



Aldus Society Notes

Fall 2024

Volume 24, No. 3

Aldus Society Receives Grant from Ohio Humanities Council

In August, we learned that our application for a grant from the Ohio Humanities Council (OHC) was successful. The Aldus Board applied for support for our 2024-2025 Speaker Series and received \$3,000. We will use this to pay honoraria and travel expenses for the wonderful folks we have lined up for this program year. Our goal is twofold: first, to help Aldus recover from the financial difficulties imposed by the pandemic, and second, to expand our outreach to the broader Central Ohio community. This year's fantastic line-up of speakers is certain to help us with both goals. The measure of success will be increased attendance and membership. So please consider inviting a friend to join you every time you attend!

Program Recap: Madison Good on the Bookbindings of Margaret Armstrong

May 9, 2024

Madison Good, of OSU's Thompson Library Special Collections, presented a talk on the late 19th and early 20th century book cover designer and illustrator, Margaret Armstrong, one of the most recognized and celebrated book artists of her time. Ms. Good discussed Armstrong's career, highlights of her work, and showed slides of many beautiful Armstrong books held in the Special Collections. She also gave a fascinating history of the development of decorative publisher's cloth bindings throughout the 19th century.

Madison Good's talk (photos below)



Aldus Society Meetings

*Regular meetings of the Aldus Society are held at 7:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month between September and May. Meetings are held at **Thurber Center, 91 Jefferson Avenue, Columbus, Ohio** (unless otherwise announced). Socializing at 7:00 p.m. Free parking on Jefferson or behind Thurber House and at State Auto rear parking lot (between 11th St. and Washington).*

Aldus Society Programs 2024-2025

The Aldus Society

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Thursday, September 12th, 2024: Dan Sinykin

Dan Sinykin will speak about his well-received book *Big Fiction*, examining how changes in the publishing industry have affected fiction, literary form, and what it means to be an author.

Thursday, October 10th, 2024: Angus Fletcher

Angus Fletcher, professor of story science at Ohio State's Project Narrative, combines neurology and literary analysis to explore the psychological effects of different narrative technologies.

Thursday, November 14th, 2024: Jennifer Weinbrecht

Jennifer Weinbrecht, owner of the only store dedicated exclusively to books by and about Jane Austen, will speak on the life and legacy of the eighteenth century novelist.

December TBD, 2024: Holiday Party

Date to be announced.

Thursday, January 9th, 2025: Aldus Collects

Join us for Aldus Collects!

Thursday, February 13th, 2025: Roger Jerome

Roger Jerome will present "Dickens in Ohio." Few people know that the great novelist visited most parts of Ohio in 1842 and wrote about it. "American Notes for..." Roger has studied his travels in detail and promises original details.

Thursday, March 13th, 2025: Alan Farmer

Alan Farmer will build on recent advances in estimating the numbers of lost books to consider how lost books might reshape our view of the early modern English book trade and the cultural history of England from the mid-16th to the mid-17th century.

Thursday, April 10th, 2025: Rhiannon Knol

Rhiannon Knol will speak about the role wrong ideas have played in Renaissance and early modern science, focusing on the writings of Aristotle, Christopher Columbus, and Athanasius Kircher—and reactions by their readers, from Galileo and Harvey to Sor Juana de la Cruz—and on the ongoing negotiation of authority, empiricism, and imagination in scientific and philosophical discourse.

Thursday, May 22nd, 2025: Kari Gunter-Seymour

Kari Gunter-Seymour, Poet Laureate of Ohio, is the featured speaker for the May 2025 program.

Saturday Spotlight Recap: “When This You See, Remember Me: Early American Photographic Portraits”

The OSU Libraries RBML Saturday Spotlight was presented Saturday, April 6, 2024 and was curated by Kate Shannon, associate professor in the Department of Art.

A collection of photographic portraits from the Rare Book & Manuscripts Library’s (RBML) Floyd and Marion Rinhart Collection showcased one-of-a-kind cased daguerreotypes, ambrotypes, and tintypes, providing a glimpse into American life during the 19th century and the infancy of photography.



Upcoming Saturday Spotlights: OSU Libraries Rare Books & Manuscripts Library

All Saturday Spotlights are from 10:00-12:00 in the Thompson Special Collections Reading Room (Thompson 105).

Fall 2024:

September 28

Mythical creatures, curated by Lauren Cowell

November 16

Women’s health, curated by Genevieve Berendt and Michela Bertossa

Spring 2025:

February 22

Clerk’s Press, curated by Clare Simmons

April 5

Cheese, curated by Leslie Lockett

CONVERSE FREELY.
OPAQUE THOUGHTS
MIGHT MAKE
MEANINGFUL
UTTERANCES.
NOURISH
INTELLECTUAL
CURIOSITY BY
ASKING QUESTIONS
TO
INVESTIGATE
OPEN
NON SEQUITURS.

C. Mehrl Bennett
May 2, 2024

Plan for the Future

By Paul Watkins

Upon rising from my bed some weeks ago, waiting for the pain to subside and blood to circulate, I realized I was old—very old.

It was time to plan for that next stage in life, i.e., the afterlife. I turned to a man who had dedicated four decades examining this perplexity and had written extensively about his findings. Here is what could be considered Mark Twain's Step No. 1 for the afterlife.

Etiquette for the Afterlife

(Abridged)

By Mark Twain

In hell, it is not good form to refer, even unostentatiously, to your relatives in heaven, if persons are present who have none there.

Upon arrival in heaven do not speak to St. Peter until spoken to. It is not your place to begin.

Do not begin any remark with "Say." It is vulgar. Call him "Hochwohlgeborene."

To *start* with. After that, say "sir."

Wait patiently in the queue till it comes your turn to apply for a ticket. Do not look bored, and don't scratch your shin with your other foot.

When applying for a ticket, avoid trying to make conversation. St. Peter is hard-worked and has no time for conversation. If you *must* talk, let the weather alone. St. Peter cares not a damn for the weather. And don't ask him what time the 4:30 goes; there aren't any trains in heaven, except the through-trains for the other place, and the less information you get about them, the better for you.

Don't tell him you used to have an uncle named after him, "maybe you have met him." He is tired of that.

You can ask him for his autograph—there is no harm in that—but be careful and don't remark that it is one of the penalties of greatness. He has heard *that* before.

Do not try to show off. St. Peter dislikes it. The simpler you are dressed, the better it will please him. He cannot abide showy costumes. Above all things, avoid *over*-dressing. A pair of spurs and a fig-leaf is a plenty.

Do not try to Kodak him. Hell is full of people who have made that mistake.

If you get in—if you get in—don't tip him. That is publicly. Don't *hand* it to him, just leave a quarter on the bench by him, let on you forgot it. If he bites it to see if it is good, you are not to seem to notice it.

Leave your dog outside. Heaven goes by favor. If it went by merit, you would stay out and the dog would

go in.

Always observe the forms of etiquette. Whenever you meet the redeemed, pay no heed unless they salute; but always when you meet angels, uncover and make a bow.

When you meet a friend, don't volunteer to call on the rest of the family; it could be embarrassing. Just wait. If the man forgets to invite you, or casually remarks that the family are off on vacation, drop the matter right there, don't say a word. You can rely upon it the family are where they don't need any snowshoes.

Be very *careful* about etiquette when invited to dinner. For evening dress, leave off your spurs.

Angels are in a class by themselves, and much higher than you. Do not try to look like an angel; it will not deceive.

By and by, if you behave, they will give you a halo. The most of them are flimsy and will not wear; but if you are good you will get one with a rubber tire.

neck & fog

speaks a snuggled skull a
glottis gate **■** sinks in mud

published was a knife

—John M. Bennett

Winter Wears Me

D o w n

Lake effect

shears glass nostrils

A walkway mirrored in **ice**

reflects a tree,

Heavy with snow...

C r a c k

... *i n g*

C. Mehrl Bennett

2024

Glimpset Groups: Did Aldus Invent Something (Besides *Italic Type*)?

By Nancy Campbell

There are many types of writing groups—perhaps you're in one. Some are for aspiring writers who critique each other's work. Some are classmates who respond to a prompt and all have different statements on the same topic.

Two writing groups, both made up of Aldus Society members, write Glimpsets.

A Glimpset, according to Emerson Gilbert, who coined the term, is “a brief reflection or short story of one of life's moments. Just a glimpse, a snippet, of the past or the present.”

In 2015, a group of men, all Aldus members, started meeting to write Glimpsets together, read them, and then have lunch. Emerson and George Bauman described the group in an article in this newsletter in 2021 (on page 15 of [Aldus-Newsletter-Spring-2021-WEB2352551.pdf](#) ([aldussociety.com](#))).

The group was started by Emerson and Tony Clark, who shared their interests in genealogy and family history over lunch. Then George joined, followed by Geoff Smith and Don Rice. The group met at a room at the Upper Arlington Library, where they would visit and then spend 20 minutes writing a brief story of their past.

With a time limit of 20 minutes, the only sounds were the “scraping of Geoff's pencil and the tappity-tap on keyboards” along with the timekeeper's reminders of how much time was left. Then they would take turns reading their Glimpsets. There were no suggestions for improvements, just appreciation from the listeners.

When they were done, they walked across Tremont Road and had lunch at the Chef-O-Nette diner, each ordering a sandwich and George Fries (which are overcooked French fries, according to the article).

The First Spin-Off

Women members of Aldus had been enjoying quarterly lunch get-togethers for years, but in 2020, when the pandemic forced the termination of that tradition, Pat Groseck started the monthly outdoor “meet-ups” in Thompson Park. By 2022, the women's meet-ups continued indoors. (Aldus members receive monthly email invitations.)

Taking a cue from the men's Glimpset group, some of the women decided to try the concept. A meeting on the back porch at Brenda Allinger's home in 2021 was the start.

The guidelines for the women's group differ from the men's. With five regular members, the women meet bimonthly at a member's home on Saturdays from 1 to 3. Food is not involved, but visiting, appreciation, and joy are always present.

Karen Robinson, who taught writing and communication to adult students for decades, is the coordinator. At first, she offered a list of writing prompts which had worked well for her students, but this group already had inspiration. We have written and read to each other about memories of childhood, the death of a husband, something we were mad about yesterday, visual poems, memories of early marriage, what we see from our favorite chair, and acrostic poems from an inspiring word.

“Everyone writes ahead of time for 20 minutes, give or take a few minutes,” said Karen. “Writing at home before the meeting allows people to edit and re-edit.”

“It's fascinating to hear the variety of topics and writing styles people are inspired to create,” said Lois Smith. “Everyone brings their own personal experience and expertise.”

Would You Like to Be in a Glimpset Group?

Current group members have different opinions on whether groups should be enlarged. Some say yes. Others say no, as long as the group is of the current size.

If you are interested in this type of bibliofellowship (that is, socializing with people who also like books), the best plan is to start your own Glimpset group.

Find four to six friends (or acquaintances, if you want to know them better) and suggest a meeting. It takes trust to share family stories, attempts at humor, personal history, recent thoughts, and adventurous stabs at new thoughts.

Tony Clark recommends a small group. “I feel three to five people represents a group that functions effectively time-wise. After story time is over, we have lunch together and enjoy our camaraderie,” he said.

Current members meet at different intervals—the men used to meet monthly, now occasionally; the women meet bimonthly. Locations can be at a meeting room at a library or coffee shop or a member's home. Meetings with food? Yes or no, it's the group's choice. Meeting times can be midday on weekdays, or Saturdays 1 to 3 p.m., or whenever suits your group.

What Are the Benefits of a Glimpset Group?

- **Cathy Bennett:** “The process of writing a short glimpse of some creative nugget from our mind is a wonderful way to feel connected, emotionally and intellectually.”
- **George Cowmeadow Bauman:** “Glimpset has been a joy, an inspiration, and a very productive writing activity. And the pleasure of meeting regularly with

these guys, was something to look forward to, especially when we followed up with lunch at the Chef-O-Nette.”

- **Tricia Herban:** “Participating in the group helps me get to know myself and the others better. I look forward to the gatherings as a truly bright spot on my calendar.”
- **Emerson Gilbert:** “It’s a chance to develop lasting friendships and spontaneous writing.”
- **Lois Smith:** “Above all, Glimpsets is fun!”

You could be a part of a Glimpsset group too. Reach out and ask your bookish friends if they would like to form a group. You get to know people better, you get to write down and share your thoughts and memories, you get to see and enjoy friends on a regular basis—no menu-planning or house-cleaning required—just a chance to record your thoughts and share them with an appreciative audience.

A Literary Jaunt A Day Immersed in Burnsiana

By Donald Tunnicliff Rice

I first became aware of Rabbie Burns’s omnipresence in Ayrshire a few years ago while wandering through the Burns Mall in the center of Kilmarnock, a city of some 47,000 souls twenty-two miles southwest of Glasgow. A plaque on an interior wall caught my eye. It stated that it—the plaque—was erected in July 1947 to “mark the site of the Printing Office from which the First Edition of the Poems of Robert Burns was published July 17, 1786.” John Wilson, printer of the book, had his shop in the Star Inn Close on Waterloo Street. Presumably that building (or a later building on that site) was among the many structures torn down to make way for the mall.



(Above) The cottage in which Robert Burns was born. The lighted windows look out of the two rooms where the family lived. The two rooms to the right are the byre (where livestock were kept) and the barn (for storing equipment and feed).
(From a painting by Monro S. Orr)



John Wilson’s Printing Office. (From Thomas Smellie’s *Sketches of Old Kilmarnock*; by permission of East Ayrshire Leisure / East Ayrshire Council)



The plaque is protected behind a tamper-proof insert in the wall to protect it from vandals or, more probably, souvenir hunters.



The first poem in the book was “Twa Dogs.” Here they are outside the Burns Mall in Kilmarnock, discussing the world of 1785.

Those who celebrate Burns's life and poetry will be quite familiar with the Kilmarnock edition of *Poems: Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*. The original price was three shillings, and the entire edition of 612 copies sold out in a couple of months. This would seem pretty good for a book of dialect poetry, but the truth is two-thirds were purchased as advance copies by friends. Well, the friends knew what they were doing, and the price has been going up ever since. In 2019 a copy sold at Christie's for £56,250 (\$71,555 at the current exchange rate).

I also learned that day that the cottage in which Burns was born was accessible from Kilmarnock by local coach, but it was getting late and I had to catch a train back to Glasgow. I made up my mind that if I returned to the area I would arrange my time to include a visit to the cottage—and that's exactly what happened this past October.

In Kilmarnock I caught the 9:25 #4 bus to Ayr, the county seat, getting off at the town hall, and then got on the 10:18 #316 toward Dunure, getting off in the village of Alloway across the street from the cottage. I knew exactly what buses to take because I'd asked Mr. Google a couple of weeks earlier while still in Columbus and then carried the printout with me. The easy access to such information has made travel a lot less tiresome.

Burns's cottage, in which he was born on January 25th, 1759, is a long, low clay structure with a thatched roof built just two years earlier by his father's own hands. He would also have thatched the roof, professional thatchers being nonexistent at that time. That such a rude house has lasted this long in any state at all is probably due to the

fact that for much of the nineteenth century it served as a common alehouse—a development that Burns himself would have heartily approved—and the owner quite naturally wanted to keep it as intact as possible. When John Keats visited in 1818, he had a few drinks and experienced a sense of connection with Burns, making sure while there to write a sonnet in his homage. By the 1890s using a national shrine as an alehouse was considered unseemly, and the cottage was purchased by the Burns Monument Trust and transformed into a romanticized version of a mid-eighteenth-century dwelling. The many changes that occurred over the years have caused some to question if it could be considered the same house in which Burns was born. But as one writer responded in 1900, "it may be claimed that we have a considerable fragment of it; nay, that we have the essential parts of it."

More refurbishments occurred in the 1990s, and a Historic Building Survey following the cottage's (inevitable) acquisition by the National Trust for Scotland in 2008 showed that serious structural and conservatorial issues had compromised "the intentions of recreating the original cottage using traditional materials based on academic research and advice." Nonetheless, it remains a popular site for tourists, very few of whom are concerned with archaeological niceties, and I found it a good place to start on my Robert Burns experience in Alloway.*

From the cottage one follows a pedestrian walkway called Poet's Path—a pleasant ten-minute stroll—to



Interior of the cottage, considerably brighter and cheerier than it would have been back in the day. (Courtesy Scottish Heritage)

the Robert Burns Museum. Along the way there are a number of sculptures inspired by Burns's poems and a series of standalone weathervanes illustrating scenes from "Tam o' Shanter."



A larger-than-life wicker sculpture of Tam o' Shanter racing for the Brig o' Doon.



A critical moment in "Tam o' Shanter."

The museum is a modern building with a large gallery, darkened to protect the many artifacts from the deleterious effects of bright lights. (Such museums used to frustrate me terribly until I had my cataracts removed.) In all it contains more than 5,000 items related to Burns, including a pair of his darned socks. I spent some time moseying through it. It was in here that I realized how nearly total was my ignorance of Burns's life and character. If you're surprised to learn that he fathered thirteen children (the first of which was out of wedlock and eventually followed by another seven such children), that he lived in near poverty most of his life, and that he died at the early age of thirty-seven, you should do as I did on my return and read one of his biographies. I discovered, among other things, that he was much more political than I would have guessed, finding both the French and American revolutions compatible with his radical bent. He once toasted

George Washington at a dinner, which was something of a risk.

After lunch in the museum café I walked to the nearby Burns Gardens, site of a seventy-foot-tall classically designed monument to the poet, which opened to the public on July 4, 1823—a so-called *cenotaph* from the Greek for *empty tomb*, Burns having been buried elsewhere. The planning had begun in 1814, less than twenty years after his death—and at a young age—so this clearly indicates the high esteem in which he was held.

The monument is situated on a rise, and the view from the walkway around the circumference of its cella (the central drum structure) is quite stunning, particularly when looking towards the Brig o' Doon, a fifteenth-century bridge over the River Doon that plays an important part in Burns's famous poem, "Tam o' Shanter." The sad fact is that until my visit I'd never read the poem and, therefore, had no idea it had been the source of the show title *Brigadoon*. And had I read it even years earlier before I stepped aboard the famous clipper, *Cutty Sark*, I would have known that the poem was also the source of that name. (My education is riddled with such gaps, but it's fun filling them in.



The Burns Monument.

In addition to crossing the bridge I walked through all the paths in the carefully tended and tree-filled Gardens, making sure to rest a bit on a park bench bearing the sign, "In loving memory of RHONA DAVIDSON a wonderful person," which I'm sure she was.

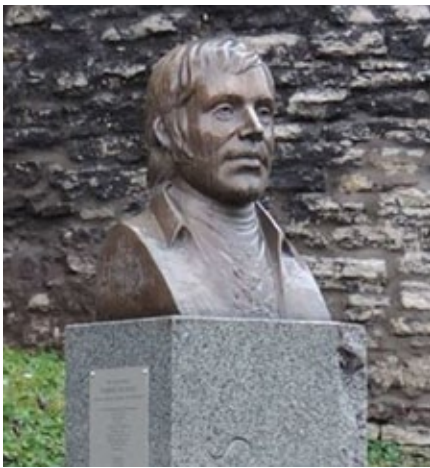
At six feet tall, this mouse didn't look all that tim'rous to me, but children love to take pictures with it.



Sidebar: Alexander Boswell

There would be no Alloway Memorial—at least in its present form—had it not been for Alexander Boswell, the son of Samuel Johnson’s biographer James Boswell. “It was at his suggestion, and by his unwearied efforts,” wrote James Gibson “that Scotland did homage to her National Poet near the place of his birth.” And so it fell to Boswell to have the honor of laying the foundation stone in 1820. I was sure the official opening three years later would have been a gala event, complete with bunting, skirling bagpipes, and maybe even a minor member of the royal family to say a few words. It took some digging to learn that it wasn’t a gala event at all, but a rather somber occasion. It seems that in one of those weird quirks of fate, Boswell, at age forty-seven, had been killed in a duel earlier that year—one of the last Scotsmen to do so.

Sidebar: Monuments to Burns (Source: Wikimedia Commons)



There are more than sixty known statues, busts, and other memorials to Burns around the world—sixteen in the United States alone. All of the rest are in other English-speaking countries but for the one pictured above, which is in Tallinn, the capital of Estonia.

In 1990 a Scottish Club (Šoti Klubi) was founded in Tallinn to celebrate Scottish culture. Among other activities they hold Burns Suppers (complete with haggis), ceilidhs, and even a full Scottish festival. A few years ago they began a program to honor “Scots who have made a difference.” The bust of Burns was their first effort. A more recent bust of Sean Connery, their second. Who knew?



The Gardens are a popular place for weddings. This handsome couple let me take their photo on the Brig o’ Doon. The groom’s kilt, I believe, is a universal tartan unassociated with any clan.

Before returning to Kilmarnock I made another stop at the café for a pot of tea and to buy my son and daughter-in-law a spurtle, the recommended tool for stirring oatmeal, one of their preferred breakfasts these days. Then I traced my steps back to the cottage, remembering to stand on the “wrong” side of the street to catch the bus. It had been one of those long, long days that sometimes occur when you’re in totally new circumstances that require you to remain conscious the whole while—something that can be quite satisfying if the circumstances are pleasurable, and they had been on that day.



A selection of spurtles, all topped with stylized thistles. By tradition they’re held in the right hand and stirred clockwise.

* If you’d like to dig deeper into the story of Burns’s cottage, a good place to start would be *Burns’ Cottage: The Story of the Birthplace of Robert Burns from the feuing of the ground by William Burnes in June 1756 until the present day* by James M’Bain. Glasgow, Bryce, 1904.

Heroes

By Tricia Herban

The first line of the Aeneid is “I sing of arms and the man.” The lines that follow reveal that this is a noble story, elevated by the hero’s challenge to the Goddess Juno. Paradise Lost begins with an invocation to the goddess Urania followed by a statement of the story line. “Of Man’s first disobedience and the fruit of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste brought death into the world and all our woe.” Already we know that there will be an unredeemed fall from grace. Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales begins with a prologue that defines the time of year—spring—and explains that the purpose of the pilgrimage is to visit the shrine of the blessed martyr interred at Canterbury. The group of 29 set off on pilgrimage...” to go seeking out strange strands, to distant shrines well known in sundry lands.” In other words, this microcosm of humanity has set out on a potentially life changing voyage in search of renewal and health.

The classic hero is defined as an Odysseus type going back to Greek mythology. That hero begins as an ordinary person like you and me. But then, he (yes it would be a man for sure) is given a unique challenge that pulls him beyond his world of experience and comfort. At first, however, he rejects this call to adventure. But the supernatural intervenes and he is offered some kind of special power or aid. Convinced by this, he accepts the challenge and is then led to experience a series of physical and mental tests. When he adheres to his values and bests the enemies, he becomes triumphs over the ordeal. This earns him the right to return to his original world, victorious.

To simplify the idea of the hero’s journey: The hero leaves his world of comfort and predictability—the world he understands and in which he knows how to succeed. He takes on unknown challenges. Frequently

he is provided with a mentor or a guide who helps him overcome the transitions and obstacles on his path. In the process, the hero is himself transformed by his experiences and, critically, he survives to tell the story.

Then there are superheroes. Superman, Batman. They exist outside the law and their existence is justified by their transformative goals to do good. Another examples is Robin Hood who stole from the rich and gave to the poor.

These characters are passionate individualists and refuse to be ruled or led by others. They frequently have aliases and the ability to vanish or hide and this is essential to protect their integrity and enable them to accomplish their objectives. They are purely good.

Then there are flawed heroes. These persons act heroically in one aspect of their lives but not in all. Bill Cosby, JFK, Martin Luther King. Their public lives were exemplary, but their personal lives transgressed conventional mores of social behavior.

Heroes are still human and face the possibility of failure. We think of them in the context of their humanity—the same humanity that we have. The tension of motivation affects all human decisions: the risk of self sacrifice versus

the reward of success. All human experiences take place in a context—in the context of the people around us, of people who have influenced our lives. These people may be living or dead, personally known to us or encountered through historic or literary acquaintance.

And most importantly, everybody’s life deserves a story. Every life contains a story. Just as we think of ourselves as ordinary people, yet it is worth considering how we may have acted heroically. It is also worth thinking about the possibility that simply exceeding expectations or even admitting mistakes can be heroic.

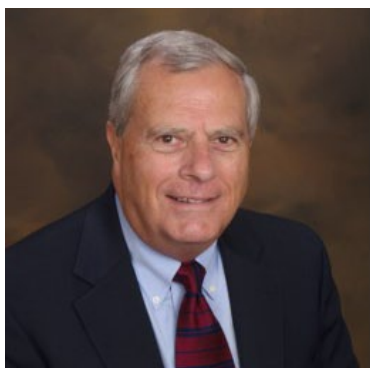
With this framework as preamble, I would like to invite us all to explore the heroic. What it means to us and who we think of as our heroes.

There can be many kinds of heroes.

1. Champion over adversity
driving urge to succeed
has something to prove
overcome personal handicaps
2. Trailblazer
adventure
to uncover new truths
3. Nurturer
to help others
possibly sacrificing himself
4. Martyr/Activist
be an agent of change
willing to die for a greater good
5. Threshold Guardian
Florence Nightingale

Authors in Our Midst: James Tootle

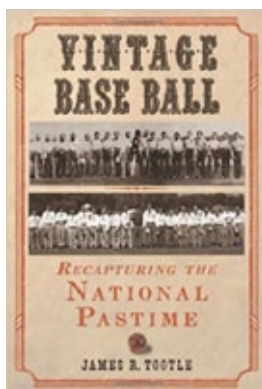
By Emerson Gilbert



Dr. James R. Tootle, retired Assistant Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at The Ohio State University, has a Ph.D. in American History, is an Ohio State alumnus and the Aldus member featured in this issue of *Aldus Society Notes* as the *Author in Our Midst*.

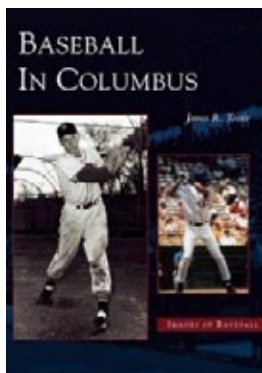
Jim had a twinkle in his eye as he talked about the students he and his wife, Barbie, mentored for over 50 years at The Ohio State University, many of whom gathered at a Homecoming Event in their honor last October. Then he told of his passion for the vintage game of base ball (not baseball).

Jim drew on his years as a vintage base ball player with the Ohio Village Muffins in writing *Vintage Base Ball: Recapturing the National Pastime*, published in 2011 by McFarland & Company. Vintage base ball games, circa 1860, are played in a field (not a stadium), with wood bats and handmade leather balls. Players wear period uniforms and there are no baseball gloves or called balls and strikes.



You may have seen Jim and his team, the Ohio Village Muffins, playing base ball on its home field, Muffin Meadow, on a visit to the historic Ohio Village at the Ohio History Connection.

Jim's book, *Baseball in Columbus*, was published in 2003 by Arcadia Publishing, a leading publisher of local history. His research for this book took him to the Columbus Metropolitan Library, Grandview Heights Public Library, the New York Public Library, the Chicago Public Library and the National Baseball Hall of Fame Library in Cooperstown, N.Y. The book begins with the earliest amateur clubs formed right after the Civil War. It continues with the development of professional teams including Columbus' major league teams of the American Association in the 1880s and '90s and the Negro Leagues teams of the 1920s and '30s and traces the story of Columbus' minor league teams—the Senators, Red Birds, and Jets—up through the recent era of the Clippers.



Used copies of *Baseball in Columbus* are currently available through ABE Books. Both books are available on Amazon.

Jim has published articles and book reviews in *Nine: A Journal of Baseball History and Culture*, and a series of columns in the Thurber House newsletter. He became a member of the Aldus Society over 15 years ago at the invitation of Paul Watkins.

Jim enjoys writing on his screened-in porch, usually on his laptop and iPad. The first draft of any project is often “written” in his head while walking on the Olentangy Bike Path or mowing the lawn.



You may not know that Jim received The Ohio State University Distinguished Service Award in 2012, recognized for “profound changes in the undergraduate student experience and as a constant mentor to student leaders across campus” or that after receiving his Ph.D, he taught a special section of the freshman survey course for student-athletes.

Jim is a board member of the Columbus Historical Society and Chair of its Publications Committee. He writes for the Columbus Historical Society journal, *Columbus History*. Recently, his well-researched article on Hank Gowdy tells of this Columbus native and a hero of the 1914 World Series and the first major league player to volunteer for military service in World War I. He is editor and contributor to the CHS monthly series *Footprints of Columbus* in the *Senior Times*.

In their travels, Jim and Barbie enjoy visiting Presidential Museums, National Parks, and authors' homes. Favorites include Mark Twain, Willa Cather, Washington Irving and Edith Wharton.

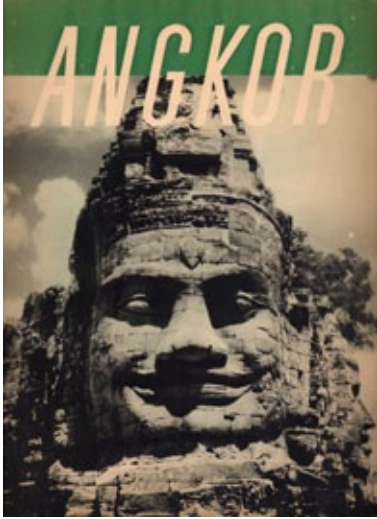
Jim retired in 1999 and continues to write. He is now working on a full-length biography of Hank Gowdy and continues researching the history of the Ohio State baseball program through the years.



Collecting Cambodiana, Part One

By Scott Williams

One of the great cultures on our planet has been the Cambodian nation. They built the largest temple ever—Angkor Wat. And what other ancient culture ever put massive smiling faces on a temple? Their language has the longest written tradition in Southeast Asia. Their national territory at one point was vast—including parts of present-day Malaysia, Thailand, Laos and south Vietnam.



Angkor. A beautiful folio black and white photogravure softcover book of the Angkor Wat ruins published in 1948 by Editions Boy-Landry in Saigon. Photos by Michel Huet.

They would be the dominant power in Southeast Asia from about 100 to 1300 A.D. In the 20th Century, Cambodia's capital Phnom Penh was called *The Paris of the East*—and so it was, up until 1970. I twice visited this unique culture, rather resistant to modernity, at the height of their civil war in 1973. During the tragic 1970s, Cambodia would sadly experience a societal melt down and bequeath to the world a new word: autogenocide.

Preeminent among Cambodians are their “*Aspara*” dancers. In the warm moist atmosphere of Cambodia, the flowing ethereal sounds of a gamelan orchestra with dancing *Asparas* on stage will transport you to another dimension! Yet, the Khmer Rouge would virtually ban dancing along with so many other things. As a result, the day after the Khmer Rouge were kicked out of Phnom Penh by the Vietnamese communist army on January 7, 1979, Cambodians rushed to have an impromptu dance in the Royal compound—*first things first!*—with everyone present crying throughout the performance.

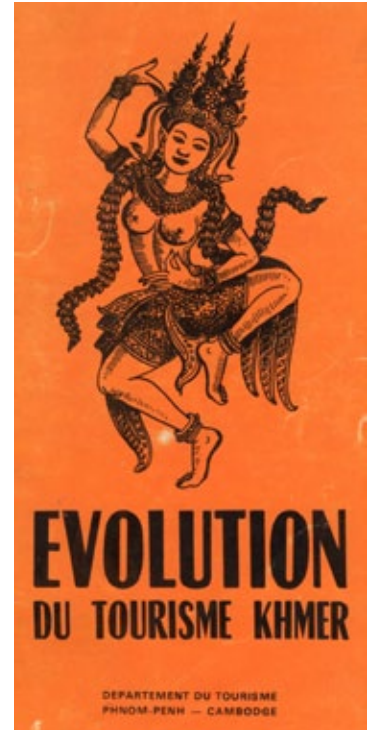
I was returning to Cambodia in July of 1973, flying into the capital of Phnom Penh from Saigon on an old Air Cambodge French Caravelle jet. I carefully chose my window seat on the left side of the rear cabin, behind the wings for a good view. It was the monsoon season, so a thick cloud cover existed. Suddenly, the rear jet engines, which I was sitting just in front of, stopped their roar and my plane literally began dropping out of the air! Breaking through the cloud layer, we quickly

banked sharply to the left at perhaps 1,000 feet above ground level. I was stunned. The view below me was of a vast, flat, rice-growing plain with *thousands* of water-filled bomb craters going right out to the eastern and southern horizons. No time to take a picture, as the plane quickly leveled off and then banked sharply to the right to land at the capital's Pochentong Airport.

The previous March of 1973 in Phnom Penh was, for me, quite an introduction to active warfare. Each night from the top of my government-mandated hotel in downtown Phnom Penh, one of the tallest buildings in the city, I could watch B-52 carpet-bombing explosions on

the horizon looking to the east and south. Each “*box*” (USAF lingo) would eventually shake the hotel. The British journalist, William Shawcross, wrote the book on this matter: *Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambodia*. One night the whole sky was lit up with parachute-flares on the southeast side of the city. In surrounded Phnom Penh, little did I know that the southeast Khmer Rouge forces led by Ta Mok were precariously close to taking the city—many pundits had predicted such unbeknownst to me. The Khmer Rouge communist leaders had decided to take the city that month to humiliate the United States while under its bombing campaign and to prove their superiority over their most-hated enemy—the Vietnamese communists!

A year earlier, I had been in Paris to buy a Citroen 2cv. During my stay I stumbled upon a table at the Sorbonne selling Khmer Rouge propaganda. Wow! I bought one each of their publications and their one postcard available for sale, ha! This was the era of “*FUNK & GRUNK*” with Prince Sihanouk as the head of the Khmer Rouge

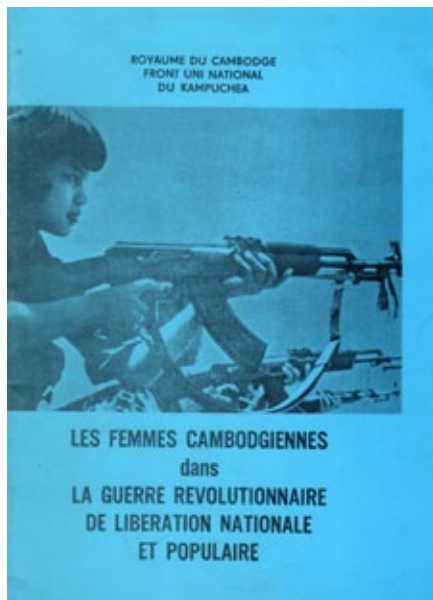


Evolution du Tourisme Khmer. Showing a dancing *Aspara* on the cover, this detailed government statistical report was published in early 1970 just before the coup d'etat and start of the civil war. It predicted a great increase in tourism that was not to happen.

coalition. Those two bureaucratic acronyms would cause much hilarity among youthful Westerners savvy to the era's African American slang word, *funky*.

I would buy more Khmer Rouge propaganda for my collection over time—and one of their chief publishers would be The Peoples Republic of China, their most important ally. Indeed, China literally forced the extremely secretive leadership of the Khmer Rouge to “declare” themselves and create an elected legislative government. This Khmer Rouge legislature, during its one and only meeting, would elect a rubber-plantation worker as the Prime Minister whose name was Pol Pot. International monitors had never heard of the name, but someone would soon recognize him as Saloth Sar, the Phnom Penh high school teacher who had “disappeared” in the 1960s. For cleaning up their international appearance, the Chinese would give Pol Pot in 1977 one of the grandest receptions any nation-state leader ever received in Peking!

How ironic when compared to the way the Khmer Rouge treated the half-dozen or so nations allowed to have an embassy in their capital. It was considered the worst diplomatic assignment on the planet! Embassies were concentrated into a small block of mansions surrounded by barbed wire with guards not permitting



Les Femmes Cambodgiennes. My most intriguing piece of propaganda. The cover image is also used for the postcard I bought in Paris. After learning the history of the Khmer Rouge, I would be stunned by a simple picture found in the front of this 1973 publication (see Madame Khieu Ponnary-et-al image).



Madame Khieu Ponnary-et-al. An image of the secret leaders of the Khmer Rouge likely taken around 1970 up in the northeast tip, dragon's tail, of Cambodia where Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia meet. Khieu Ponnary was married to Saloth Sar (spelled Sor in this image; who would later emerge as Pol Pot, the supreme leader). Ponnary's sister, Khieu Thirith (named Ieng Thirith in this image) was married to Ieng Sary, the Khmer Rouge's Foreign Minister. All four met in Paris in the early 1950s. Their enemies would label them the Pol Pot-Ieng Sary Clique. Nuon Chea wearing over-sized (!) white trousers, would be nick-named Brother Number Two, under Pol Pot who was called Brother Number One. Nuon Chea, due to his mixed racial background, being part Chinese, would tell Saloth Sar that he should become the new secret leader (e.g., secretary) of their 1960 re-constituted communist party. Pol Pot's wife, Khieu Ponnary, would gradually lose her mind as events unfolded!

any exit—other than to-and-from the airport. Food and liquor were scarce and diplomatic communications virtually impossible in the evacuated, almost empty, capital.

Collecting print-material during my two short stays in Phnom Penh was fascinating. This was the era of General Lon Nol and the Khmer Republic. Lon Nol was as bad as Pol Pot, in so many ways. But give Lon Nol credit for saving my life! Afterall, he ordered his American helicopters to drop magic colored sand (fairy dust?) in a circle around the capital to protect it from the enemy. There were plenty of government-overseen publications in French, all with a focus on the war. I sneaked out of my hotel after curfew one night to collect propaganda posters! An older Cambodian military police officer snuck up behind me as I worked to remove one. He was angry, of course!

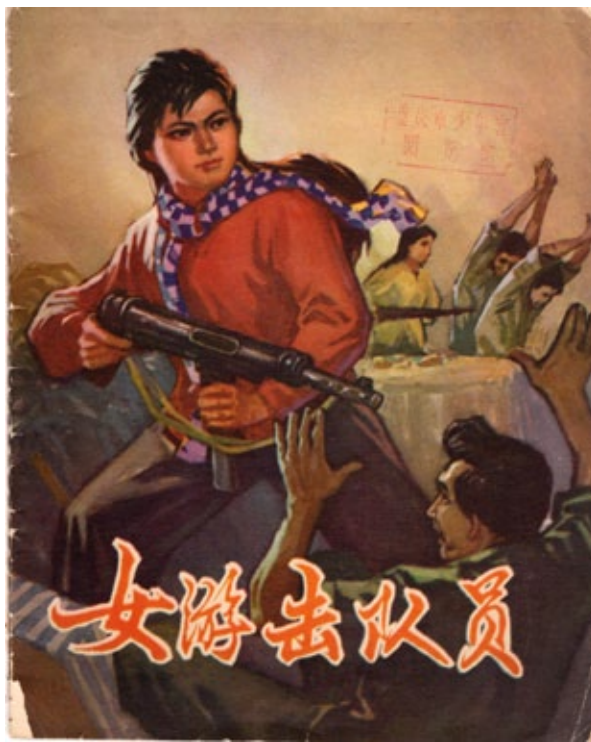
Speaking some French, and being an American, I made friends with him and he let me keep my haul—I am still grateful to him.

Poor Lon Nol, *the black papa*, as he liked to be known, was in over his head. His military orders destroyed his army whose generals sold U.S. equipment to the Khmer Rouge and pocketed the pay of their ghost troops. He would sit crying in meetings with American military and diplomatic leaders who brought bad news. His most important

advisor was his astrologer.

The insanity of war and politics, as applied to Cambodia, was evident by the USSR deciding to recognize General Lon Nol's, American-backed, right-wing government, and not the Khmer Rouge. In March of 1970 Sihanouk was in Moscow when Lon Nol's coup d'état occurred. Sihanouk flew off to Peking for exile. The Soviets were miffed at Sihanouk's decision given the Sino-Soviet split. So, I visited the USSR embassy in downtown Phnom Penh. There was a broken chair, knocked over, and debris around its *open* front door. I simply walked in saying "Bonjour, Bonjour?" A young handsome Russian *apparatchik* man in suit and tie greeted me and then gave me a beautiful photo book on Siberia after learning I had done the Trans-Siberian. I also got one of their mimeographed *Novosti Agence de Presse Annonce* daily press releases covering one day's news about the USSR. But that front door? Apologizing to me, the diplomat informed me that there was trouble with their Cambodian workers. And that door's story gets stranger! When the Khmer Rouge took Phnom Penh on April 17, 1975, all foreigners were gathered and put into the French embassy compound. All but the Soviets who refused to come out of their embassy, demanding that the Khmer Rouge allow them to remain in it as fellow communists. The Khmer Rouge response was to blow open the metal door with a rocket propelled grenade (RPG). The Soviet diplomats were then marched to the French embassy, where, days later, a large truck convoy would depart to dump all the foreigners on the Thai border.

I always enjoyed just walking around in my travels. In Phnom Penh,



***The Female Guerrillas.* A likely true story told in my pamphlet, *Les Femmes Cambodgiennes*, became a Chinese comic/graphic novel. Plot: a bunch of young Cambodian women running a restaurant in the countryside capture a bunch of Lon Nol troops through trickery.**



***Cambodian Proverbs.* A palm leaf manuscript! A prized item in my collection.**

I was lucky to come upon the outdoor bookstore for Cambodia's leading Buddhist society, the Institut Bouddhique, which the French helped to found. I eagerly snapped up small pamphlets in French, mostly about their Theravada-brand of Buddhism. Each booklet I bought was then stamped with their new "Republican—Buddhist Institute" government seal. Curious, and then amazed, I discovered that they had their older seals present for Sihanouk's Royal Government and even the former French Colony! I ordered those seals to also be stamped into my booklets. Best of all, they had two "traditional" Cambodian publications for sale. One on *Cambodian Proverbs*, in English, and the other on *La Fondation de Phnom Penh d'après La Chronique Khmère* as translated to French by Georges Coedès, one of France's famed historians and archaeologists on Cambodia. Both "books" were published in the mountain resort of Bokor with stiff, rectangular-cut, sheets of dried palm (?) leaves and a hole in the center for a cord to bind it all together (a form of binding found in Asia). One must carefully move each delicate "leaf" along the cord to turn each page. More than a few of the proverbs translated to English don't make sense! And one proverb is rather troubling given the disaster of Cambodia—"If you are eager to be instructed, kill the teacher; if you want to get fruits and flower, burn the stump." Following these proverbs one finds an added text! It is an anti-French Colony item titled "Kram Nguy Says" with two-line phrases mostly complaining about taxes. I paid five cents each for these two traditional books.

Elsewhere in Phnom Penh, I would buy *A Collection of Cambodian Folk Tales in Simple English* by Men-Riem that I possibly purchased at Doch-Chhoeun's Book-Store, who



(Above) *Buddha Poster*. This 1973 Khmer Republic propaganda poster shows attacking Vietnamese communist forces as ancient enemies depicted in the Hindu Ramayana epic. The goddess is using her hair to drown the enemy under a meditating Khmer monk, if not the Buddha himself.



(Left) *Fighting Poster*. All of the 1973 Khmer Republic propaganda posters that I collected featured only Vietnamese communist army forces being destroyed, rather than the unmentionable Khmer Rouge forces for whom the Republic's army was mostly fighting. One can see the North Vietnamese army's famous pith helmet and a "Ho Chi Minh" slipper in this illustration. The other posters that I collected are too gruesome—using photos of heaps of dead bodies.



L'Armée. This was a glossy magazine I picked up in 1973 devoted to the Khmer Republic's military. The cover clearly shows an army that included both children and seniors. On page 3 is an editorial by the (disinformation) spokesperson for the Republican army who was the butt of many Western jokes. The poor Colonel's name was Am Rong ("am wrong").

is listed as publisher, but with no date assigned (probably around 1971). Cornell University holds a 1962 (first?) edition with the book being re-published in Phnom Penh as recently as 2002. My Doch-Choeun Book-Store copy put a quote by Booker T. Washington on its back cover—*how surprising!*

One day in the capital, I entered the Tourism Office of the three-year-old Khmer Republic. It was on the second floor of a big building. Only one person was there, a middle-aged Cambodian woman with heavy make-up, a Western hair-do, and beautiful traditional clothing. I was able to walk out with many free posters! However, before I departed, I found myself in a surreal conversation with her. I casually asked where the train station was (always a good bet for picking up print souvenirs). She kept telling me it was near a town down Highway 4 called Kompong Speu. *Ou est la gare? vs. Ou est la guerre?* I would never visit either location. The train station was a real miss as it was where Pol Pot (Saloth Sar) and friends secretly met in 1960 to form their "new" communist party of Cambodia. As for Kompong Speu, it is close to where American AP journalist Kate Webb was captured on April 7, 1971. Her book, *On the Other Side*, is a fascinating, crazy, fast-paced read! She was lucky to be captured by Vietnamese communist troops in the area as all the foreign journalists captured by the Khmer Rouge never came back.

So concludes Part One of my story, *Collecting Cambodiana*. In Part II we learn about others Collecting Cambodiana as I continue my adventure through Cambodia.

(Editor's note: Part 2 will appear in the January 2025 winter issue.)

