The Aldus Society

Celebrating Books!

Aldus Society Notes

Winter 2026 Volume 26, No. 1

Remembering Aldus Founder, Long-Time Member, and Dear Friend Genie Hoster

The Aldus Society is dismayed and saddened to hear of the death of one of our founders and long-time members, Genie Hoster. Genie served as president of Aldus from 2009 to 2012. In this issue, her article on Long's Bookstore is part of her research on the history of bookstores in Columbus. The Aldus Society sends deepest condolences to Genie's husband, Jay Hoster.

September 2025 Program Recap: Short Talks on New Book History Research by Ohio State English PhDs

On September 11, the presentations included **Jessica Crabtree** on an 8th-century manuscript in Ohio; **Sabrina Durso** on James Thurber's vision loss; **Eileen A. Horansky** on heraldry, print, and authorship in sixteenth-century London; **Shaun Russell** on the evolution of Shakespeare's sonnets in print; and **Samantha Trzinski** on marginalia in a copy of *The Mysteries of Udolpho.*

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).*

The Aldus Society

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Aldus Society Notes is published three times a year. For article ideas and submissions contact the Editorial Team, Harry Campbell, at hhcampbell25@gmail.com or 614-284-0889.

Newsletter deadlines are August 1st, December 1st, and April 1st.

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Field Trip to MLK Jr. Branch Library

On September 20 several Aldus members were treated to a guided tour of the Martin Luther King Jr. branch (1467 E. Long St.) of the Columbus Metropolitan Library. The outing was organized by Jolie Braun. It's worth a trip just to experience the space!

Led by branch manager Chanie Scott, this event included a tour of the building (completed in 2018) as well as the branch's African artifact and art collection.

October 2025 Program Recap: Dr. Sarah Peters Kernan on Manuscript Recipe Books in Early Modern Europe

On October 9th Dr. Kernan discussed recipe books from the early modern period (1500-1800). These manuscripts containing culinary, medical, cosmetic, and household recipes include valuable clues about their owners and the contexts in which they collected, composed, and transmitted this information. Dr. Kernan presented on her 2024 collected volume on culinary recipe books co-edited with Helga Müllneritsch, titled *Culinary Texts in Context, 1500–1800: Manuscript Recipe Books in Early Modern Europe.*

She provided a fresh perspective on early modern recipe books by placing them within a wider European context, including regions like Catalonia, Finland, French, and German-speaking regions, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and England. By considering a large number of recipe books produced throughout Europe, the materiality of these books, and the inclusion of specific ingredients and preparations in their recipes, Dr. Kernan identified several patterns of manuscript creation, recipe collection, and international recipe transmission.

Aldus Society Notes, Volume 26, No. 1 was published in January 2026.
Body copy is set in Garamond, and headlines are set in Franklin Gothic.

November 2025 Program Recap: Logan Elm Press

By Nancy Campbell

I was very glad to attend the recent Aldus program of Ann Woods and Bob Tauber speaking about the "Logan Elm Press and the Art of the Book."

The November 6 presentation was suggested by Ann Alaia Woods, a world-renowned calligrapher, paper-marbler, and book artist. Ann was a frequent collaborator with Bob Tauber and the Logan Elm Press and could certainly have done the presentation on her own, using her extensive collection of Logan Elm Press books. But it was fortunate that Bob was able to make the trip from Atlanta, where he lives now.

The Logan Elm Press had two active lives, the first of which ran from 1978 to 1993, when it was part of the Art Education program at OSU. Its first location was in the university's former laundry building on 18th Avenue, near the center of campus activity. It moved to a former school building on Kinnear Road where Art faculty members had studios, including Sid Chafetz, who was a friend, mentor, and collaborator with Bob and the Logan Elm Press.

My first memory of the Logan Elm Press was in 1990 when there was a reading of *A Letter of Columbus* in a large meeting room in the Thompson Library. The reader that night was the poet and OSU professor David Citino, who had provided a new poetic version of the letter's text.

A Letter of Columbus was a huge success for the Logan Elm Press but in the early 1990s, budget cuts at the university forced its closing. I remember going to the Press's closing reception, which was a subdued affair.

To everyone's surprise and delight, Chef Hubert, subject of LEP's *Such Sensations*, stands to introduce himself, and to thank Bob for creating such a beautiful book.

A decade later, the director of the University Libraries, Joe Branin, had the idea of reviving the Logan Elm Press. He saw it as a complement to the university's vast collection of books and endless access to digital resources. He thought that increasing awareness of the book arts – from papermaking to publishing – would be a way to set the OSU Libraries apart from other research libraries.

So, the Logan Elm Press was reborn in the early 2000s. In 2006, they published an "Apology for Printers," a reprint of a Benjamin Franklin essay on the

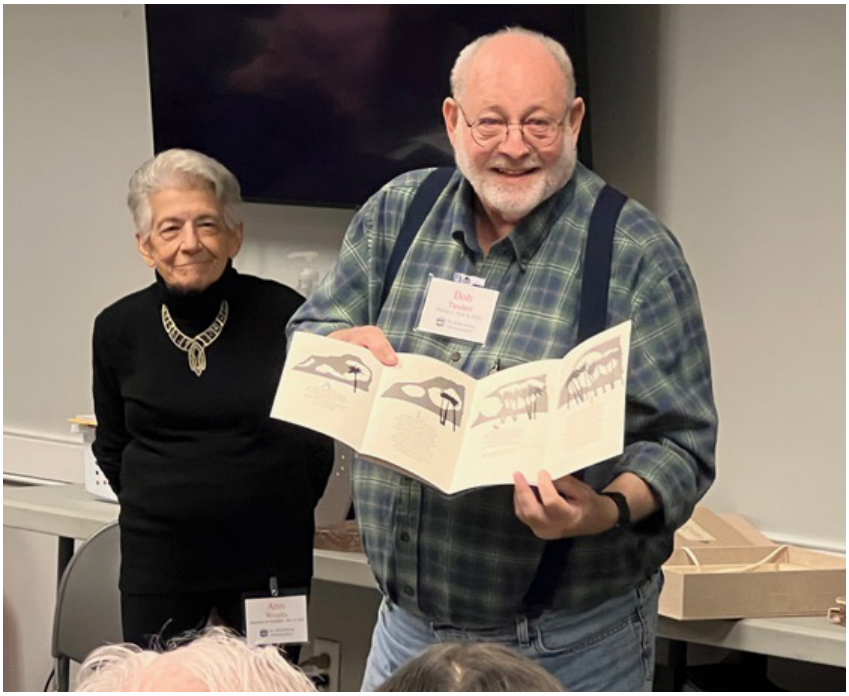
300th anniversary of Franklin's birth. They produced many small books and pamphlets during these years. The major publication of the Press's second life was *Such Sensations, Food & Philosophical Reflections of Chef Hubert Seifert*, which Bob described extensively at the Aldus talk.

The book is a celebration of the Spagio Restaurant and its owner. It has 12 chapters that include menus and serving suggestions for a dozen special meals throughout the year. It was a very expensive book, but it quickly sold out – the Spagio Restaurant had a wide reputation for excellence and many affluent diners.

Ann began the presentation to Aldus by describing her discovery of the Logan Elm Press in the old Laundry Building, but Bob did most of the talking, as eloquently as ever. During the Question & Answer segment, Chef Hubert himself stood up and recounted briefly his experience of working with the Logan Elm Press and his appreciation of Bob.

It was a pleasure to see Bob and Ann working together again to tell the Logan Elm Press story to an audience made up of Aldus members, people who had worked with Bob and Ann at the Logan Elm Press, former OSU students of Bob's, and people who had seen Aldus's publicity announcements.

The Logan Elm Press had two brief but remarkable lifetimes and closed in 2015 when Bob retired, but it didn't die. As long as the books exist, the Press lives on, still appreciated and admired.



Aldus Society Holiday Party

On Thursday, December 4, on a cold, clear night with a full moon rising in the east, we gathered at the Brookside Country Club for our annual holiday party! We had a delicious buffet dinner and entertainment provided by director Tricia Herban and her players, Steve Andersson, Jack Salling (with a splendid German accent), and David Brightman performing a short and hilarious one-act reading of "Words, Words, Words" by David Ives.

The 2025 Carol Logue Biblio-Fellowship was presented to Aldus Treasurer and former long-serving Trustee, Dan Jensen. As usual the final event was the silent auction with Jack in the Important role of auctioneer (sans accent). Most of the lots were sold, including several signed first editions, with one or two brief but exiting bidding battles!

We all look forward to the upcoming January program, Aldus Collects, on January 8th, and to the rest of the winter and spring program meetings.

Aldus Men's and Women's Lunches

By Nancy Campbell

Each month, Aldus members receive emails inviting them to lunch at the MCL Restaurant/Cafeteria in the Kingsdale Shopping Center. These meetups are a great opportunity to socialize, get to know other Aldus members, and to talk about what you have been reading.

Susan Houchin, who joined Aldus a couple of years ago, wrote to the Aldus listserv in September, "I started coming to this gathering when I first joined. I found it was a great way to meet people and a welcome turn on the usual book club format. I always hear about something I want to read."

The women have been meeting for many years. During the pandemic, Pat Groseck organized outdoor monthly get-togethers at a park where we sat in lawn chairs six feet apart. Moving indoors to MCL, where there is a wide variety of food options, became a good alternative.

The women gather, anywhere from five to 14 of us, at a round table. We visit, we eat lunch, then we each talk for a few minutes about what we've been reading. I take notes and Karen Robinson checks the titles (and subtitles) and types a list that we share with those who attend.

In 2025, Don Rice started a similar group for men members of Aldus. They meet on the last Thursday of the month at MCL.

Here are the upcoming dates for the women's and men's groups and a list of the titles that Women Aldines shared in November:

You're invited! Mark your calendar!

Women members of Aldus:
Jan. 24, Feb. 28, March 28, April 25, May 23 or 30 (depending on the holiday — we'll let you know)

Men members of Aldus:
Jan. 29, Feb. 26, March 26, April 30, May 28

Sue Johnson
The Crossing: El Paso, the Southwest, and American's Forgotten Origin Story, by Richard Parker

Betty Baltes
War Letters: Extraordinary Correspondence from American Wars, by Andrew Carroll

Miriam Mansour
World of Wonders: In Praise of Fireflies, Whale Sharks, and Other Astonishments, by Aimee Nezhukumatathil (Author) and Fumi Nakamura (Illustrator)

Jan Sorensen
Field Guide to a Hybrid Landscape [about the human-made ecosystem of the Nebraska National Forest at Halsey], by Dana Fritz

Lisa Zierten
On the Calculation of Volume (Book 1): A Novel, by Solvej Balle

Karen Robinson
A Town Like Alice, by Nevil Shute; and *The English Problem*, by Beena Kamlani

Susan Houchin
The Serviceberry: Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World, by Robin Wall Kimmerer; and The New Age of Sexism: How AI and Emerging Technologies Are Reinventing Misogyny, by Laura Bates

Christine Clover
Pride and Prejudice, by Jane Austen

Cathy Bennett
The Black Wolf: A Novel, by Louise Penny

Tricia Herban
The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything: A Spirituality for Real Life, by James Martin, S.J.

Nancy Campbell
The Widow: A Novel, by John Grisham

ICYMI (In Case You Missed It)

With A.I. (Artificial Intelligence) articles so frequently in the news, did you see the report from the Book Hunters Club of Houston in the Spring 2025 issue of FABS (Fellowship of American Bibliophilic Societies)?

This group meets monthly in a bookstore and discusses a book they have all read that month. The report on their February meeting is on pages 57 to 59. If you are gagging by the time you have finished the second or third paragraph, skip to the final one to see who (what) really wrote the article.

Nancy Campbell

What we become depends on what we read
after all of the professors have finished with us.
The greatest university of all is a collection of books.
—Thomas Carlyle

Remembering Long's College Book Store and The Bibliophile
Part 1

By Genie Hoster

Frank C. Long began in pickles. His business card read that he offered them in "any size, in any quantity, at 20 cents per hundred." The pickles, along with a $5-per-quarter scholarship and performing odd jobs on campus, enabled him to leave the family farm in West Sonora, Ohio, and move to the Ohio State University campus in 1898. He studied horticulture and forestry; his education also included elocution and French.

He was to become the founder of Long's College Book Company, which by the 1920s and early 1930s had become the country's leading used-book wholesaler. By the 1940s, his bookstore was considered by many to be the largest in the world, which Long was quick to tout in his advertising.

Early History

When Frank Long first came to Columbus at age eighteen, he was scrambling to make ends meet. He worked as a caretaker on the university's farms, for faculty members' properties, and he also worked in construction. Then the manager of the student-run book exchange in University Hall asked him to join that operation. It was a natural progression, since the entrepreneurial teenager was already buying and selling used books from his room at the university.

Within a short time, Long would come to own the book exchange. However, within six months, claiming it needed the space for class activities, the university evicted Long's enterprise from the building, and he was faced with finding another location near campus for his bookselling activities.

Kiler's Drug Store – at the northeast corner of Eleventh and High, just across the street from campus – was willing to share its space with him, so he moved his inventory there and shared their storefront. This location was just across Eleventh Ave. from textbook dealer L. S. Wells. At first, Long's store was listed in the city directories as Long and Kiler. The following year after graduating from OSU, Long borrowed $500 to expand his business. By 1909, Wells was gone and Long's own operation had become firmly established at this location. Soon, Long moved to an even larger space at 1836 N. High St. at the corner of E. Fifteenth Ave., where his newly-named College Book Store would remain for nearly one hundred years – until 2005.

He had left pickles behind.

Getting Started

In 1905 Frank Long married Mary Ethel Manley, who was from Dayton. As his business prospered, Long moved it to a two-story brick building which he built at 1836 N. High St. He moved his family into an apartment upstairs from the bookstore. They had two sons who survived to adulthood: Robert, born in 1906, and Frank C. Long, Jr., who was born in late 1909 in the family apartment.

Long's College Book Store continued to expand its footprint as it crept south from its original site and would occupy nearly half the block directly across from OSU's main campus. During the 1930s, the store's iconic turquoise sign with red neon letters vaunting the store's name (one of the first neon signs installed in Columbus), was installed on the building's northwest corner.

Activity in the textbook business rises and falls in relation to the rhythm of each school year. During slack times, Long did some traveling representing textbook publisher C. M. Barnes. While on the road, he bought textbooks from other college bookstores and also purchased used textbooks from students (a rare practice at that time). But soon he was too busy to travel.

In 1912, Long launched a publishing company for textbooks written by OSU professors. He also began publishing some of the country's first poetry anthologies through this company.

Seven years later, he started issuing mail-order catalogs, which most book dealers did at that time. His first catalog listed 8,000 titles for sale; the number of books he carried eventually grew to over 80,000 in a single catalog. In order to put more books into the hands of readers, rental libraries had become popular at this time; so, the untiring Long decided to also start a book rental library. He charged three cents a day for fiction titles, a price which had already been established by Columbus's downtown book operations such as Smythe's and McClelland's bookstores.

Early "Book Wars"

During the 1920s, the university's Board of Trustees gave in to complaints from students who felt there was "a monopoly" of textbook sellers even though there were

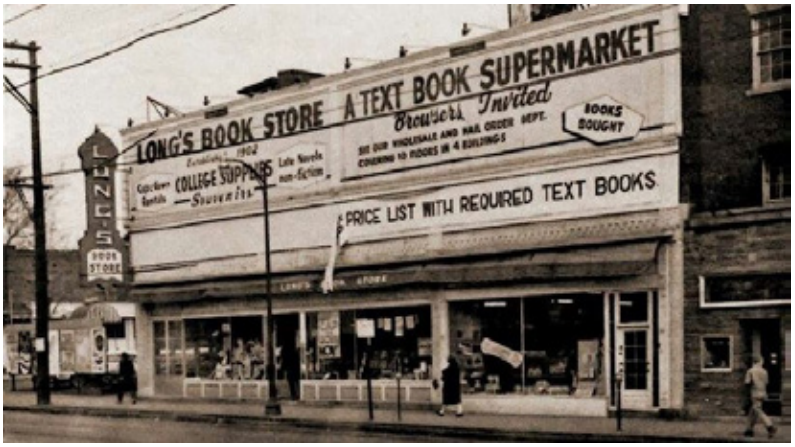
two textbook sellers: Long's store and the much smaller Varsity Supply Company. Long sued OSU, but without success (his case even went to the Ohio Supreme Court).

Noticing Long's success, the university decided to open its own bookstore which they named the Co-Op Bookstore. Price wars ensued as each store sought to sell their textbooks to the student body. Each offered discounts up to ten percent on various titles. By 1930, Long began publishing testimonials from campus leaders in his newspaper ads and in OSU's yearbook, the *Makio*. A typical ad would say, "I buy used books at Long's," printed next to a photo of a well-known student campus leader, such as drum major C. Wilbert Pettigrew. Being featured in one of Long's ads became *the* thing on campus to do. Long's also hired students to pass out his store's price lists to students.

By the late 1930s Long's claimed to have a stock of "over a million new and used texts and 4,000 supplies useful to students," according to their advertising.

After World War II, as the university's enrollment ballooned, so did Long's inventory. Long took a risk by purchasing government surplus textbooks, which expanded his inventory to three million books. But Long's gamble after the war did pay off for him. In 1954, Ohio State's student-run newspaper, *The Lantern*, reported that Long's had steady customers in all 48 states and two territories of the United States, as well as in China, India, and the Philippines.

Circa 1950



Circa 1990

Colonel Long and *The Poor Nut* – AND a Thurber Connection

Frank Long, Sr. was an admirer of a well-known Civil War veteran, Col. Robert G. Ingersoll, who was considered by many to be the foremost orator and political speechmaker of late nineteenth-century America. Whether as a joke or in total admiration, Long emulated Ingersoll so often that his friends began to call him "Colonel Long," a nickname that followed him the rest of his life.

Around 1925, this moniker became known far beyond Columbus when Long was depicted in *The Poor Nut*, a hit Broadway play written by J.C. Nugent and his son Elliott, who was a student at Ohio State at the time the play was written.*

Most of the play was set in a college bookstore whose owner is called "Colonel" Small. In the play script, Colonel Small is described as "a gruff old fellow with metal-rimmed glasses and an iron-bound disposition."

The lead character in *The Poor Nut* is named John Miller. He is a shy, myopic student, clearly modeled upon James Thurber, Elliott's classmate and good friend. Long took this play in good humor. He liked the publicity the play generated and took all his employees to the Hartman Theatre in downtown Columbus when *The Poor Nut* was performed.

Thurber and Nugent hung out regularly at Hennick's soda fountain, next door to Long's bookstore. It was a meeting place and watering hole for students following World War I. In their even more successful collaboration, *The Male Animal*, the iconic Hennick's is mentioned and it, too, received much publicity from the play.

*** Elliott Nugent and his father J.C. would write and act together on hundreds of sketches and plays for many years. J. C. was a child performer and went into vaudeville. On Broadway, and later in films, he was generally a character actor who specialized in playing fathers, crackpots, and misers. Elliott was performing on stage by the age of four, and attended Ohio State, where he befriended James Thurber, with whom he collaborated in *The Male Animal*. Titled *The Poor Nut*, this three-act comedy had a student-athlete hero who worked part-time at a college bookstore (which was suspiciously similar to Long's store).**

What's Mine Is Yours: A BOOKSTORE-Y

(From the Acorn Bookshop Archives/2008)

By George Cowmeadow Bauman

Bonnie Woodside was one of the Acorn Bookshop's regulars, and one of those folks who are lifelong course-takers, working part-time in order to class-room part-time. Big-Lots-thrifty by necessity, she defied the usual low-middle-upper class categories with her admirable commitment to books and knowledge.

She walked or bused all around Columbus, a city that does little to accommodate such non-drivers, reducing bus routes and voting down light rail again and again. At Acorn, she didn't usually enter by the side door, as most people did, because it faced the parking lot, which was how most people arrived to book-shop. Instead, the #5 bus dropped her off across Fifth Avenue, down on the corner by the Giant Eagle grocery, and a minute later she'd be jangling our front door open, and entering Booktopia.

On every visit she got carried away—by her own admission—and bought an armful of Clearance books, as well as a few others, and a CD or two. It was enough to always fill a brown grocery sack-or "poke," as my English grandfather Cowmeadow used to call them.

My colleague Christine and I noticed when the shop's regulars hadn't come into the shop for a while. About a year before we closed the shop, we'd noted that we hadn't seen Bonnie in some time. We thought of her whenever a book came in that had "Pulitzer Prize Winner" on it, for Bonnie had been reading her way sequentially through all the Pulitzer literature winners, starting with the first one—Ernest Poole for *His Family* in 1918.

When she stepped in out of the snow on a March Saturday afternoon, we greeted each other with pleasure, and even said "Happy New Year," for it had been November since she was here.

She set her shopping bags down and shook out of her long, blue fiber-filled coat—sparkling under our lights because of all the melting snowflakes, looking more like a diamond-studded satin royal robe being set aside than a thrift-store special.

I asked, across the aisle of displayed CDs, how her Pulitzer reading was coming.

"I'm stuck on Faulkner's *The Fable*," she said. "I've even taken a Faulkner commentary out from the library and am reading what he means line by line, but it's slow going right now."

She began browsing and I turned to ring up a rugged-looking man in a bright red North Face parka who was buying two mountaineering books. After finishing with him, I went to where Bonnie was flipping through our classical CDs and told her how much we'd missed seeing her.

She looked up, and paused before speaking.

"I have a really special friend," she began by way of explanation, glancing back down, not at the CDs in her hands but into her thoughts. After a moment she added, "And she was dying from kidney disease. So I donated one of my kidneys to her."

She seemed oblivious to the other browsing customers that kept her story from being more private. She had tuned out everything but the relating of her story, the telling of which was clearly giving her great pleasure, not discomfort.

I was thankful that no one was in the immediate vicinity: the two dark-dressed teenagers huddled in the Hippie-Dippie-Yippie-Beats section would be there for a while browsing through Kerouac and Hunter Thompson, while the guy in the WWII section was settled into a chair and 1944 France. Nancy Drew books were keeping another woman busy in the back corner as she was trying to match up the numbered ND yellowbacks on our shelf with the ones on the list she carried.

In a soft, but very happy voice, Barbara continued. "I haven't told many people about this…" and paused again for more internal connecting to a story seldom told.

"The day after our kidney surgeries I was stunned when my friend walked into my hospital room and said, 'My levels are normal!'"

The transplant had been necessitated by her friend's failing kidneys, so the good report about her medical levels was wonderful, joyful news.

"I couldn't help but have tears in my eyes," Barbara said, getting a little moist again. "It was the best holiday gift I could imagine—my friend alive and walking into my room."

When I praised her for what she had done—a little choked up myself, she said, "It was nothing—although the doctors almost didn't take me because I'm close to my 'sell by' date."

I burst out laughing at that line. She smiled at my enjoyment of her phrasing.

"But they took me because I'm a perfect blood match with my friend," she said proudly, "and because I walk everywhere, every day, keeping me in good shape."

I asked how her friend was doing, and Barbara replied, "She's still frail and has a long way to go."

Then, underplaying her own heroic involvement, added, "But for me, it was just breakfast in bed for a couple of days!"

"You Could Look It Up"
Some Reflections on a Favorite Quote

By Wes Boomgaarden

There was a time, not very long ago, when I rather too frequently used the phrase "You could look it up" when trying to add weight to a weak argument, to proffer confidence in my belabored point, or when pondering or discussing a topic for which "the truth" wasn't close at hand. This was, I stress, a very long time ago, during the pre-smartphone era, which more than half our population cannot quite believe ever existed.

Now, of course, colleagues, debaters, friends, foes, and acquaintances are constantly *on* those smartphones looking *at* or *up* … something. (Now, I ask you: Is that irony? Or is that paradox? Is it neither? Well, you could look it up.)

Because I was so thoroughly bred, buttered, planted, and watered in the twentieth century, whenever I heard or used that old "you could look it up" phrase, I would think of baseball's Ol' Perfessor, Charles Dillon "Casey" Stengel (1890-1975). I thought he must have been the original source for it; because he was, for me. Casey had a legendary career in the game, with an especially stellar one as manager of the New York Yankees mid-century. In my youth, he was Central Casting's version of a Major League Baseball manager. I recall being very entertained listening to him stringing along sportswriters in post-game news-gatherings of the day.

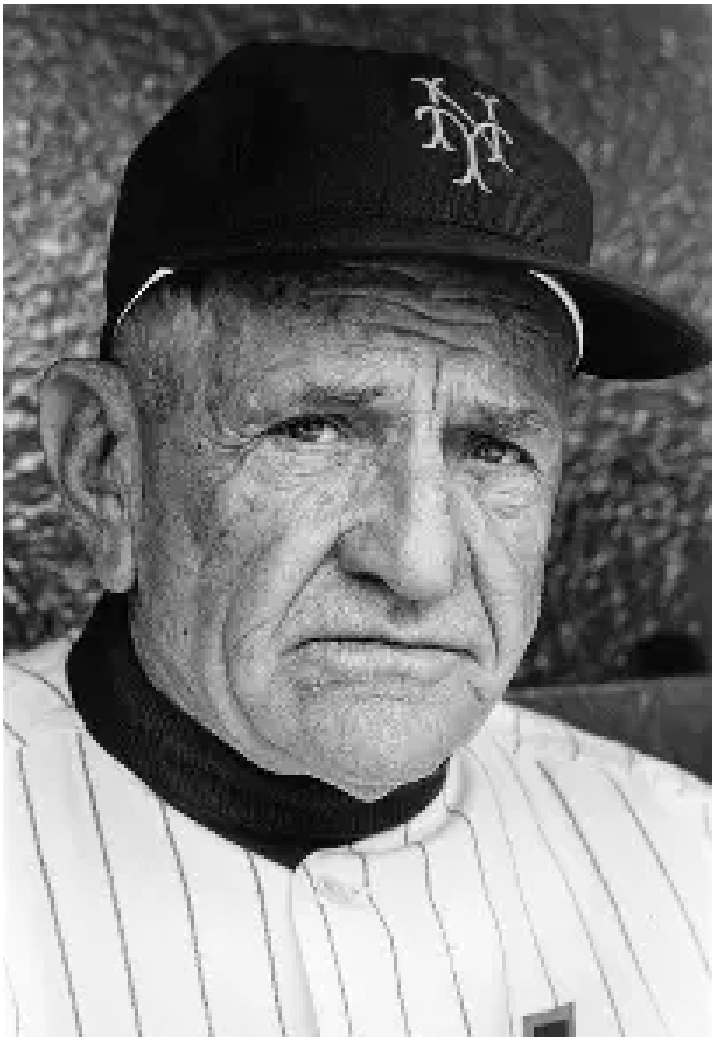
For my money, Robert W. Creamer's biography of the man – *Stengel: His Life and Times* (Simon & Schuster, 1984) – is the funniest biography ever written. Creamer had a lot of good material to work with. Ol' Casey's hilariously frank and pithy quips and quotes must have tickled Creamer. They surely have stuck with me.

So, perhaps Creamer was an influence on my use of that phrase, "You could look it up."

Casey has as many or more enduringly-quotable phrases* as does Yogi Berra, his team's lovable catcher at the time. But as we all know, it's Yogi who is now much more well-known for his own enduring malapropisms. Folks quote Yogi all the time (often in error) and perhaps have forgotten (the unforgettable) Casey.

In this age of Facebook memes – where an endless supply of idiots post, re-post, and attribute erroneous or unattributable "quotes" to famous people or to other idiots – one must be careful about hanging any string of words onto any person without doing some research, one's due-diligence.

I'm afraid this includes my own favorite, my now admittedly-erroneous attribution to Casey Stengel of my too-oft-used phrase. Ah, even when I could have used my computer's generative A.I. option to seek the true source, I turned to my copy of Ralph Keyes's handy, analog *The Quote Verifier: Who Said What, Where, and When* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2006). Therein I read with interest that it was Stengel who said "You could look it up" so often to sportswriters of his day that it became erroneously attributed to him. These things happen, and get out of hand.



Casey Stengel

Keyes is quick to note the true source of the quote as our own James Thurber. I can be just as quick to add that Aldus Society members are more likely than any other demographic group to actually *know* this; that "You Could Look It Up" is the title of a Thurber short story published in the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1941; and that everyone they know knows this. (Or, if we didn't know for certain, we could simply ask Jay Hoster, who might even know off-hand that the story was in the *April 5th*

1941 issue.) You can find Thurber's story in an online version from the *Saturday Evening Post*, complete with its Norman Rockwell illustrations at https://www.saturdayeveningpost.com/wp-content/uploads/satevepost/james_thurber.pdf. You'll be rewarded for it if you do.

In this Thurber short story, an unnamed Major League baseball team "dropped down to C'lumbus, Ohio, from Pittsburgh" for an exhibition game as part of the team's longer road trip. The story, remembered by one of its players long afterwards, in a style that reminds one of Ring Lardner's, is a wild tale about the team's manager – Squawks Magrew – desperate to get out of a losing streak in games against the St. Louis Browns. The setting is evidently during the William Howard Taft Administration, since it was "the same year C'lumbus decided to call itself the Arch City, on account of a lot of iron arches with electric-light bulbs into 'em which stretched acrost High Street." And he makes prominent mention of the "Chittaden Hotel" and some other "C'lumbus" details.

The story is colorful and fun because of how Thurber narrates it, of course, and how he populates it with characters, and not just the desperate Magrew. It centers on one Pearl du Monville, a man "only thirty-four-, thirty-five inches high." Pearl – "he might 'a' been fifteen or he might 'a' been a hunderd, you couldn't tell" – whom Magrew befriends at the Chittaden Hotel bar, and then takes along with the team to continue their road trip. For the next four *Saturday Evening Post* pages, the story enfolds – with colorful illustrations from none other than Norman Rockwell – of a desperate Magrew shocking everyone by putting the small man du Monville into the lineup for a plate appearance late in a game against St. Louis. I won't spoil the story's ending for you, but the plot device involves the size of the diminutive du Monville's, … er …, strike zone.**

And, by the way, the story's narrator uses the phrase "you could look it up" at least four times in his recollections from the perch of his advanced age in recollecting it.

Ralph Keyes's *The Quote Verifier*, notes that Thurber's story likely was read widely in the day by sportswriters, and perhaps they fed Casey Stengel the line. Keyes rests his case with his own: "*Verdict:* Credit James Thurber as author, Casey Stengel as publicist."

And there you have it, that rare gem these days, the truth.

*Here are but a few of my favorite Stengel-isms:

- *"Every manager wants to throw himself off a bridge sooner or later, and it's very nice for an old man to know he doesn't have to walk fifty miles to find one."* [Upon getting the job of managing the Oakland Oaks, the Bay Area's Pacific Coast League minor league team, in 1946, on the proximity to the Bay Bridge to their stadium]
- *"I'll never make the mistake of being seventy again."* [Upon being fired by the Yankees after the game-seven World Series loss to Pittsburgh in 1960]
- *"Can't anyone play this here game?"* [On reviewing his hapless expansion team the New York Mets, during their first season, 1962]
- [And, my all-time favorite, from in his final years] *"Most people my age are dead at the present time."*

** Life can imitate art in baseball, too! On August 19, 1951, the St. Louis Browns's owner – wild Bill Veeck – had the 3-foot-7-inch little person named Eddie Gaedel placed into the team's lineup as a pinch hitter during a game against the Detroit Tigers. It was one of Veeck's most famous (of many) publicity stunts and became a legendary moment in baseball history. Gaedel wore uniform number 1/8 in his appearance, took four consecutive pitches as balls, and marched on to first base with a walk. He is in the Major League record books, with no official at-bats (having been walked in four straight pitches), but with a still-record on-base percentage of 1.000. There's a famous picture and even posters of it sold of the diminutive Gaedel at the plate that day. Immediately after the stunt, the no-nonsense Commissioner of Baseball, changed the game's line-up rules, preventing any future similar line-up substitution strategies in Major League Baseball.

As I was sayin', you could look it up.

Eddie Gaedel

Recent Books Explore the Role of Women in the Making of Shakespeare

By Roger Jerome

As I write this, a smash hit movie, *Hamnet*, is opening, based on a novel of the same title by Maggie O'Farrell, 2020, with the subtitle *A Novel of the Plague*. The book joined a very long line of fictional books about William Shakespeare and is a terrific read.

In the last ten years a popular theory about who wrote the plays of Shakespeare has been featured in a number of books which join another very long line of books about the "authorship question." It was Harry Campbell, the esteemed editor of "Aldus Society Notes," who got me involved in discussing this question.

I had trained as an actor in the UK at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, where Shakespearean texts were studied in many classes. I was a founder-member of the Royal Shakespeare Company when it was set up in 1961. I acted professionally in 14 of the plays there and directed productions of seven of them. As an undergraduate at Birmingham University my tutor was John Russell Brown, editor of several Shakespeare texts and eventually head of Graduate Theater Studies at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, and we were lifelong friends. A mutual friend, also a graduate of Birmingham University, was Terry Hands, who became a director of the RSC. I love visiting the theater in Stratford-upon-Avon, and have, for the last 20 years, or so, visited the Stratford Festival in Stratford, Ontario. I must have seen hundreds of productions of Shakespeare's plays in my lifetime, including over 40 versions of *Hamlet*.

Harry pulled me up short when we first discussed the authorship question about 12 years ago. He threw names at me, including famous doubters and alternative candidates: Delia Bacon, J. Thomas Looney, The Earl of Oxford, Kristin Linklater, Mark Rylance. I followed them up and became hooked by the big question: Who wrote Shakespeare's plays? I lost the friendship of Terry Hands when I raised the question with him. "Of course Shakespeare wrote Shakespeare's plays," he said angrily, "over and out!" He put the phone down on me forever. (Perhaps it is obvious that there is also a dimension to the question which is geographical. UK scholars are aware that the Bard is probably one of the biggest reasons why tourists visit England. If Will of Stratford-upon-Avon didn't write the plays, then buses, cars, and trains would not bring international visitors to the West Midlands, pouring huge amounts of cash into the local economy. The London airport would certainly see a big difference in number of travelers.)

In 2015 Tina Packer wrote *Women of Will — The Remarkable Evolution of Shakespeare's Female Characters.* She is English and had a full career in the UK as actor and director before coming to America in 1978. She founded Shakespeare & Company, a year-round theater center in Lenox, Mass, sitting close to Tanglewood, the summer home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Packer's book is one of the best theater books I've ever read. It is rooted in good sense and her lengthy involvement in acting in and directing Shakespeare's plays. She includes a whole section about Aemelia Bassano, who is "without parallel" and "an extraordinary woman writing in any age." A. L. Rouse had, in 1978, identified Bassano as "the Dark Lady" in Shakespeare's Sonnets. She was, in fact, the first woman in England to publish a volume of poetry in her own name.

Shakespeare's Dark Lady, by John Hudson, was published in 2016, a powerful combination of historical evidence with feminist theory to argue that Bassano is a possible candidate as author of the plays. He gives detailed samples of Bassano's writing being similar to the Bard's. Hudson highlights Bassano's position in the Elizabethan court and provides a strong argument, challenging our long-held beliefs and assumptions.

Elizabeth Winkler followed an examination of Hudson's theory in her 2023 book *Shakespeare Was a Woman and Other Heresies.* This is an absorbing and frequently very funny account of Winkler's attempt to get established Shakespearean experts to discuss alternatives to William of Stratford as the author of the works. For example, Stanley Wells, former director of the prestigious Shakespeare Institute, evades her, finds reasons to cut short conversations, or just resorts to obscenity! She encounters a blanket denial of other possible writers of the works: "It's a load of shit," said Wells. He never responded to her follow-up questions.

Aemelia Bassano Is introduced three-fourths of the way through the book and is discussed for almost four pages. Winkler visits Wilton House, home of another writer and authorship candidate, Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke. There is an illuminating section where Mark Rylance, actor and director, is interviewed at length. Winkler writes, "He didn't care who it was," he admitted. He cared about understanding how the plays were made." Ros Barber, Alexander Waugh, Thomas Kuhn, Graham Greene, Wilfred Bion, Stephen Greenblatt, Gary Taylor, the U.S. Supreme Court, James Shapiro, King Charles III, Jonathan Bate, and Margorie Garber are all discussed in Winkler's exploration of the book's subtitle, *How Doubting the Bard Became the Biggest Taboo in Literature.* A very valuable book.

Thank you, Harry, for also recommending *By Any*

Other Name, by Jodi Picoult, a novel published in 2023 – which is a book I couldn't put down! It is an ingenious exploration of the Aemelia Bassano story, set in two different time frames – the late1590s to the early 1600s alternating with the present.

And what do I think?

As Tina Packer says, "7 or 15 or 40 people came together to make a Shakespeare play." Just as the great musical, *West Side Story* was made by five theatrical geniuses – Bernstein, Robbins, Laurents, Sondheim, and Prince – theater plays are made by a group of people. A painter can paint alone, a musician often writes and plays individually, writers usually write entirely on their own. But a dramatist writes as one of a group of people. The Shakespearean plays are, inevitably, the results of group collaboration. New textual discoveries will continue to be made, and the plays will always be of great interest. Every time I see a new production of a Shakespeare play, I'm seeing another version of the text. Elizabethan women who were proven writers could arguably have been involved in the making of Shakespeare's plays, especially considering the creation of so many remarkable female characters.

Two Ohio Books of Glass

By Tom Bredehoft

Two favorite items from my book collection have no pages, no bindings, no contents, and no words. They are glass whimsies, fanciful toys or bits of folk art usually described as having been made by glassworkers who were working off the clock, taken home at the end of the day in lunchboxes or pockets. They are mere representations of books—but made of transparent glass, they also seem to become a kind of blank slate. These are books that remind us of the infinite possibilities of the form, precisely because of what they do not have and what they cannot do. They call to mind our foolish—even childish?—notion that material books are transparent vessels and containers, and as such they can also serve as a reminder of why we collect.

As is true for much folk art, the charm of these objects was intended to please only a small and local audience, even a private or familial one. If we know little about their makers, it is surely because their original owners knew them well. These were not commercial items in any way, but expressions of the materials and the skills that defined a workman's trade. Each was a one-off item, a unique expression of individual artistry made in the context of a mass-production factory. Glass collectors usually suggest such whimsy books were made as children's toys, although they might just have easily served as small paperweights or even as strictly decorative objects. If intended as children's toys, they poignantly invoke a world where factory workers' children were encouraged in literacy.

In my experience as a book collector from a family of glass collectors, glass whimsy books are difficult to find, and they are now scarce and highly prized by collectors. We are fortunate here in Central Ohio that Newark's A. H. Heisey and Co. (1896-1957) was a factory where workers are known to have made such books; at other Ohio Valley glass factories, workers' toys were often glass chains, or canes, or even glass hammers: skilled glassworkers being playfully ironic about the fragility of their medium. Heisey workers made glass canes, too—but the books they made are special treasures now.

Bibliography:

[Anonymous]. [Untitled]. [Attributed to A. H. Heisey and Company: Newark, OH, 1st half of the twentieth century]. Clear glass book-shaped solid. 1.85" by 1.37" by .75". Ground and polished on all surfaces, with one side rounded to form the "spine." Unopened. With some wear and chipping. Provenance: purchased in the early 1980s at a local household auction in Wilkin's Corners [Licking County], Ohio.

[W. M.]. [Untitled]. [Attributed to A. H. Heisey and Company: Newark, OH, second quarter of the twentieth century]. Transparent glass book-shaped solid. 1.65" by 1.10" by .60" Ground and polished on all surfaces, with extensive cutting (and polishing) to mimic page edges and a decorative binding; a cross on the top cover suggests that the book is intended to represent a bible. Maker's (or owner's?) initials "W M" on lower cover. Colored (pink) transparent glass, in a shade corresponding to the Heisey Company's "Flamingo" color, in production from ca. 1925-35. Unopened. Provenance: purchased around 2010 at an antique auction in Perry County, Ohio.

wobble writ

window scrawls cross my
glass ¿is it air? wondering
my offal head , words
sunk inside the bricks
a mist text , iiegg ible
spattered fried a face
reads itself sin traducir
text or spillage dissolves
back a my hand

—John M. Bennett

Aldus Collects Is Coming

Once again, the Aldus program in January (8th) will feature our own. We have five thoughtful members who will share some insight into their collections, whatever field that might be in.

You don't want to miss this most enjoyable program! This year's lineup consists of:

- **Don Rice:** "Discovering J. Inchardi"
- **Ann Woods:** "Books on Books, and Bindings that Speak Volumes"
- **Jack Salling:** "Surrealists and Their Books"
- **Roger Jerome:** "Owzat? It's a Harder Ball"
- **Joel Hampton:** "Love Letters from WWII"

Jolie Braun will be MC-ing the program this year while George Bauman is recovering from knee surgery.

Spring 2026 Programs at Thurber House

February 19: Ohio Goes to the Movies (Thurber Film Screening)

February 26: Book Bar (Adult Social Mixer for Book Lovers)

Adult Writing Workshops (In-Person and Virtual)

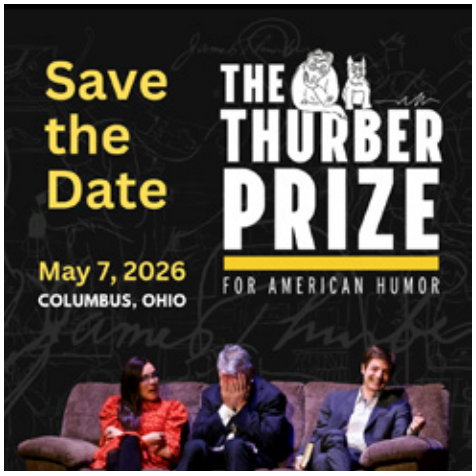
Adult Writers' Studio: Elevate Your Writing or Finish Your Manuscript

Young Writers' Studio for Grades 9-12 (In-Person and Virtual)

Laughter Wellness (Joyful Self-Care and Stress Relief)

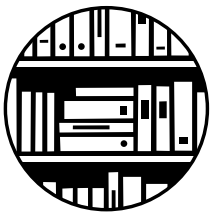
***Flip the Page: Central Ohio's Teen Literary Journal* (Ages 13-19)**

March 7: Cabin Fever Crafternoon (Bring Your Own Craft)



May 7: The 2026 Thurber Prize for American Humor Award Show

Learn more and register at www.thurberhouse.org!



The Aldus Society

Celebrating Books!