



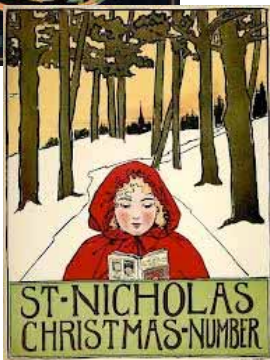
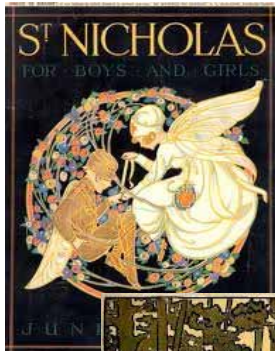
Aldus Society Notes

Winter-Spring, 2013

Volume 13, No. 1

Aldus Collects Program Scheduled for January 10

Our January program has turned into a tradition: Aldus members share highlights from their varied collections, which is what makes this program so educational and fascinating. This year, four Aldus members are scheduled to share treasures which this year include ephemera, incunabula, literature and book art.



Lani Heilman will share copies from her collection of *St. Nicholas Magazine*, one of the most successful magazines for children published during the second half of the nineteenth century. Begun in 1873, *St. Nicholas* was published through 1940.

St. Nicholas published short stories, serializations, and poems by prominent authors of the day such as Jack London (it is said he owed his career to the magazine), Mark Twain, Bret Harte, Louisa May Alcott, Robert Louis Stevenson, Frances Hodgson Burnett, Theodore Roosevelt, and Rudyard Kipling. Arthur Rackham illustrated several covers and stories.

The articles celebrated holiday tradition, ambition, exploration; the changing role of women in society, the uses of new technology, and the different ways of life in foreign lands.

Marcia Preston will share her beautiful pages from illuminated manuscripts, including a leaf from the legendary Hornby Bible which was created in France c.1220. She also collects early printed pages including one produced by Aldus Manutius (1449–1515), the name-sake of our organization. Her Power-



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the Jackalope

*Do you recognize this man?
You can read about him starting on
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The Aldus Society

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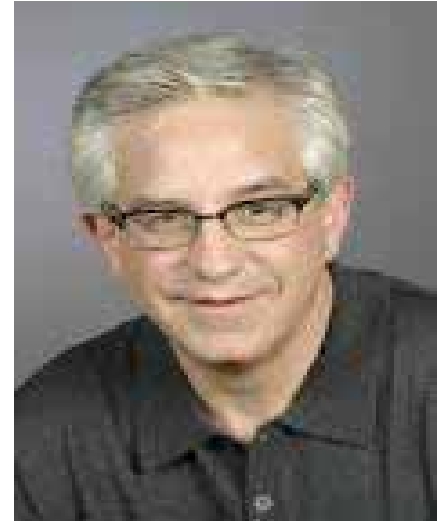
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Historian Wes Cowan to Present March 14 Program

The Ron Ravneberg Memorial Speaker traditionally gives their talk at our March meeting. This year is no exception. Our speaker will be Cincinnati auction house owner and treasure hunter Wes Cowan, who is the founder, head honcho, and principal auctioneer of Cowan's Auctions, Inc.

Cowan has traveled all over the country appraising heirlooms for *Antiques Roadshow* and has his own hit show, *History Detectives*, which also airs on PBS. He says these shows "tap into our inherent interests in the history of our country and the history of our families." He also writes an antiques column for the *Cincinnati Enquirer* and is a frequently requested speaker at antiques events.



After receiving his doctorate degree, Wes taught at the Anthropology Department of the Ohio State University. In 1984 he moved to Cincinnati to assume the post of Curator of Archaeology at the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History. He has published widely in the fields of American archaeology and paleoethnobotany.

Like many collectors, he became a dealer to support his collecting habit, and actually started selling 19th-century photographs in mail and online auctions shortly after he left graduate school. Most families have something in their house that was passed down by one of their ancestors. A box of letters from WWII, or grandmother's wedding silver, or great-grandfather's Civil War musket...or a book! He says that everybody's a curator of something.

In a recent interview Cowan remarked that he never leaves home without a book to read. Ahhh, a man after our own hearts!

Our Ravneberg Memorial speaker position was created in remembrance of Ron Ravneberg, our past president who sadly passed away in the spring of 2009. Ron was a great champion of books and of promoting contact and communication among book people everywhere. Ron also served as our newsletter editor for a number of years and was responsible for creating our memorable Celebration of the Book event in 2004, which featured biblio-luminaries Barry Moser and Nicholas Basbanes.

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 ☞

ALDUS COLLECTS, from front page

Point images will allow members to view these pages in detail.

Marcia is also planning to bring a page from the *Nuremberg Chronicle*, which was first printed in 1493. Also known as *Liber Chronicarum*, it is a year-by-year account of notable events in world history from the Creation up to its year of publication. The book was illustrated with 1,809 woodcuts printed from 645 woodblocks. It includes references to the game of chess and to medical curiosities, including what is believed to be the first depiction of conjoined twins.

Ron Beach has been collecting books by American novelist, short-story writer, and playwright Sinclair Lewis. In 1930, Lewis became the first writer from the United States to be awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature. Books by Lewis include *Main Street* and *Babbitt*. Lewis refused the Pulitzer Prize for *Arrowsmith* (1925), a novel about the challenges faced by an idealistic doctor. Adapted as a 1931 Hollywood film directed by John Ford and starring Ronald Colman, *Arrowsmith* was nominated for four Academy Awards.



Alan and Ann Alaia Woods will share their collection of pop-up books. “Pop-up” describes collapsible paper images that elevate off the page into three dimensional structures.

Today’s movable and pop-up books contain the same basic elements developed and improved upon by previous generations of paper engineers.

February 14 Speaker Will Discuss Copyright Law

Sandra A. Enimil, JD, head of the newly established Copyright Resources Center at the Ohio State University Libraries, will be our February 14 program presenter. Enimil provides information and resources on copyright issues and is the go-to person for OSU’s educators, archivists and librarians when they have questions concerning the use of copyright-protected materials.



Copyright has been defined as the “balancing the rights of authors with the rights of the public to use the work without seeking permission or paying royalties.”

Needless to say, the Internet has brought yet another dimension to the subject of copyright, as well. This digital technology of course makes it far too easy to copy, distribute, and modify copyrighted works in digital formats. Therefore, educators need to focus even more on what the law is and is not, the complexities of fair use, and the inescapable issue of plagiarism.

Enimil will share anecdotes about the perils and pitfalls of copyright in the contemporary world and how it affects the library and other institutions. **BRING YOUR QUESTIONS** to this informative program.



They will be sharing books by book artists such as Robert Sabuda (*Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*) and Jan Pienkowski (*Botticelli’s Bed & Breakfast*). In addition they plan to share their copies of *M. C. Escher Pop-ups* by Courtney Watson McCarthy, Edward Gorey’s *The Dwindling Party* (pictured above), and *Gutenberg’s Gift* by Nancy Willard.



History of Carnegie Libraries in Ohio Topic of April 11 Program

Our April speaker will be Mary Ellen Armentrout, who is the author of *Carnegie Libraries of Ohio: Our Cultural Heritage*.

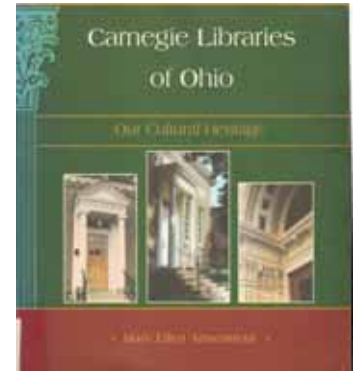
A Scottish-American philanthropist and visionary, Andrew Carnegie donated much of his vast fortune to build libraries all over the world. He acquired his fortune after building his own company, Carnegie Steel, from the ground up; he then sold his company for over \$400 million to J.P. Morgan. This transaction made Carnegie the richest man in the world at the time.

Armentrout's comprehensive book, which took four years to research and write, documents the 111 libraries in Ohio that were built with Carnegie's money. Ohio was the recipient of the third largest number of Carnegie

Libraries. Although some of these libraries have been appropriated for other uses, Carnegie's original mission of providing public access to books and information continues unabated.

Every library's story is different and unique and reflects each community's needs. In Columbus, our downtown library was completed in 1907. It was built utilizing a \$200,000 gift from Carnegie.

She will be bringing copies of her book, which will be for sale for \$34.95. (Cash or checks, please.) She will sign copies of her book following her presentation.



Virtuoso Webmaster of Booktryst Rescheduled for May 9

Stephen Gertz, the grand poobah of the rollicking website called Booktryst, will make another try at visiting Columbus to give us his talk, "From Athanasius Kircher To Ashton Kutcher: 350 Years of Strange, Unusual, Eccentric, and Just Plain Weird Books. Or, Heteromorphic Literature 101."

Gertz had been scheduled to kick off our 2012-13 programming, but he unfortunately became ill *en route* from Los Angeles. Fortunately he is much better, Booktryst is appearing once again on a regular basis, and he's back at work at David Brass Rare Books in Calabas, California, where he is Executive Director.

If you haven't already visited this site on the internet, you'll find it is occasionally outrageous but always entertaining and educational, while dedicated to news, information, and features about the world of rare books and all aspects of the rare book business.

You can find more about Steven and his website in our September 2012 newsletter, or visit the site at www.bookstryst.com. Subscribing to the website is free and subscribers can find as many as four or five submissions in their email boxes each week.



Mountain House Lures Aldus Visitors for Second Time

This past October 6, Aldus Society members paid their second visit to Mountain House and the Dard Hunter Studio in Chillicothe, Ohio. The Studios are run by Hunter's grandson Dard III, who carries the family business forward at the Studio, through an annual conference, and in traveling exhibits that feature the work of his grandfather.

Like we did last year, we all met for lunch after the tour. Good friends and good books, the ultimate in biblio-fellowship! That's what Aldus is about. With our member interest in this field trip strong, we promise this won't be our last visit.

A big THANK YOU to Lois and everyone who help to organize Aldus field trips including this one to Mountain House



The Collector Within

By Craig Speece

Until seven years ago, I rejected the label of “book collector.” This, despite the fact that more and more books were found in my house, a result of frequent visits to used bookstores when traveling. I insisted on identifying myself as just a reader, or as someone who liked books. Or I was adding to a personal library. After all, to me collectors seemed to be a bit odd and more than a bit obsessed.

I was sure I was nothing of the sort.

One of my favorite authors is Graham Greene, and I had purchased many of his books. Over time, I began to replace some of my poor editions with better copies (sure, something a collector would do, but that didn’t mean that I was a collector). I acquired books of his plays, even though I don’t normally enjoy reading plays (they are meant to be performed, not read).



But the signs were there: I bought a collection of his stories that had been dramatized on British television, even though I had the stories in other editions. I bought poorer editions of books I already owned because I wanted the movie-version dust jackets. Then I bought a children’s book he wrote, even though I have no children. I bought his dream diary, which he composed when he would wake at night, quickly jotting down the essence of his dreams, despite the fact that the description of another’s dreams is the worst sort of torture.

In denial, I would still insist that I was not a collector.

I bought books about Greene. I bought literary criticism of his works, even though I usually find such analysis tedious. I bought a novel (*Picture Palace*) by Paul Theroux, an author I’d never read, only because Greene is a character in the story. Greene praised the author Brian Moore, so I began to buy and read Moore (who turned into another of my favorite writers).

The signs were all there, yet I failed to acknowledge that I was a collector.

Then in 2005 came a trip to Phoenix. While there, I visited The Book Gallery owned by Mike Riley. He noticed my interest in Graham Greene and showed me to

a locked case. (Note to book buyers: when the store’s owner takes you to a locked case, flee.) He unlocked it and brought out *The Name of Action* and *Rumour at Nightfall*, Greene’s second and third novels.

These two books are historical fiction, and both were critical and commercial flops. Greene himself later repudiated them, writing “Both books are of a badness beyond the power of criticism properly to evoke—the prose flat and stilted...the characterization non-existent.” Greene went so far as to suppress both books. At his insistence, future editions of his other books did not include *The Name of Action* or *Rumour at Nightfall* in the listing of his previous works. When he became successful,

publishers brought out new editions of all his other books, even previous poor sellers such as *It’s a Battleground*, since anything with Greene’s name on, would sell.

But Greene would not allow *Name* or *Rumour* to be reprinted. So the original first edition runs are the only ones ever printed.

So I’m looking at these two books. Their condition would be graded as “good” which every Aldus member knows isn’t good. Neither had a dust jacket. These are books that I probably would never read, as everyone, including Greene, agreed that they were awful. And the prices were geometrically more than I had ever paid for a book.

When I bore my coworkers or relatives with this tale, at this point I’m often interrupted (assuming anyone is still listening) with “Why would they be so expensive?” Any Aldus member understands: they were early, suppressed works by an author who later became a best seller. And with so few copies around, the market value becomes high.

These were books I didn’t want to read, they were not in even in “very good” condition, and they were absurdly expensive.

And with little hesitation, I bought them. With that purchase came an epiphany. Knowing this about myself, I am glad a group such as Aldus exists.

Now I can go before a friendly Aldus gathering and say “My name is Craig, and I am a book collector.”



The Aldus Story

By Jay Hoster

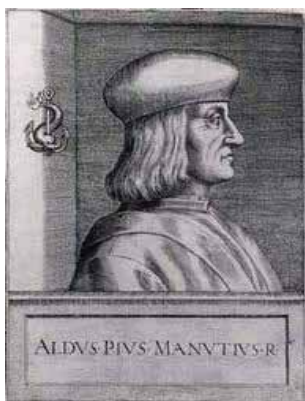
Many of our newer members might be curious about to how our organization — The Aldus Society — got its name. We lay claim that we're "about all things books," so how would an anchor and dolphin logo become part of our identity? Thereby hangs a tale (many of them, actually).



During our formative months over the winter of 2000, our visionary founder Geoffrey Smith hoped that we might apply for membership in the Fellowship of American Bibliophilic Societies (FABS) as soon as we were officially organized. And we noticed that many of the FABS member clubs had named their clubs after famous people in the history of books, printing and collecting.

For instance, The Caxton Club in Chicago was named in honor of the first English printer, William Caxton. Our neighboring club in Cleveland, The Rowfant Club, was named for Rowfant, the home of Frederick Locker-Lampson (1821-95), a writer of light verse who was a leading book collector of his time. Canada's Alcuin Society was named to honor the memory of Alcuin of York, who encouraged the study and preservation of ancient texts, contributed to the development of the lower case alphabet, and helped establish numerous schools and libraries.

Certainly we could simply have assumed a simpler name, something like the "Central Ohio Book Club." But founding trustee Paul Watkins sagely suggested naming our organization to honor someone who is held in highest



Aldus Manutius
(1449 - 1515)

esteem in the history of the book world — Aldus Manutius. As a result Aldus' name and the logo for his Aldine Press have been happily incorporated into all of our activities since that time.

So who exactly, was Aldus Manutius? Why is he important in the history of printing? Why have publishers incorporated variations of his logo into their own, and why

have architects even used his Aldine Press logo as a decorative element in their buildings?

Aldus Manutius was a scholar, grammarian and teacher known in the most important humanist circles of the time before coming to Venice around 1490. In 1493 he established the Aldine Press during a time which came to be known as the Venetian High Renaissance. His publishing legacy includes the distinction of introducing italic type, which was first used in an octavo edition of Virgil which he published in 1501.

The spirit of The Aldus Society is our commitment to life-long learning about all things books and sharing these enlightenments advocated by Aldus Manutius over 500 years ago.

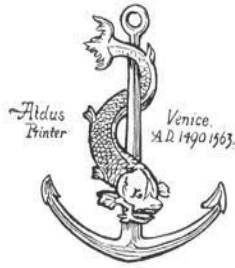
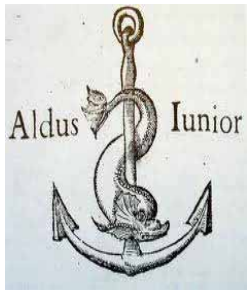
The revolutionary impact of Aldus' editions is readily apparent when the elegant portable octavo of his 1502 edition of Dante, printed in italic type without commentary, is compared to the ponderous incunabula of the previous decades, which were inclined to bury Dante's text beneath exegetical commentary. His italic type allowed him to introduce books in a more compact format, now considered a forerunner of today's "pocket books." His smaller italic type took up much less space on the pages which made his books less expensive to produce, inexpensive to purchase, and easy to carry. These books were called *libri portatiles*.



Manutius and his grandson Aldus the Younger, who was also a printer, are credited with introducing a standardized system of punctuation including developing the modern use of the semicolon and the modern appearance of the comma.

Manutius stated many times that his goal was to make available in print the classic texts of the ancient world which were beloved by Renaissance humanists. We are fortunate that he appeared at such an important moment in the history of the book. Aldus is credited with re-introducing original Greek texts to the western world after centuries of unavailability.

Choosing Aldus Manutius as our namesake actually resulted in a "double-hit." Not only were we able to honor him by naming our organization after him, we also were able to utilize his printer's mark for our very own logo. This mark is arguably the best-known printer's device in the history of printing.



VARIATIONS ON A THEME: The anchor and dolphin image has been used by Aldus Manutius and many others over the years. Above you can see many of these artistic interpretations, including William Pickering's at far right.

His device brings together two seemingly disparate elements – the anchor and dolphin – which serve to illustrate the classical adage *festina lente*, a paradox that means “make haste slowly.” The tacit meaning is that activities should be performed with a proper balance of intensity and contemplation.

Erasmus praised this adage in his great work, *Adagia*, and used it especially to compliment his printer: “Aldus, making haste slowly, has acquired as much gold as he has reputation, and richly deserves both.” Subsequently, Aldus used the corresponding symbol of the dolphin and anchor as his printer’s mark.

After Aldus’ translation of Euripides was published, Erasmus was so pleased with the results that he took up residence at the Aldine Press. What Erasmus wrote went directly to the compositor and then to the printing press, a practical application of *festina lente*. “The labor was such that there was no time to scratch one’s ears,” Erasmus later recalled. “Aldus very often declared that he was astonished that I wrote so much *ex tempore* and amid such a tumult of surrounding noise.”

Actually, Aldus wasn’t the first to use the anchor and dolphin image. The anchor and dolphin device is familiar to collectors of Roman coins. During the reigns of Titus and Domitian a denarius silver coin depicted an anchor with an entwined dolphin. Terry Belanger, founding director of the Rare Book School, donated an anchor-and-dolphin denarius to the Clark Library at UCLA and gave a talk with the intriguing title “Parallel Lines Never Meet: Dolphins and Anchors and Aldus / Book Historians and Numismatists and Roman Coins.”



Aldus showed Erasmus a Roman silver coin, given to him by Cardinal Bembo, which bore this symbol on the reverse side. Terry Belanger donated a similar one to the Clark Library at UCLA.

So well-known is the anchor-and-dolphin of Aldus that other publishers have employed it over the centuries. William Pickering, a nineteenth-century British publisher added “Discipulus Aldi” (disciple of Aldus) to the anchor-and-dolphin device (*above right*). Thomas Bird Mosher, an American fine press printer of the early twentieth used a device with two dolphins entwining the anchor, and the anchor-and-dolphin currently serves as the logo of Doubleday Publishing with the ring at the top of the anchor in the form of a “D.”

And so well-known is the anchor-and-dolphin of Aldus, it has been used as a complimentary architectural feature in buildings, as well. Many university libraries have used this symbol in their stained glass windows and the Library of Congress honors Aldus with their colorful mosaic of the anchor and dolphin in the Thomas Jefferson Building. In New York City, the Printing Crafts Building sports the anchor and dolphin logo on their beautiful terra cotta façade.



ABOVE: A portion of the Printing Crafts Building façade in NYC
RIGHT: Mosaic from the Thomas Jefferson Building at the Library of Congress in Washington D.C.



With such a long and rich history of both Aldus and his printer’s device, it is only fitting to remember our organization’s namesake, Aldus Manutius.





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DEC



2012 Aldus Holiday Dinner & Silent Auction



Another Holiday Dinner and Silent Auction are under our collective belts. It seems repetitive to say that this year's event was the "best ever"

– but well, it was! The new room set-up at LaScala was conducive to lots of pre-auction browsing and it facilitated dinner cheer for our 57 attendees. This year we netted just over \$2000, nearly \$500 more than last year.

Many thanks to all our donors, bidders and the raffle ticket purchasers and a special tip of the hat to our troop of volunteers who helped gather donations, provide boxes and supplies, sell raffle tickets, set up for the event, collect money and otherwise support the cause!

For more photos, visit our page on FaceBook!



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ABOVE: Harry Campbell, seen here carrying off his "Thoroughly Thurber" raffle prize. That's Nancy Campbell just behind him. ABOVE RIGHT: Geoff Smith browsing auction items. RIGHT: Bill and Marcia Evans FURTHER RIGHT: Esther Miller.



CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT:
George Bauman talks with Ron and
Kristen (Hilson) Beach; several
tables of happy party-goers; Ed
Hoffman and Lani Heilman; Amy
Bostic our treasured
treasurer; Debra Lewis
and Don Rice; Jim and
Jacquie Vaughan.

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Raffle Winners

Wes Baker Won the “\$100 gift certificate for a Spending Spree at Acorn Bookshop” and the “Cozy Writing Corner” raffle prize was won *in absentia* by Emerson Gilbert. Harry Campbell won the “Thoroughly Thurber” table of Thurber goodies.

ABOVE: Paul Watkins and Jim Tootle. BELOW: our president Ed Hoffman welcomes members to our fun-filled evening.



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Laralyn Sasaki Receives 2012 Carol Logue Bibliofellowship Award

Aldus member Laralyn Sasaki was this year’s recipient of our Carol Logue Fellowship Award, which we initiated last year as part of our Holiday Dinner/Silent Auction activities. It was a unanimous decision by the award committee who chose Larilyn because she has met the criteria of “devoting time and energy (and possibly their own funds) to promote or bring to fruition a special program, idea or activity which brings Aldus members together in the spirit of biblio-fellowship.”

Laralyn sent us this note of appreciation: “I truly thank the Aldus Society for the honor of being this year’s Carol Logue Fellowship Award recipient. Carol’s spirit accompanies all that we do with the holiday dinner and auction, and I am delighted for the additional reminder of her Aldus friendship.”

Last year’s winners were Paul Watkins and Marcia Preston, both founding trustees who were instrumental in our earliest organizational and programming activities.

ALDUS COLLECTS

Jack Matthews

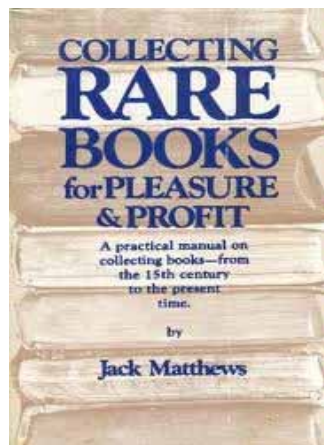
Bookman Extraordinaire

In the world of books, the name Jack Matthews means many things to many people: book collector extraordinaire, inspiring professor, perspicacious philosopher, unparalleled epistolarian, discerning scholar, and clever writer. Indeed, Jack might be considered the consummate Jack of All Trades, and Master of *ALL*.

Jack has been a member of The Aldus Society since its very early days, and has been invited to present two programs over the years. And he even accepted our invitations! His talks were based on some of the many essays he has published in the twenty-some books he's written throughout his career. Lively, entertaining and astute, Jack's lectures are always entertaining and filled with the scholarship and tenants he has acquired during his lifetime in the world of books.

Jack's writing has been praised for his capacity to entwine historical fact into richly inventive narratives. He's published 18 books of literature which include hundreds of poems, short stories and plays. These books have won much recognition including two awards from The Ohioana Library, a Guggenheim fellowship (which landed him in Norway), and a Major Artist Award (of \$50,000) from The Ohio Arts Council. His works of fiction have been praised by Eudora Welty, Shirley Ann Grau, Tim O'Brien, Doris Grumbach, and a host of other famous and highly accomplished authors. Anthony Burgess wrote that Jack's novel *The Charisma Campaigns* (1972) "already has the feel of an American classic." *Charisma* also was nominated by Walker Percy for the NBA Fiction Award.

But wait, there's more! This article, written especially for Aldus members who love to collect books (that's pretty much all of us!), is about



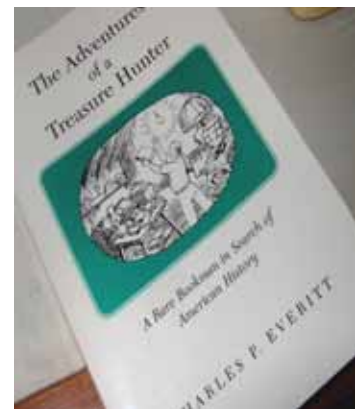
Jack and the five books he has written about his intrepid adventures in the book collecting world.

His first work on the subject was *Collecting Rare Books for Pleasure and Profit* (1977, Putnam); Jack says that this is the only book he wrote which the publisher changed a title before publication. Jack's title had been *A Philosophical Guide to Investing in Rare Books*. This book is a practical guide for how to turn an expensive hobby into an occasionally lucrative pastime. Aldus member Bill Rich bought this book when it came out and says "I bought it then, and was enthralled. I still think that this is one of the best books ever on book collecting from the collector's point of view."

The remaining four books are collections of essays he's written about the art and soul of book collecting: *Reading Matter: A Rabid Bibliophile's Adventures Among Old and Rare Books* (2000, Oak Knoll Press); *Booking Pleasures* (1996, Ohio University Press); *Memoirs of a Bookman* (1990, Ohio University Press); and *Booking in the Heartland* (1986, Johns Hopkins University Press). As much philosophy and history as high (and low) adventure, these books are included in all erudite bibliographies (and course syllabi) about books on book collecting.

With these credentials, Jack was asked to write an introduction of the re-issue of Charles P. Everitt's highly regarded memoir, *The Adventures of a Treasure Hunter: A Rare Bookman in Search of American History* (1987, Meyerbooks). In this book Everitt wrote: "You probably know about the hunger and thirst of the Donner Party, the travelers who caught in the Sierra Mountains in winter, finally ate one another. That hunger and thirst is mild compared to that of a collector lacking one volume to complete his collection. Hunger for books is, in some people, the thing that will break down all inhibitions and hesitations. It is no respecter of person or station."

Matthews defines "booking" as "The covetous foraging for old and rare books...it is an act which leads naturally



to the pleasures of adding them to one's personal library, then reading them as instruments of light and measure in a murky and chaotic world."

"The world of books is wonderfully complex, and the number of titles that populate it seems to be as nearly infinite as the number of stars.

—from *Booking in the Heartland*

Jack grew up in the Columbus suburb of Clintonville. "I had a wonderful childhood and didn't know there was a Depression," he said. Like many youngsters, he was a stamp collector, and even joined in the "mysterious mania" of collecting tin foil as his contribution to the war-time effort. Later, as a teenager, he discovered the delights of collecting books during the early 1940s when he attended an estate sale four blocks from his home. He bought two books from the 1840s for a dime apiece. He still has one of them, an edition of the Lewis and Clark journals published in Dayton in 1845.

And so began Jack's life-long love of books, particularly Americana (books which carry stories of adventure, history, geography, folklore and cultural heritage in early North America). The thousands of books he has discovered over the past years have ignited his imagination, and in his essays about their discovery and content, he takes us on circuitous journeys into the past.

To date, he speculates he has travelled over a million miles, mostly within the state of Ohio, tracking down books for enjoyment and occasional financial gain. In his book-collecting jounries Jack has come upon books that few of us would think to buy, primarily because of their condition. But for Jack these books' treasure lies within.

"...It can be an adventure and an excitement to read from an old, forgotten book and thus receive a message no one else today is taking in, or no one else remembers clearly. It is an act of liberation, of freedom, to pick up a volume on impulse, give it a few minutes and listen to the message it is sending out. No doubt most of the books you pick up will prove worthless to you at that time; still you have given them another chance, and you haven't really wasted your time," he wrote in *Booking in the Heartland*.

Jack is particularly fascinated with daily life on the early frontier. He seeks out letters and diaries which can tell many stories of isolation, loneliness, and unbearably hard work – and lively traditions as well. These settlers who sought to establish farms and homesteads in the western lands had limited books to read except the family Bible

and perhaps old primers in their school houses. During these difficult times, they traveled by horseback and wagon over primitive roads across the midwestern prairies, often in the menacing shadow of native populations. Other dangers they faced were on the rivers, where they traveled by keelboat and flatboat, and later by steamboat. River travel was difficult because of shallows, the ever-changing sandbanks and newly-fallen trees lurking beneath the river's surface.

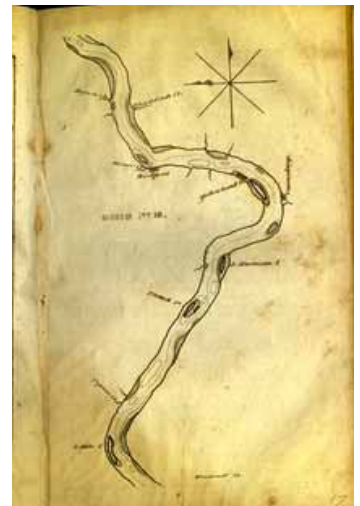
Several of Jack's stories share his discovery of copies of Samuel Cummings' *The Western Pilot* (see image above). This book was published as a navigational guide for river pilots who were laying a course on the Ohio and

Mississippi rivers to the Gulf of Mexico during the early 1800s. Towns, inhabitants, stores, bits of history, points of interest, and industry are described along the route. According to Jack, we can find at least 20 different versions of this book (some even with different titles) because it was necessary to reprint it often to reflect the ever-changing river routes following seasonal rain and flooding.

Because it was of such practical use by river boatmen on the frontier, Jack's copy is "nearly thumbed to oblivion, consulted in all sorts of weather, handled and mauled in the urgency of the moment.

"Sternly utilitarian in purpose, the *Western Pilot* is wildly poetic even when it is trying to be most matter of fact. One is delighted by the mere listing of the names encountered on the descent of the greet rivers from Pittsburgh to New Orleans. Their quaintness and primitive vigor are in many instances still with us, for some names have lasted on, even into our world," he writes.

"Just below Pittsburgh is Dead Man's Island (a story in that, you would think), and then such places as Big Bone Lick and Conoconneque Creek...Once out on the Mississippi, you meet Bloody Island...Hanging Dog Island, Iron Banks, and near New Orleans, the Yazoo Bayou. Not to mention 12 Pole Island and Riddle's Point (with "an ugly bar on the right below the point"). River boatmen were known for their hard drinking – which often led to death



by knife, gunshot, drowning, or nightmare – but even if they were sober, all of those names would have been enough to inspire them to giddiness and wonder.

“The time it bears witness to has travelled all this way, and the generations of men who have handled it and consulted it in sunlight and by lantern, to work their way through winter storms, spring rains, and the peaceful and fragrant air of summer and autumn...they have left their imprint upon these pages as well, and such mute testimony is vivid and precise even if we can’t read it as we do that other text.”

“Part of the pleasure in collecting is to build your own literary curriculum. Rediscovering an old and neglected writer is something of a personal triumph, after all.”
— from *Booking in the Heartland*

Jack’s book collecting stories cover a wide variety of scenarios inspired not only by books but also by incidents such as a young fiction writer who got drunk one night and stole the bust of Edgar Allan Poe from the Poe Museum in Richmond, Virginia.

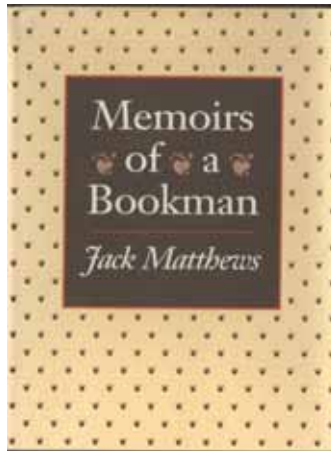
In *Memoirs of a Bookman*, you will discover how he began collecting books by Ernest Hemingway and his thoughts regarding Hemingway’s untimely death: “...it may have seemed that all the pursuits Hemingway could believe in were over, and he had said all he had to say.”

In *Booking Pleasures*, the chapter “The Poetry of Definitions” Jack ruminates about dictionaries: “as with all antiquarian objects, much of their interest consists in how they reflect the changes wrought by time.” He muses how definitions of words have changed and how certain words have fallen out of use. For instance, “the word *puddingtime* was once a colorful term for ‘the time of dinner; the time at which pudding, anciently the first dish, is set upon the table, but also bears a secondary meaning: nick of time; critical minute’.” We learn from this essay that dictionaries teach us that our language was not invented yesterday.

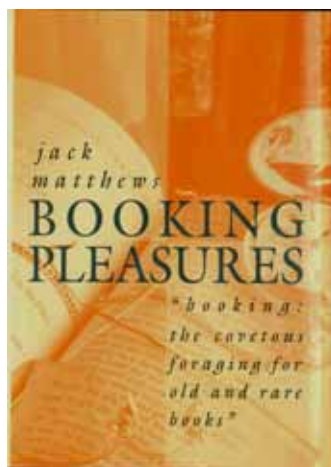
In *Memoirs of a Bookman* he tells how he found a book that proved to be Nathaniel Chapman’s copy of a 1915

Swedenborg volume while “pawing over a sad accumulation of used books” in a Columbus thrift shop. (Nate was Johnny Appleseed’s brother). “Most of the religious books from this period are wonderfully unreadable,” after which he plunges into a detailed discussion of Swedenborgism. The subject of Ohio’s own Johnny Appleseed has cropped up often in Jack’s writings. “He was, in fact, something of a cranky mystic, a holy man obsessed with apples, a peculiar sort of protestant frontier saint.”

In addition, book lovers everywhere will enjoy reading Jack’s many musings on attending charity and library book sales. (“They’re innocent in the dark arts of pricing rare books — don’t know what they’re doing, and the gem table seldom has anything like the bargains that can be found in the slush.”) At these sales, as well as at his well-documented country auctions, he’s looking for books with messages from the past in the form of local and country histories, biographies of old-time preachers, soldiers, and politicians, reports of historical societies, and old diaries and sometimes even ephemera.



In *Collecting Rare Books for Pleasure and Profit* Jack rails against collectors who purchase books as investments. “What a dreary divarication is this, and how schizoid and truly mercenary is the man who plays such a nasty game against himself! To invest in books does not imply that the collector intends to sell them; he merely buys them with the conviction that his taste in honoring them will be validated by posterity and that – with effort and know-how comparable to those of other investors – this validation will have a dimension of financial profit.” Jack, tell us what you *really* think!



While writing *CRBFP&P* Jack asked author and bookstore owner Larry McMurtry what he thought about the practice of investing in rare books. McMurtry replied, “We don’t like customers who regard books as investments. Also I don’t like being collected, although I like being read.” Matthews sardonically adds, “Unquestionably, the rest of us should feel grateful for the existence of such high-minded folks; they make the world just a little better for all of us.”

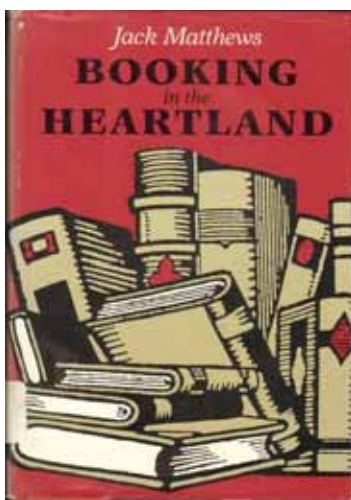
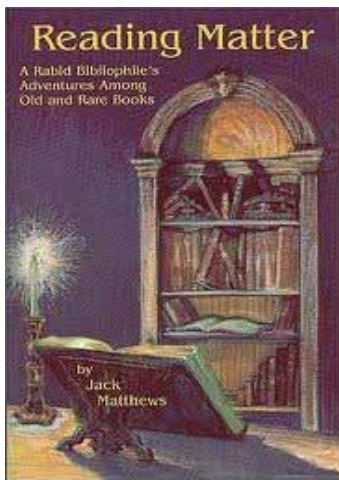
In *Reading Matter*, Jack writes about book catalogs in his essay “A Cabinet of Facts and Follies.” He says they are sometimes collectible in themselves, having “attained to aesthetic and bibliographical heights that have seldom if

even been surpassed; and some of these catalogues are as handsomely bound and printed as the books they celebrate.” For Jack, they are endlessly fascinating: “One can step into an enchanted world of antiquarian learning, rich in wisdom and human error, superstition and grandeur.” His favorite dealer catalog is Pickering and Chatto’s 1902 illustrated catalog (which he notes has the Aldine anchor and dolphin on its title page). “Marvels are to be discovered in such a place, and those marvels will tell you something of what we have been, and what we are and what we might be.”

One of Bill Rich’s favorites stories is the episode in *Booking in the Heartland* where Jack “shares his fantasy about getting the jump on other collectors and dealers at a book sale. This is where he dreams of hiring a fat, big, and tough woman with an umbrella to be in line waiting for the opening. She is right behind Jack, who is first in line. She tries to pay the admittance fee with a \$100 bill, which no one can change, and she resolutely stops anyone getting into the sale before her – Jack is all alone, inside, with no competitors...I treasure my copy of this book, which he duly inscribed, ‘To Bill Rich, with bibliophilic cheer’.”

Intersections

One of the threads that tie Jack’s booking essays together is his philosophy about how the past, present and future are linked. In one essay he referred to this as the ‘bracketing of time,’ in which human lifespans overlap one



another, and many of his stories relate to this philosophical observation.

For instance, in several of his books he has shared his admiration of artist/writer Thomas Hart Benton and how this attraction has taken him on a voyage of intellectual adventure as their histories converged with one another and overlapped with a host of others in Columbus. It goes like this:

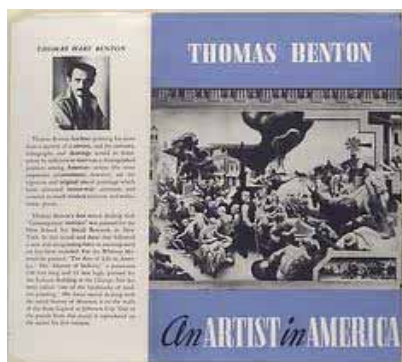
Matthews came to enjoy a “slight acquaintance” with Columbus artist Emerson Burkhart. As a senior at the old North High School on Arcadia Avenue, Matthews had won an art scholarship for the Columbus Art School, located next to the museum on East Broad Street. He took several classes including a life-drawing class taught by Burkhart. Matthews remembers Burkhart as unique.

And Burkhart liked the energy in everything Jack did. (Jack says he would have settled for *talent*, at that time, “...but now, all these years later, I’ve come to think energy is all right too – being connected with talent in mysterious

ways.”)

Later, Jack was asked to write an article for *Timeline* magazine about Benton, and his essay “The Artist Who Discovered America” was published in the September 1989 issue. After reading the article, book collector Pat Mooney (who previously didn’t know about Jack’s connection with Burkhart) sent Jack a copy of Burkhart’s personal copy of *An Artist in America* which he had found at Ed Hoffman’s bookshop. Mooney’s cover letter contained the terminology “serendipitous conjunctions of circumstances.”

Inside this book Burkhart had scrawled “loud, enthusiastic, sometimes angry-looking commentary and drawings in the margins and on the backs of plates of illustrations. He was a fitting reader of Benton, for he shared his aesthetics in important ways – an aesthetics based upon a cantankerous sort of rugged, down-home honest and a passion for common people and everyday things.” Jack says that if individual copies of books could speak, this one would yell and thunder...throughout this copy of the book, Burkhart had written notes, made sketches and critiqued Benson’s work.



An aspiring artist during high school, Matthews came to admire Thomas Hart Benton when he read Benton’s autobiography *An Artist in America*.

“Benton and Burkhart are long dead, but Pat Mooney, Ed Hoffman, and I survive, and we are connected in that our lives have briefly intersected in this small drama of influences centered upon a book written and published by one (man), over fifty years ago, and then later annotated and scrawled upon by another man a decade or so later. These are the intersections reflective of what we variously are and what we think, do and judge worthwhile ...Benton’s energetic autobiography with Burkhart’s own particular energy poured into it. Indeed what a vessel is this! For Burkhart was inspired by Benton’s gift, and added to, and in various ways conveyed, that inspiration to Pat Mooney, Ed Hoffman and myself. And, now, you.”

He goes on to conclude: “We know the intersections because that’s the only place where we have ever lived; but we don’t know where the roads began or where they will end, because nobody we’ve ever known has ever visited such unimaginable places.”

Sunday Creek Books

After years of collecting, Jack had accumulated an excess of books which were limiting the family from moving freely about their home (literally). Like many book dealers before and since, he made a decision to transition from collecting to officially declaring himself a book dealer with a bricks and mortar location. He and his wife Barbara purchased a small building in Glouster, a few miles from their home near Athens, Ohio.

They first named their business Hockhocking Books, then later changed the name to Sunday Creek Books. The building was small – a single-story 2000-square-foot building which had previously been a saloon. After much restoration work to its deplorable interior, they installed enough shelving and massive tables to store as many as 15,000 books. The store was open only on Saturdays or Sundays between the late 1980s and late 1990s. Barbara would watch the store while Jack travelled about, attending auctions and book sales. “It’s always more fun to hunt books than to sell them,” he’s said many times.

Vestiges of the building’s lively history remained in the form of a back bar, with three original beveled mirrors bracketed by oak pillars. If you stood in a certain spot, you could barely make out the word “Buttermilk” scratched on the surface of the middle mirror. Jack would

learn later that there is a certain stage in the distillation of moonshine whiskey that used to be called buttermilk. “If this old back bar could talk, how many stories it could tell...stories filled with how much bragging, lying and just plain down-home ignorance!”

Apparently the building had a colorful history, and Jack says some of it may even be true. In the past, the building was known to have housed a barber shop and post office as well as a saloon; and neighbors told Jack that at one time there were cockfights and pit bull fights in the basement.

Jack tells a story about a man named Clink Hook, who was a mean drunk, and “one night somebody phoned Sherrif Williams and told him Hook was raising hell – shooting rats, breathing hard, making noise, cussing out Williams , and being a general all-around sort of nuisance. Williams put on his gun belt, walked to the footbridge that crossed the creek, and stopped when Hook cried out from the other side, ‘Henry, don’t take another step!’

“And Henry didn’t take another step, at least not right away. What he did was pull his revolver out and shoot Hook dead. Three times, in fact – right in the brisket before his body could hit the dirt. From what they say, you could have slid an octavo, or maybe a quarto, on Hook’s chest and covered the spread of those three shots.”

In the general disorder of his shop, Jack promised his visitors “the great adventure,” for to him, adventure and predictability are utterly incompatible...in fact deadly enemies. *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* is a book that reminds him of an antiquarian bookstore in which the stock, just as his was, is only partially researched, priced and classified. He comments in his philosophical way: “All that we can be sure of is, what we eventually find will be worth finding and it will be in print. And whoever cannot understand the adventure of all this simply doesn’t know what’s what.”

On many a summer Sunday, book dealers and bibliophiles would gather on the front porch of Jack’s store, swapping book stories and telling lies. The store overlooked the meandering Sunday Creek, and their discourse drifted lazily to the sounds of the nearby creek. Sort of a Saloon Salon of the day.



Of course, folks were there to purchase books, as well. Aldus members Jay Hoster and Ed Hoffman visited many times, leaving with fond memories and interesting books each time. And Bill Rich recalls, “Jack encouraged my first visit, and I have had wonderful times there. I bought from him that first visit (1992) my copy of Lockhart’s *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott*, one of the great literary biographies. This was the 1837-1838 Paris edition, the same years as the Edinburgh firsts, published in English by the Galignanis, four volumes in contemporary binding. These are books I cherish to this day – and Jack sold ‘em to me for \$20.”

When Jack closed shop he sold his inventory to Michigan bookseller Mike Reardon, who operated Books from Hell. (Yes, there’s really a town in Michigan named Hell.) And the striking back bar with “Buttermilk” written on it can now be found in the downstairs bar at Jimmy’s Upstairs in German Village.

“I can recall weeks, even months, of hours spent with dealers over the years, trading old stories as well as old books. And, while I have gotten many treasures from dealers this way — including my first edition of Huckleberry Finn — I have also gotten much that is less tangible. I speak of ideas, gossip, and book lore — rich possessions all.”

— from *Memoirs of a Bookman*

The Internet Awaits

A tad late on the scene, Jack has recently joined the world of internet bookselling, setting up a computer alongside walls of book-filled shelves in his heated garage. His lovely daughter Barbiel

Matthews-Saunders works here listing many of the books he has accumulated over the years on their website, www.jacksoldandrarebooks.com. With a father/teacher such as Jack, she is sure to be successful in furthering Jack’s bookselling business and in a career as a bookseller, when she’s ready to strike out on her own. Not one to slow down since “retiring,” Jack is still hard at work, now primarily collecting and organizing his works into even more volumes for publication.



Barbiel Matthews-Saunders

And in another intersectional twist, Barbiel is a gifted artist, following her father’s (sidelined) ambition to become an artist. Many of her colorful canvases are hung on the walls of her parent’s home. And one of her illustrations — the image of the female Sphinx wearing dark glasses -- graces the front cover of her father’s book, *Interview with the Sphinx* (Personville Press).

If this article has inspired you to read some of Jack’s books you can find them at most used-book stores and on the ‘net. Aldus-member book dealers might carry some of the titles mentioned above; or you can search for all Jack’s books at www.vialibri.com.

(Jack’s Lexicon on next page)



Ghostly Populations

Several years ago, long-time Matthews admirer Robert Nagle approached Jack about creating an official Jack Matthews website. It happened, and the site was named www.ghostlypopulations.com, after one of Jack’s early books.

The site is extremely well-organized and fun to explore. In addition, Robert has converted many of Jack’s books to eBook form, and has recently recorded Jack’s comic philosophical play, *Interview With a Sphinx*, with actors reading the various parts; it will soon be available as an eBook.

The site also includes Jack reading his short story “Girl at the Window,” and you can also listen to many audio interviews. There are study and discussion guides of some of his books, and best of all, the site directs you to places where all these items can be downloaded in e-format.



A Jack Matthews Lexicon

Jack loves wordplay—an inveiglement that often leads to delightful circumlocutions and lengthy textual ramblings.

In reading Jack’s essays on book collecting, one might be reminded of Lewis Carroll’s “Jabberwocky” and *Through the Looking-Glass*. Carroll is credited for originating fantastical words by combining common words into invented words, a practice called “portmanteau,” which literally means folding or blending two things (in this case, words) together.

Here’s a list of both descriptive phrases and a few of Jack’s portmanteau creations you will stumble upon in his book collecting books:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| refracted kaleidoscopically | concinnity | centrifugation |
| powerful anonymity | panpsychistic | stridulous |
| pulsilate animation | esemplastic | nerdy grumpus |
| antecedent influences | sybaritic dalliance (wasting time) | mystective fiction |
| ephemeral neologism | synthesis of the dialectic extremes | chronocentrism |
| refracted kaleidoscopically | grandiose abstractions | recondite terminology |
| heuristically | powerful anonymity | terminal desuetude |
| inexplicable epistemological felecity | pulsatile animation | aqua vital art (whiskey) |
| ephemeral neologism | antecedent influences | broken, pachydermous asphalt |

The Genealogy of Jackalopes Subject of Last September’s (last-minute) Program

Last September, Aldus experienced “a first”: the inaugural speaker for our autumn programming, Steven Gertz, webmaster for Booktryst, experienced a serious health problem on his morning flight from Los Angeles to Columbus and was unable to complete his trip here.



Rachel Waymel came to our rescue. Rachel is a doctoral student at Ohio State. She had previously prepared a fantastic paper about woodcuts and jackalopes and had been working on the material for presentation in her

History of the Book class. She was ready, willing, and eager to step in to present her program to Aldus.

The name *jackalope* is a portmanteau (see *Jack’s Lexicon above*) of jack rabbit and antelope, two denizens of the old West. It’s also been called antelabbit; deerbunnie; and stagbunny. It is said that jackalopes first entered the American slanguage in the early 1800s,

Those who have traveled in the American west might remember seeing images of horned rabbits staring back at them from glossy picture postcards at roadside attractions. Or mounted on the wall of a taxidermist’s shop.

But Rachel told us that similar creatures have been recognized for centuries throughout Europe, and she showed us images from early printed books (*right*), woodcut illustrations, and artworks dating back at least to the fifteenth century. The American jackalope appears to have numerous European cousins: the German *skvader*, Bavarian *wolpertinger*, and Thuringian *rasselbock*. In Sweden, a related species is called the *skvader*.



She told us that it’s been speculated that these antlered rabbits really exist, but are possibly bunnies who have been infected with tumors caused by a papilloma viral infection which causes horn-like growths on their heads. This same virus causes human warts.



But in the meantime, jackalopes continue to be the subject of research, speculation — and sometimes practical jokes. Thanks, Rachel, for your wonderfully researched talk. (We hope you received an “A” for your efforts. You earned it!)

