

The
Aldus
Society

Celebrating Books!

Aldus Society Notes

Spring 2026

Volume 26, No. 2

May 14 Program and Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting will take place prior to the program featuring **Ron Shaull**, a Central Ohio papermaker, paper artist, bookmaker and writer, presenting "A History of Paper, from Pulp to Pixel."

The brief Annual Meeting will consist of an annual report and voting on the slate of 2026/27 trustees. All members are welcome to add their names to the ballot to be a trustee. Contact President Jack Salling (moroccoboundbooks@gmail.com) if interested.



January 8 Program Recap: Aldus Collects

On Thursday, January 8 we gathered at the Thurber Center for the first Aldus Society event of 2026! Aldus Collects. The participants who shared their collections this year were:

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



Don Rice

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).*

January 8 Program Recap Continued: Aldus Collects

The Aldus Society

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George Cowmeadow Bauman

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

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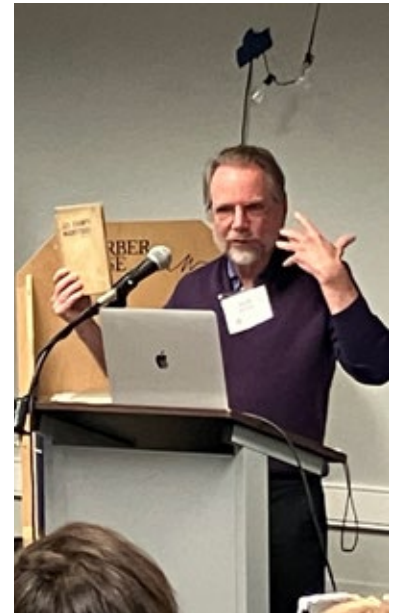
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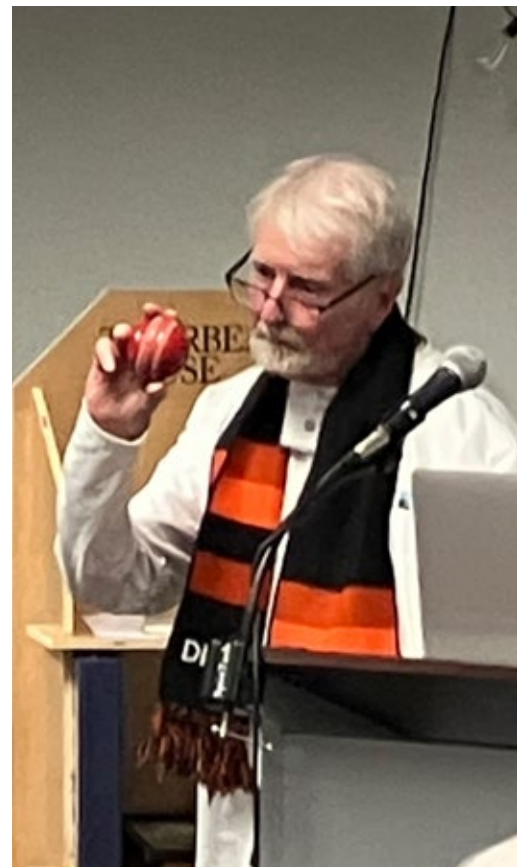
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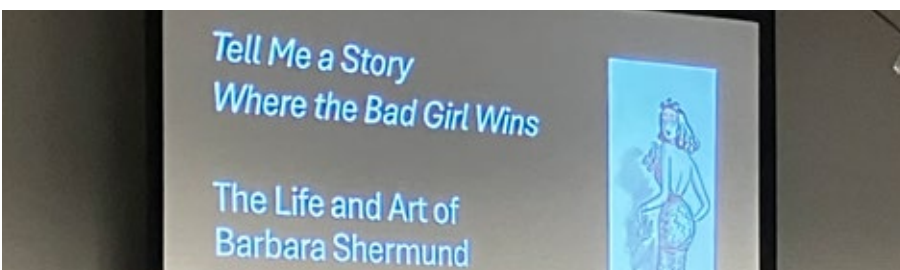
February 12 Program Recap: “A Table-Top Fine Press from Ohio: Charles C. Bubb’s Clerk’s Press (1908-1917)”

Aldus member Tom Bredehoft told the fascinating story of a this small Ohio press and its relationship to other English and America fine presses of the early 20th century.



March 12 Program Recap: “Tell Me A Story Where the Bad Girl Wins: The Life and Art of Barbara Shermund”

Caitlin McGurk, Curator of Cartoon Art at the Billy Ireland Cartoon Library and Museum, presented an excellent talk on the feisty early 20th century cartoonist who broke into the field of magazine cartoonist as one of the very few female artists. Caitlin also signed copies of her major book of the same title, which was also the title of the exhibit which opened at Billy Ireland and has been traveling ever since.



April 9 Program Recap: “Early Southern State Passports and the Paper They’re Printed On: A Little Known American Story”

Thora Brylowe from the University of Colorado presented “Early Southern State Passports and the Paper They’re Printed On: A Little Known American Story.”



COLUMBUS BOOK FESTIVAL



**KIMBERLÉ
WILLIAMS
CRENSHAW**



**LAURA
DAVE**



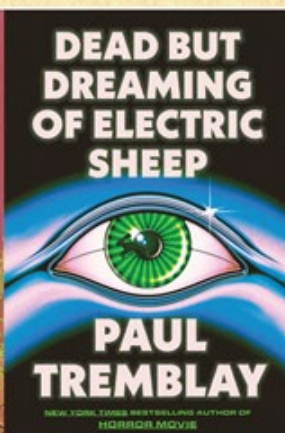
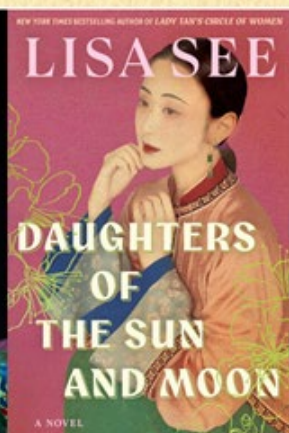
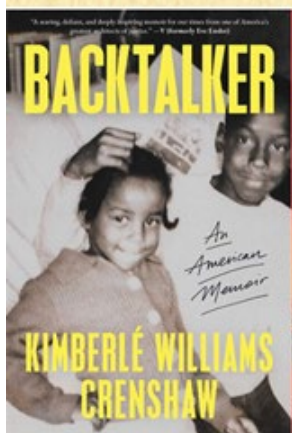
**TJ
KLUNE**



**LISA
SEE**



**PAUL
TREMBLAY**



Aldus Field Trip: Mazza Museum

By Nancy Campbell

On March 29, a group of 18 Aldus members made the trip to the University of Findlay campus in Findlay, Ohio, for a double-header program about children's book illustration.

First up was Jeffrey Ebbeler, a Cincinnati-based artist who has illustrated dozens of books and also written a few, speaking about his process of illustrating a book.

He works primarily with the editor after the publisher has purchased a manuscript. He reads the book's text and then researches and imagines what the characters will look like, where they live, and how they operate. He gave examples of the wide latitude he has for the look of the characters and then read us *The One and Only Dylan St. Claire*, a delightful story about an over-enthusiastic theater kid (sorry for the redundancy).

Then we moved next door to the Fine Arts Pavilion, which houses the Mazza Museum. The Mazza holds the world's largest collection of original artwork from illustrators of children's books. The museum's director, Dan Chudzinski, spoke eloquently about each of the illustrators currently on exhibit, opening for us the world of illustration, collecting, and sharing with audiences of all ages.

The first exhibit we saw upon entering the Mazza Museum was original artwork from Marc Brown's *Arthur* books, including a life-size sculpture of Arthur himself, studious at his school desk and quietly welcoming visitors.

Right: The tour of the Mazza Museum started with the director, Dan Chudzinski, introducing us to Arthur and the work of Marc Brown.



The director, Dan Chudzinski, showed a copy of *The Keeping Quilt*, by Patricia Polacco, the story of a family that immigrated from Russia. The daughter, the author's great-grandmother, made a quilt using clothing that each of the family members had brought with them.



The work of Stephen Gammell, illustrator of several volumes of *Scary Stories* and many other titles, is displayed on different walls to separate the “scary” pictures from the “others.”

Ruth Sanderson’s *A Storm of Horses* tells the story of French painter Rosa Bonheur (1822-1899), who was fascinated with horses. The realistic illustrations show Bonheur’s life and work, breaking through the barriers that kept women in traditional roles, learning about horse anatomy and skeletons, and painting her 16.5-by-8-foot masterpiece, *The Horse Fair*.

Special thanks from the whole group go to Madison Good for organizing this field trip, and to Tricia Herban for suggesting it. It was a memorable afternoon.



Bill and Marcia Evans enjoyed Ruth Sanderson’s horse illustrations.



The group with speakers Dan Chudzinski (seventh from left) and Jeffrey Ebbeler (to Dan’s left).

A Thurber Miscellany

By Jay Hoster

Let's start with a quiz. Here are some foreign language editions of James Thurber's writings. Can you identify the original title for each? Answers are included at the end.

1. French—*Le sexe pour quoi faire?*
2. Italian—*Favole per il nostro tempo*
3. Dutch—"De hond die mensen beet"
4. Spanish—"La noche en que cayó la cama"
5. German—"Na schön, wie du meinst—du hast also einen Seehund bellen hören!"
6. Czech—*Trináctery Hodiny*
7. Catalan—*La Meravellosa O*
8. Swedish—"Natten då spöket kom"
9. Icelandic—*Siðasta Blómið*
10. Danish—*De tretten ure*
11. Portuguese—*Luas e luas*
12. German—*Der Grosse Kleine Spielzeugmacher*

One of the most memorable scenes in *My Life and Hard Times* is Thurber's description of the Get Ready Man, "a lank unkempt elderly gentleman with wild eyes and deep voice who used to go about shouting at people through a megaphone to prepare for the end of the world. 'GET READY! GET READY' he would bellow. 'THE WORLLD IS COMING TO AN END!' His startling exhortations would come up, like summer thunder, at the most unexpected times and in the most surprising places."

Thurber wrote of an incident involving the Get Ready Man and famed Shakespearean actor Robert Mantell in the role of Lear. When Mantell appeared at the Colonial Theatre in Columbus in 1911, the critic for the *Dispatch* commented that "his Lear stands a gigantic monument to his greatness and understanding of Shakespeare's heroic figures." Mantell had studied the part for years, even going so far that "once, in a great thunderstorm at his country place, he went out in the rain and blackness to enact the part and speak the lines of Lear in order to the better feel them."

And yet, in Thurber's telling, nothing could have quite prepared the great actor for his encounter with the Get Ready Man.

In the midst of Mantell's performance, "The Get Ready Man added his bawlings to the squealing of Edgar and the ranting of the King and the mouthing of the Fool, rising from somewhere in the balcony to join in." Thurber added that neither he nor his father "ever completely got over the scene."

The Get Ready Man's exit came when "they found him finally, and ejected him, still shouting. The Theatre, in our time, has known few such moments."

It's easy to suppose that Thurber created the persona

of the Get Ready Man, but in her book *You and Your Friends* (1906) Mary Robson McGill identified him as a Seventh Day Adventist named Willard P. Walters who habitually proclaimed "Get ready for the end of the world!" even though "Columbus and the old world move along without making any special preparation for the interesting event he predicts."

Robert O. Ryder, editor of the *Ohio State Journal* for a quarter of a century, was a source of inspiration for Thurber. Ryder began as a reporter for the paper, and his ability to turn a phrase is demonstrated in an account he wrote about a fight between two members of the state legislature. They called each other a liar, and Ryder noted that "both gentlemen were correct."

Ryder was part of a talented family. His brother Jack was Ohio State's football coach at a time when salaries were just a bit lower than they are now—Jack was paid \$300 per season for coaching the Buckeyes. He later became a sportswriter at the *Cincinnati Enquirer*. His brother Arthur was a Sanskrit scholar at Berkeley who translated many works into English, including the *Bhagavad Gita*.

At the *Journal*, Ryder was both editorial writer and paragrapher—the latter being the now-forgotten task of writing humorous squibs on the pitfalls of everyday life. Ryder once commented, "A good paragrapher is one that can make something that was ground out sound as if it were dashed off," and it is not too much of a stretch to think of Thurber nodding his approval at that thought as he included it in *The Thurber Album*.

Ryder's most memorable creation was the Young Lady across the Way. In the wake of the Panic of 1907, the Young Lady demonstrated a knack for misunderstanding her father's comments on financial matters. As an example, "The young lady across the way says she thinks her father must have some awfully nice friends, she hears him speak so often about having another call from his bankers."

Ryder's text was accompanied with drawings by Harry J. Westerman, who portrayed the Young Lady with large hair that was often topped by a prominent chapeau, accompanied by a dog with a perennially quizzical expression.

There's one young-ladyism in particular that has a familiar ring: "The young lady across the way says she can't understand why her father talks so much about being hard up when she saw his check book herself and noticed there were at least a hundred checks in it without any writing at all on them."

Thurber recycled that in the caption for one of his best-known cartoons, in which a woman says to a man

and a Thurber dog, “So I said to the bank teller, ‘How can I be overdrawn when I have all these checks left?’”

Clara Eleanor Wagner’s *Cupid in Hell* is arguably the oddest book ever published in Columbus. It was published by Nitschke Brothers in 1910 and the frontispiece portrait of the author shows a well-dressed woman staring at the reader with an angry expression while the artwork depicts a forlorn Cupid with a bandaged head, one arm in a sling, and the other holding a crutch as tears fall from his eyes. The contents are a fictionalized account of the author’s failed love life.

As I was browsing through this volume at a local bookstore, I came across a photograph of a man with the caption “You bewildering and bewitching winner of hearts, what was I led by before I knew you?”

Here Wagner is describing the relationship she has with her sweetheart Harrison, and it is Harrison who actually says that to her. He also says things like, “Your eyes are green shaded into turquoise blue, like the sky in Colorado; but perhaps it was only your eyes I saw there and the reflection of the sky in them.”

But on this particular copy there was a penciled note accompanying the picture: “Thurber’s father.” I compared the image with the illustration of Charlie Thurber in *The Thurber Album* and the facial features match up.

So what the heck is Charlie Thurber doing in *Cupid in Hell*?

We can, of course, suppose a torrid love affair between Clara and Charlie, but the truth may be more mundane. It’s possible that the publisher was simply using a photo they had on hand. I found a reference in the *Dispatch* to the publication of the book but no



An original drawing by Harry J. Westerman of the Young Lady across the Way, the creation of Robert O. Ryder.



Clara Eleanor Wagner, author of *Cupid in Hell*, in which Charlie Thurber makes an unexpected appearance.

trace of any gossip regarding it, so we can only guess at the reaction of Thurber’s mother and her father, the redoubtable William M. Fisher. I think we can safely guess that their responses would have been strident.

An anecdote about his father in *The Thurber Album* may adumbrate Charlie’s predicament. Thurber wrote that “in 1908, trying to fix the snap lock of the door to his sons’ rabbit pen, he succeeded only after getting inside the cage, where he was imprisoned for three hours with six Belgian hares and thirteen guinea pigs.”

Was this an attempt to overlay a family crisis with a retrospective coating of humor?

Thurber contributed only a few dust jacket blurbs to other writers’ books. One appears in *More in Sorrow*, a collection of work by *New Yorker* writer Wolcott Gibbs, who was best known for his sharp-edged parody of *Time* magazine (“Backward ran sentences until reeled the mind”), and another is in *Now Let Me Tell You...* by *Dispatch* columnist Johnny Jones.

If you come across a copy of *Now Let Me Tell You...*, you may be excited to see that it is signed by the author with a self-caricature that includes his hat, glasses, and ever-present pipe. I hate to pop your balloon, but it is my bibliophilic duty to inform you that the book is extremely scarce in the UNSIGNED condition.

The Dispatch enlisted Milton Caniff and Thurber to write dust jacket blurbs. Thurber’s effort, entitled “Jim Looks at Johnny,” included an account of the great Canal Winchester fire. But you say that you’ve never heard of the great Canal Winchester fire?

It turns out that there’s a reason for that. Read on...



James Thurber wrote a memorable blurb for Johnny Jones' *Now Let Me Tell You...*

"I first became aware of Johnny Jones more than 30 years ago, in somewhat the same way that I first became aware of thunder and lightning. He has always had a unique ability to descend on your consciousness in such a way that you don't forget him. I remember him banging into the *Dispatch* office, waving his facts and fantasies and conclusions as if they were flags. When he is right, he is never dull, and when he is wrong he is wonderful.

"One day, 28 years ago, he exploded into the office with the news that Canal Winchester was burning to the ground. It turned out that it wasn't, but I will always think of it as the great Canal Winchester fire.

"As a youth he made a deep impression on everybody he met, and has not diminished his intense excitement about everything and everybody. All things are phenomenal to Johnny Jones and he views nothing with a lack-lustre eye.

"He approaches his typewriter on the run and fights it as if it were an opponent in the prize ring. Occasionally he leaves the English language lying there bruised and bleeding, but his defeats of it are always colorful. When he insists that 'there is an alley between every street in Columbus,' you may doubt it in your mundane way, but the image sticks in your mind.

"This book is Johnny Jones speaking, and thumping

you on the chest, to emphasize what he is saying. There is no other voice, or thump, quite like it in modern American journalism. If Johnny Jones were to go out, the city of Columbus would become strangely dark and much, much too quiet and restful. Long may he wave his facts and fantasies."

In the long and not-very-storied history of dust jacket blurbs, this has to rank as one of the best.

Answer key to quiz:

1. *Is Sex Necessary?*
2. *Fables for Our Time*
3. "The Dog That Bit People"
4. "The Night the Bed Fell"
5. "All right, have it your way—you heard a seal bark!"
6. *The Thirteen Clocks*
7. *The Wonderful O*
8. "The Night the Ghost Got In"
9. *The Last Flower*
10. *The Thirteen Clocks*
11. *Many Moons*
12. *The Great Quillow*

last page

my door slab fire do
 using air & itch
 untouched a dank eye
 blank spot whirls
 through my speech a
 sticky floor a cor
 ner's corner left
 breath behind the lamp
 congestive leak said
 me book dissolves

—John M. Bennett

Remembering Long's College Book Store and The Bibliophile: Part 2

By Genie Hoster

The Bibliophile

Frank Long, Sr. never threw out anything, according to his former store manager James J. Weaver. Long's son Robert, who loved books, spent many hours enthusiastically digging through the millions of books which had accumulated in the store's cluttered storage areas. He taught himself how to identify first editions and subsequently unearthed valuable editions which had become stockpiled and forgotten about. He quickly learned that he could sell these dusty volumes (which had cost his father less than a dollar each) for a tidy profit.

Just shy of 30 years of age at this time, Robert decided to name his new business The Bibliophile. There was few – if any – book stores in Columbus at that time. Encouraging his son's new undertaking, Frank Long allowed him to locate this new enterprise inside his own flourishing book establishment. Robert immediately began running advertising throughout the state, offering to pay cash for single books or even for complete private libraries. He also offered his services to appraise estates. Robert sold these new acquisitions and added recently-issued books by popular writers to his inventory. Encouraged by his success, his father officially designated The Bibliophile as a separate department of Long's College Book Store.

In order to compete successfully against other book operations nationwide, Robert studied other stores' catalogues and shrewdly discovered there were regional differences in the demand for certain books. By 1938 he had amassed an inventory of 4,500 books, many with high value.

With its handsome, wood-paneled décor, The Bibliophile established an identity apart from the other departments at Long's. In fact for a brief time, Robert relocated his operation to a small retail space adjoining the much-larger Long's. According to the late ornithologist and writer Tom Thomson, "The Bibliophile was a very classy little bookstore wedged between Long's College Bookstore and Hennick's, a popular student hangout."

Robert hired the genial Gene Rea to manage his new enterprise. Rea had formerly been on the faculty at the Columbus School for Girls and on the staff of the *Ohio State Journal*. Thomson remembered Rea: "He had a keen sense of humor and he was humanistic in his outlook toward life." Both were members of the Wheaton Club, which was formed for devoted birders; they spent many hours in pursuit of the feathered beauties of natural history.*

The Bibliophile's inventory featured both a bargain room, as well as an area which sold some of the highest-

priced books in the country. Robert's collection of rare books, which he said was valued at an estimated \$20,000 (\$360,000 in today's money), was one of the first collections put on commercial display in Columbus. The retail display in his rare books room included first editions of Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* and *Innocents Abroad*; Wallace's *Ben Hur*; Crane's *Red Badge of Courage*; and Thoreau's *Walden* – all available for sale at The Bibliophile. Robert became a locally respected rare book dealer and was subsequently recognized as one of the country's leading book collectors.

In addition to selling fine sets of deluxe editions and important new books, Long sold books from the Modern Library collection (which sold for 95 cents a copy until 1946). Lower-priced popular editions of the day also included Blue Ribbon books (an imprint of [Reynal & Hitchcock](#), which began selling for \$1 each), and the Star series, originally known as Star Dollar books.

During the early 1950s, Robert's bookish activities expanded even further when he began republishing scarce titles from the store's vintage stock, particularly titles about the American West, which were becoming much sought-after. At this time, popular television programs and movies were recounting real and imagined heroes and villains, all hoping to depict life in the American West during the nineteenth century. Robert chose to publish books which chronicled America's story previous to its earlier, twentieth century war years.

Long made a special effort to ensure that these reprints were carefully produced and faithful to the originals. Generally issued as limited editions, his reprints always had verbatim text, and sometimes even had embossed covers or dust jackets. Titles included E.W. Gould's *Fifty Years on the Mississippi* and Robert E. Gardner's *American Arms & Arms Makers*.

But sadly, Robert Long died in 1953 at the relatively young age of 47 years.

The Literary Trade in Columbus Was Growing

Long's bookstore and the Bibliophile were not the only stores to sell books in Columbus after the beginning of the twentieth century. The largest was McClelland's Bookstore which had opened during the 1880s. (It would become the last of the old-time bookstores when it finally closed operations in 1975, after nearly 100 years in business.) Readers could also purchase books from many Columbus department stores including bygone names such as Z. L. White, Beggs Department Store, Dunn & Taft, and Geo. W. Beall – all had book departments.

In addition to a book department which sold new titles, Green-Joyce also had a circulating book department. Columbus readers also patronized the Newbook and Kelmscott bookstores which competed with Long's store.

In anticipation of its Diamond Jubilee year in 1926, Lazarus began enlarging and moving many departments into unused space on the upper floors of their building. Midwestern bookseller Lulu Teeter was recruited to move to Columbus and run Lazarus' new book operation. *The Columbus Dispatch* would later note that Teeter built the Lazarus Book Shop to a point where it was "often cited in the book trade as a model of what such departments should be."

However, Long's largest competitor in Columbus textbook sales was The Student Book Exchange (SBX). They began operation in the spring of 1953, when Basil Long (no relation to Frank Long, Sr.) opened its doors. Basil had been a buyer for Long's wholesale division since he first came to Ohio State University in 1935. In 1956, after successfully competing with Long's bookstore, SBX began construction of its own two-story building at the corner of Fourteenth and High St., just one block south of Long's. It would remain here until it closed 61 years later.

Then-OSU student Paul Watkins (one of the Aldus Society's founding members), who had been studying for the bar while he was working as head of the stock boys in Long's wholesale division, helped with the opening of SBX's new location. Paul arrived on the Ohio State campus that autumn where he began working at SBX – and never left.

Changes, Always Changes

After spending his lifetime in books, it was natural that Frank Long Sr. wanted to keep the business in his family, so several family members stepped up to assist the aging Frank Sr. to continue operating the many facets of the business during the mid-1950s.

But two years after Robert's death, Frank Sr. died at age 75. His younger son Frank Jr., who had joined the store in 1956, agreed to take charge of the massive bookstore's operations. The younger Frank had trained as a physician and had been practicing medicine in Point Pleasant, West Virginia. He had many ideas for continuing and growing the business. He added wearing apparel, school supplies, greeting cards, posters and other merchandise to the store's inventory. And he opened a large commercial art department on the lower level which would become a favorite destination for the many artists in the Columbus community. But Frank also decided to close his late brother's rare books department – undoubtedly there was nobody in the Columbus area who could duplicate his brother's energy and knowledge about rare books. Frank sold the Bibliophile's inventory of 11,000 rare and first-

edition books to the OSU library. In 1988, his daughter Jacquelin also began working at Long's and would become the last member of the Long family to work there.

After over forty years at the helm, Frank Jr. passed in 1998. His estate sold the building and several other parcels in the area to Campus Partners for Urban Redevelopment, the university's non-profit development agency. Campus Partners leased the store's massive building to Barnes and Noble, which continued selling both textbooks and retail titles. For a while, at least, business continued as usual.

However in 2005, Barnes and Noble decided to move their campus operation from the former Long's location to the newly-completed South Campus Gateway complex at Eleventh and High streets – the very corner where Frank Long had started his business a full century before. Certainly a classic example of serendipity. In addition to their own Barnes & Noble sign, the newly-located store thoughtfully reinstalled the original Long's green and red neon sign.

Demolition...and a Mysterious Tunnel

In 2016, Frank Long's Fifteenth and High building was torn down and replaced by a newer – and much larger – building. However, the demolition of this block exposed a mystery surrounding early campus history. As they were digging out the basement of the long-closed Long's store and its neighboring buildings on the block, workers exposed what appeared to be the arched entrance to a tunnel which crawled under High Street from the east side near Long's and apparently extended toward Sullivant Hall on campus.**

History lovers – and primarily urban legend theorists – postulate that this newly-discovered tunnel entrance fronted a secret subterranean speakeasy which operated during prohibition. They suggest that it might have been operated by someone associated with Long's, or by the folks who ran Hennick's, located just next door.

Interior photos of OSU's utility tunnels can be viewed on several OSU-associated sites found on the 'net. Comparing a newspaper photo of the archway of the newly-discovered tunnel with photos and original drawings of the subterranean utility tunnels, the profiles and stone arch work *seem* identical. However the newly-uncovered tunnel entrance was backfilled because the project's civil engineers warned that disturbing the tunnel might cause the collapse of High Street. So for the foreseeable future, the mysterious tunnel entrance, if that's what it is, will remain unexplored, continuing to perpetrate yet another campus-area tall tale.

* The Wheaton Club was organized by Ohio State University and named in honor of the famed

pioneering physician and ornithologist John Maynard Wheaton, who wrote landmark books after observing and documenting the appearance and habits of over 200 Ohio birds.

** Since 1896, a maze of tunnels has been built under the university's east campus. These tunnels, which were originally excavated by prison labor, connected major buildings such as Thompson Library, Orton Hall, and the Armory building to one another and to the central steam heating plant for campus. Today they carry steam heat, water, electric, telephone cables, and gas pipes throughout the east campus. Running directly under the sidewalks crisscrossing the two ovals, the heat from these tunnels also lessens the need for shoveling snow on campus during the winter.

Author's notes: Early portions of this story were researched and written by the late Aldus member, book lover, and local historian Jane Ware. Many thanks to Jacquelin Long Vaughan for availing her extensive family scrapbook, which contains the history of Long's College Book Store and served as the cornerstone for this article. (This scrapbook is now in the Rare Books archives at The Ohio State University Libraries). The remainder of this article was researched and written by founding Aldus trustee and president, and retired antiquarian book dealer Genie Hoster. It is hoped that one – or more – books honoring the multitude of previous Columbus book dealers such as Frank Long – who have played an important role in early Columbus history – might see the light of day during our current millennium.

(Part 1 of this article appeared in the Spring 2026 issue)

Books In, Books Out: A Bookstore-y

By George Cowmeadow Bauman

A 60-something guy came into our bookshop, complimented me on my cowboy hat, and cocked an ear to the stereo, which was playing "Step by Step" by Johnny Maestro and the Crests from 1960. "Now *that's* music!" he said with admiration.

He had two boxes of cookbooks to sell. I spent the next 10 minutes researching them online while we listened to a great oldies CD playing Duane Eddy's "Rebel Rouser," the Everly Brothers "Till I Kissed Ya," Bobby Vee's big 1961 hit, "Take Good Care of My Baby," and The Fleetwood's "Come Softly to Me." He and I sang variously along here and there to the nostalgia-inducing tunes.

After accepting my offer for his books, he began talking about his collection, as I prompted him to do. He has about 1,000 cookbooks, "many of them bought in the country of the cuisine." He told stories of his international cookbook-collecting adventures, especially in Paris and Argentina.

One of the perks of being a bookseller—and hairdressers and bartenders—is talking to customers, most of whom are happy to be asked about themselves and their life's adventures: their travels, their books, their families, and lots more. Many of my bookstore-ies came from such chats. At Acorn, we enjoyed personalizing the commercial transaction.

I told him that we had a cookbook collector so serious that all cookbooks we bought were offered to him before being served, er, shelved.

We chatted about his books for about 15 minutes, and then I asked him, "Knock on wood that nothing happens to you for a long time, but what have you done

to make provision for your books after you're gone?"

"A very good question," he said quite seriously. "In fact, I've been thinking of coming in and talking to you about that very topic. You're the only one I've found who loves and appreciates books."

Leading him to my goal, I asked him what his thinking had led him to do about his books.

"That's a very good question," he repeated, lifting his old red OSU cap with his right hand and running his left through his thinning hair on the side of his broad, pink head. "I need to give that some more thought, but thank you for raising the topic."

I told him that I'd asked other serious collectors who were customers of the store the same question. I knew that some collections would go to family members, and others would be donated to institutions, but I'd also seen some inherited, unwanted books tossed into a garage sale for a buck or two, when each of them might sell online for \$25 and up.

He reacted physically, backing up a step.

"Oh, no, that shouldn't *happen!*"

Then, shaking his head, he said, "My family isn't a bit interested, seeing my books as more clutter than anything else. I want to make sure my cookbooks go to someone who will appreciate my effort to put this collection together over many years and through many countries.

"I have some valuable books there. One cookbook—about cooking in the White House during the Bush administration—is signed by the author as well as Barbara and George Bush! And I have some 19th century books that also have value. Maybe another collector would be interested. Maybe that collector you mentioned that

comes in here..."

I told him that I'd show our collector the books he brought in today, but as he thinks about the future of his beloved cookbooks, he might do as some of the other collectors have done—clip one of our business cards to his will. "That way the one who inherits the books has at the very least a professional to talk to about dispersing the books in the best way possible."

Our uninterrupted time together came to an end as another guy brought an expensive set of cartography books to the counter.

Cookbook Man stepped away from the counter, and turning toward the door, thanked me for our conversation. "Yes, you have given me something very serious to think about with your very good question. Yes, a very good question..." and out into the sunshine he walked.

Cartography Man was a young, mustachioed British-accented guy who had come in with a former regular who hasn't been in recently. Because he is knowledgeable about jazz, the staff nickname for him is "Jazz John."

"Hi, John!" I greeted him. "Haven't seen you for a while."

He's not very effusive and muttered toward the floor a muddled acknowledge of my welcome.

His friend Map-Man lifted the very heavy 7-volume set of *The History of Cartography* onto the counter. "I came in looking for this set, for you have the only one listed online. But then I had second thoughts, but third

thoughts made me go ahead and spring for them." He paused for a moment as our cashier Brahmi began ringing up the set and the other books on maps he'd gathered.

Somewhat shyly, he said, "When the seventh volume of this set comes out, I'll be in it." He glanced from the set to me, and I exclaimed about him being a professional cartographer. My own interest in maps goes back to my father, a geography teacher. As well, more recently I was the Manager of The Map Store in Columbus in the early 90s.

That day's cartophile was in his first semester teaching at the University of Kentucky. I inquired about his classes and their content, which he seemed pleased to discuss; "It's all about GIS—Geographical Information Systems," he explained.

I could see Brahmi was finished and ready to announce the total to the mapper, so I paused. He didn't bat an eye at \$749, and we treated it with professional dispassion, though I did thank him a couple of times as he waited for his friend to bring the car around so that the heavy box didn't have to be carried far.

So very good books go out, and I planted the seed for a very good collection of good books to possibly come into the store.

Books in, books out.

Now that's what a good bookshop is all about.

Ode to the Cinquain

By C. Mehrl Bennett

Adelaide Crapsey [1878 – 1914] created an American short poetry form similar to Japanese predecessors. Like Ezra Pound, she admired the short form of haiku; three lines, generally following a 5-7-5 syllable count in English. The five unrhymed lines of the cinquain also followed accentual-syllabic requirements. The lines consisted of two, four, six, eight, and two syllables (or accents), respectively. In addition to her preferred metrical scheme, Crapsey strove for a sudden perception of truth typically found in Japanese haiku. A buildup of syllables in consecutive lines helps dramatize the final line, which reverts to two syllables. Working within the structure of syllables frees me up to improvise as I write each line and then pull it all together at the end with two syllables. Like any poem, a cinquain could be titled or untitled. Crapsey's five-line short form is unintimidating, and I hope many Aldus members will try it out, as they did for a previous Aldus newsletter that featured limericks. In this cinquain triplet, I write the final verse as a visual cinquain instead of a literal cinquain; each syllable is represented by a quotation mark.

Three Drunken Cinquains

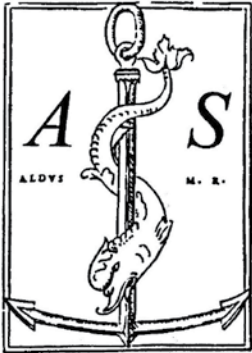
Under
a new flashpoint,
what do you hear inside
his head? Anxious babbling within,
saying...

"Not cool
Hey ha! My dear
It's hard to put store in
A drunken cocky toast master
Listen..."

" "
" " " "
" " " " " "
" " " " " " " "
" "

— C. Mehrl Bennett, 3/9/26

From the Archives: Founders of The Aldus Society (from the 20th Anniversary Newsletter, Published in January 2020)



Aldus Reflects

The 20th Anniversary of The Aldus Society
2000 – 2020

Founders

Lois Smith
(front left)

Geoffrey D. Smith
(front center)

Paul Watkins
(back left)

Jay Hoster
(back left center)

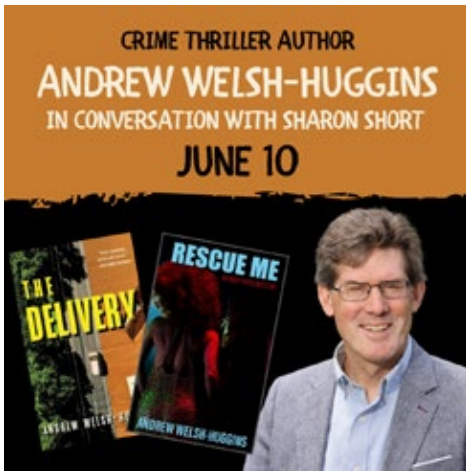
Genie Hoster
(back right center)

George Bauman
(back right)



Photo taken at Thurber House by Leah Wharton

Summer 2026 Programs at Thurber House



June 10 Summer Literary Picnic:
Authors Andrew Welsh-Huggins
and Sharon Short



June 24 Summer Literary Picnic:
Jazz Historian Jack Marchbanks



July 8 Summer Literary Picnic:
Poets Barbara Fant and
Dionne Custer Edwards



July 13 Summer Literary Picnic:
Pulitzer Prize Finalist Wil Haygood



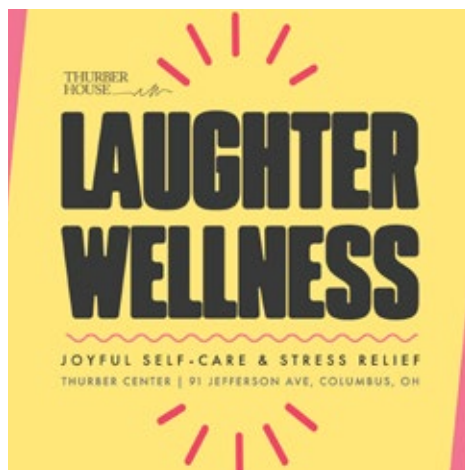
**July 22 Book Bar (Adult Social
Mixer for Book Lovers)**



July 29 Summer Literary Picnic:
Former Zookeeper Beth Armstrong



**Adult Writers' Studio: Beginner,
Fiction, and Memoir Intensives**



**Laughter Wellness
(Joyful Self-Care and Stress Relief)**



**Summer Writing Camp
(Day Camps for Grades 2-9)**

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