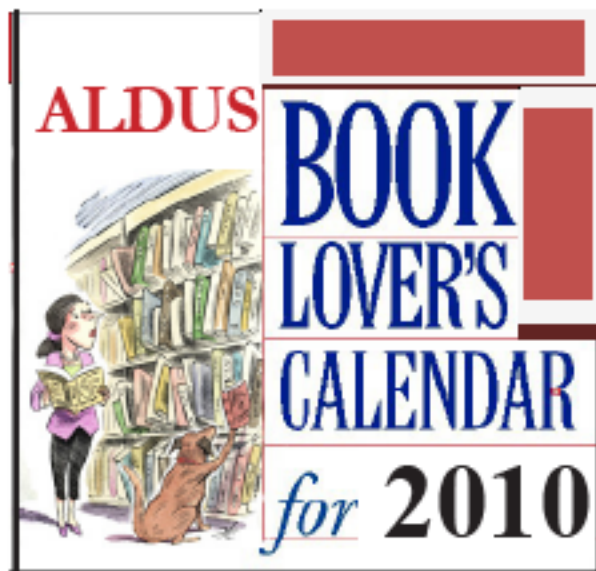
On November 1st, seventeen Aldus members travelled to Baldwin Wallace College in Berea, for a special event hosted by Jack Belcher, fellow FABS member of the Northern Ohio Bibliophilic Society (N.O.B.S.). After a scrumptious buffet dinner, it was a privilege to hear Dr. Mel Unger, Director of the Riemenschneider Bach Institute, orient us to the original collection of Bach manuscripts and other composers of the period.

After his talk, we walked to the College Chapel for an inspiring organ recital of these original manuscripts. To end our afternoon, we toured the Bach Institute for a rare opportunity to view one of the most important collections of Bach manuscripts in the world.

Thank you to N.O.B.S. for a most delightful day!



Photos by Willie Chisler



January 14

Aldus Program: Patrick Losinski, Director of the Columbus Metropolitan Library, will share the interesting history of the library in Columbus and talk about running one of the ranked #1 libraries in America (*see page 3*).

February 11

Aldus Program: In recognition of Black History Month, Dr. Rudine Bishop will give a program on African-American Children's Literature (*see page 3*).

February 21–March 7

Upper Arlington Friends of the Library Sale; Sale begins Sunday at Noon for everyone.

March 11

Aldus Program: David Lilburne of Antipodean Books, Maps & Prints in New York state, will be the Ron Ravneberg Memorial Lecture speaker (*see page 3*).

March 11-13

Grandview Heights Friends of the Library Sale; Friends preview Friday evening from 6:30 - 8:30 PM.

April 2 & 3

The 27th NOBS Akron Book Fair will be held at the John S. Knight Center, 77 East Mill Street, Akron, Ohio. Friday hours are 3:00-8:30 PM and Saturday hours are 10:00 AM-4:00 PM; Admission for the general public is \$5.00 for the two-day event. For more information go to www.nobsweb.org

April 8

Aldus Program: We will be visiting the Ohioana Library and enjoy a tour led by director Linda Hengst (*see page 3*).

April 11

51st Michigan Antiquarian Book & Paper Show, 9:30 AM to 5:00 PM. Admission \$4.50; free for children 13 and under. Held at Lansing Center: 333 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing, MI.

May 8th

The 2010 Ohioana Book Festival: Celebrating Ohio's Authors. Held at 274 E. First Ave., Columbus, Ohio from 10:00 AM – 4:30 PM. Watch our listserv for updates.

May 12-16

FABS Book Tour and Symposium sponsored by the Book Club of Detroit, held in Detroit and Ann Arbor. Details for this event and registration information is in your FABS newsletter.

May 13

Aldus Program: Cincinnati book artist Gabrielle Fox will speak about those tiny books that have fascinated book collectors for years...actually centuries! (*see page 3*).

New York City Beckons Aldus Members in April

April will soon be here and it's time to prepare for the annual pilgrimage to the New York Antiquarian Book Fair. This is their 50th anniversary year and more than 170 booksellers from all over the world are expected to display their wares from April 9-11 at the Park Avenue Armory.

A benefit preview will be held Thursday April 8th from 5-9. Log on to <http://www.sanfordsmith.com/show.php?show=bookfair> for more information.



As happens every year, the FABS annual meeting will take place Thursday before the preview –2:00pm at the Grolier Club. This year Geoff Smith is to be nominated as the next chair of that organization and it would be nice to come and show support for him. For more info please contact Bill Evans at gobux@insight.rr.com.



The Aldus Society

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Photos by George
Cowmeadow Bauman



A Halloween Treat

On Halloween, several dozen Aldus members gathered at the grave of Columbus humorist James Thurber to hear a reading by The Acorn Graveside Players. Their readings included two short stories by Thurber, and a third story written and read by Aldus member George Bauman.

It was a chilly but sunny later afternoon event. After the reading we all went down the street for warming drinks and good fellowship at the Banana Bean Cafe.

UPPER LEFT: The crowd gathers near Thurber's grave

BOTTOM LEFT: Tony Clark, dressed especially for our event, and others view the Thurber family plot

RIGHT: The Acorn Graveside Players: Christine Hayes, George Bauman, and Jack Salling

