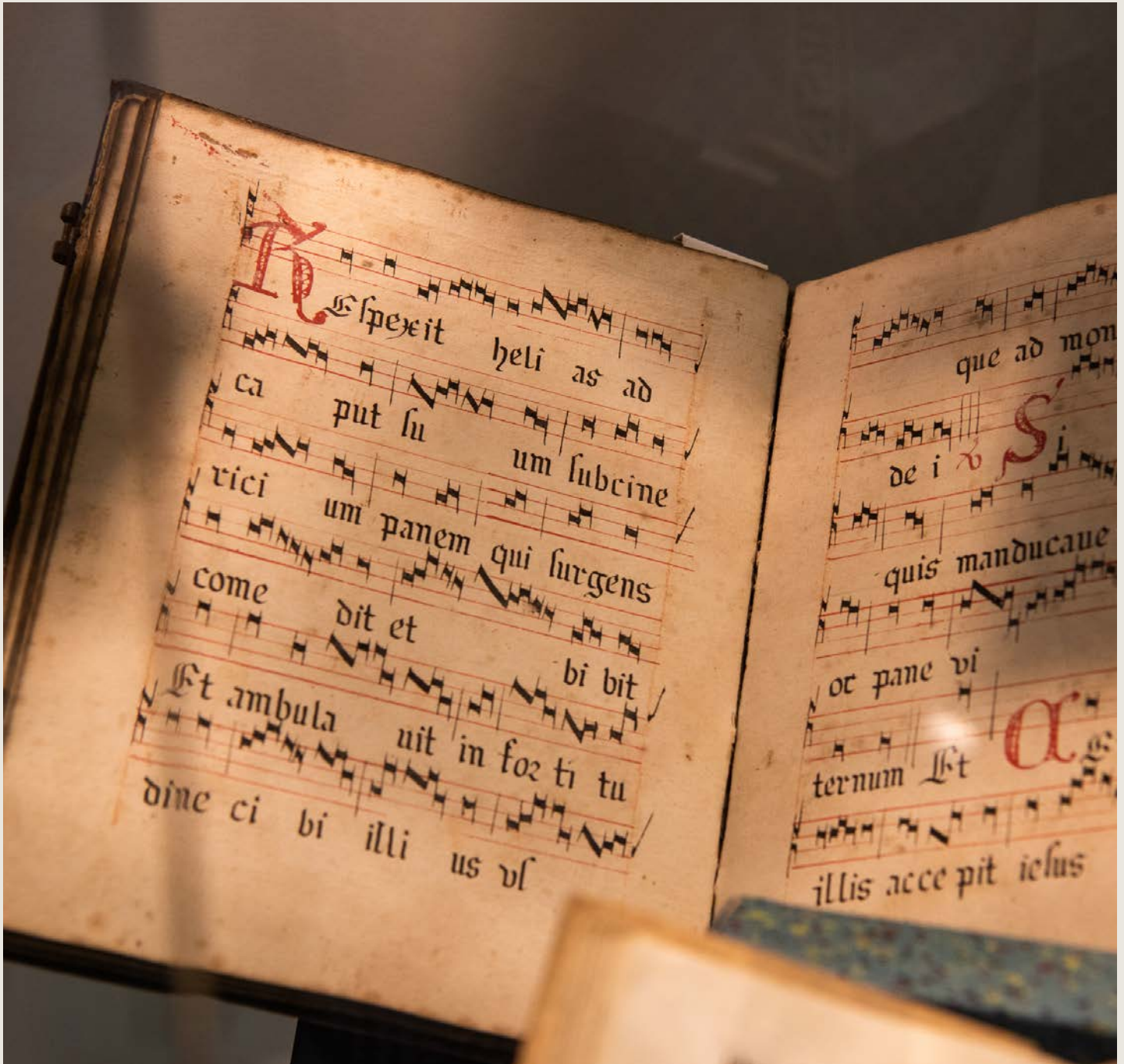


ANTIQUARIAN BOOKSELLERS' ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER



AUTUMN 2024
ISSUE 419

news - events - articles - minutes



A letter from the ABA President

Deborah Coltham

Welcome to the latest issue of the ABA Newsletter. As I write, the summer is coming to an end, and we are all, I hope, enjoying the start of the new season's events. What better time then, to reflect upon the past six months, on members past and present, on issues concerning the trade, and to look ahead to what is going to be an even busier conclusion to 2024.

It was wonderful to be back in Edinburgh for the fair in March, and my thanks to all involved, and to the exhibitors and visitors who made it an enjoyable few days. I was delighted that we could coincide the AGM with the fair, giving an opportunity for those members further away from London to attend. Plans are already well underway for next year's fair, the fair Committee investigating a new venue in a more central location.

Firsts London once again proved that it is now an established fixture in the international calendar. The choice of theme, 'The Art of the Book', was particularly successful, and enabled exhibitors to offer up a vibrant and visual array of material which, as the fair report notes, 'attested to the extraordinary history of the book'. Having taken the decision to charge a small entry fee on Saturday as a means of introducing some crowd control, footfall overall was down a little on 2023, as expected. Total exhibitor sales were up, however, by 2.5%, with private customer sales being particularly strong this year – an encouraging sign. The partnership with the FT Weekend yielded crucial advertising and promotional opportunities, and we were particularly thrilled with how well our partnership went with the Friends of the Bodleian Libraries.

The heat was undoubtedly, and unfortunately, an issue – especially on the first night and on the upper floor. A letter of complaint was sent to the Trustees of the Gallery, based upon our feedback, and, at the time of writing, we are hopeful that improvements to the air conditioning system are in the pipeline for next year. We will keep you posted. My thanks again, on behalf of us all, to the Fair Committee for their hard work behind the scenes, and in particular to the Chair Pom Harrington, who has announced that he will be stepping down from the role. Congratulations and thanks to Tom Lintern-Mole who has agreed to take over sole charge next year – though the pair will work together overseeing Firsts London 2025. Whilst not able to exhibit myself this year unfortunately, I was delighted to visit the new joint ABA/



Deborah at Firsts London 2024 with Jason Burley of Camden Lock Books

PBFA Bath fair held at the end of July. Held in the iconic Bath Pavilion, over eighty dealers from both associations came together, and reported sales were healthy and again encouraging. As with any new fair, there were inevitably a few teething problems, notably with lighting, but the fair organisers worked to address these, and more can be done for when the fair returns again in June next year.

In September a new cohort of students headed to York for YABS – this year in a new larger venue and once again scheduled for the week preceding the York Book Fair to allow for the graduating students to quickly put into practice their newly honed skills, both scouting the fair, and, in many cases, gaining practical book fair experience working for various dealers.

Hot on the heels of YABS, I know that many of us will be heading to Amsterdam for the ILAB Congress. The week starts with the ILAB President's meeting, which, if last year's day in Stockholm is anything to go by, will be an informative and collegial day of meetings and discussions. I look forward to being able to report back in the next newsletter in early 2025. The Dutch Association have a hard act to follow after the triumph of the 2022 Congress in Oxford, but they have an exciting programme scheduled, and as ever it will be a wonderful opportunity to meet and network with colleagues from all over the world, to exchange ideas and experiences, as well as explore the many bibliophilic highlights that Amsterdam has on offer.

Before we know it, Chelsea will be upon us at the beginning of November. There was a huge sigh of relief from all involved when the snap General Election was called in July rather than November! Registration is going well, with a number of new exhibitors signed up to exhibit, and we look forward to welcoming them to the splendours of Chelsea Town Hall.

Whilst the end of year is the curtain call for fairs in the UK, Chelsea is not the end of the ABA fair calendar however, with preparations well underway for the inaugural Firsts Hong Kong, which will run from 6-8 December 2024 at the Hong Kong Maritime Museum. As we've said before, the ABA runs a range of very different fairs, but offering selling opportunities to suit all members we hope.

With regards to other dates for your diary, the 45th Annual Conference on Book Trade History will once again take place at Stationers' Hall from November 17th-19th. The topic this year is 'Beyond books – Diversification in the book trade' and promises to be a fascinating couple of days as always. I know too, that the office is working on arranging some more Friends of the ABA events, so stay tuned for future announcements. Bernard Shapero has very kindly offered to host the ABA Christmas Party on December 11th in his new shop. Please do make a note in the diary – always a convivial evening and lovely way to end the year.

As always, none of this would be possible without our ABA office. Many thanks as always to Riley and Rachel for their hard work, and to Sarah Keefe who handles the accounts so efficiently. Wishing you all a happy and prosperous second half of the year.

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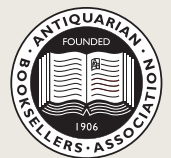
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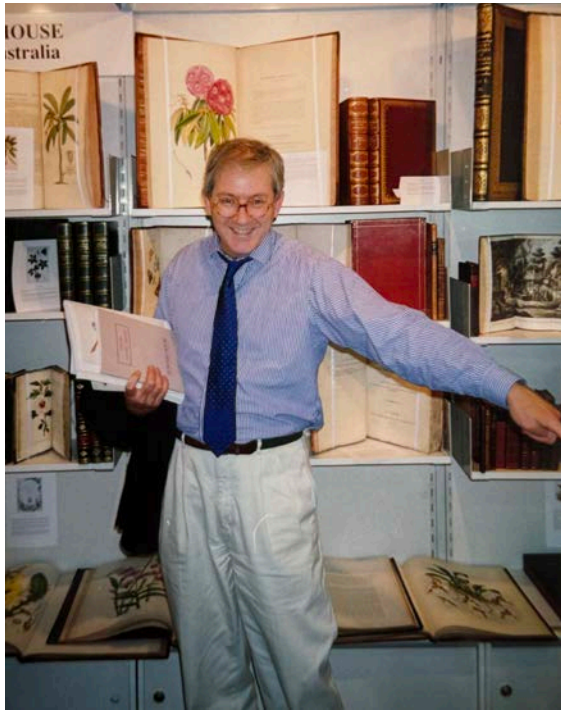


Cover image: Decorated manuscript for female Franciscan use, 1550, Stephen Butler Rare Books & Manuscripts. © Jon Baker

In Memoriam

Rick Watson

By Allard Schierenberg &
Bruce Marshall



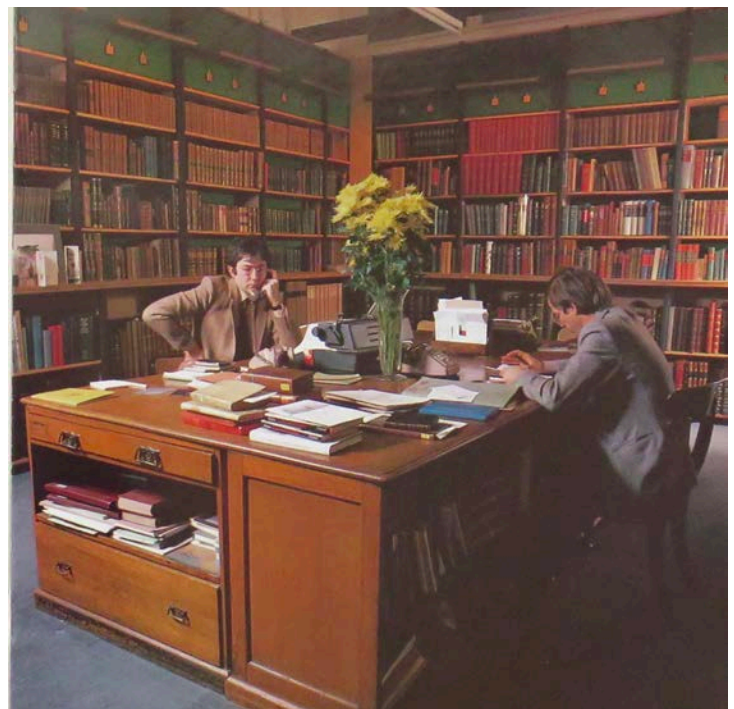
One of his most stunning achievements at that time was his cataloguing of the Robert de Belder collection of Botanical Books, 917 items with elaborate and extensive descriptions. The finest items of the de Belder collection - 'A Magnificent Collection of Botanical Books' - were sold at auction by Sotheby's in 1987, a huge success. Shortly after that Rick became an independent bookseller specializing in science and natural history. Between 1990 and 2018 he issued 22 beautifully illustrated catalogues, as well as a number of lists. His descriptions of the books are detailed and imaginative, very often shedding unexpected light on an item.

Rick was an excellent organizer. In time he moved from London to California to be near his children

Rick was working at Kew Books around 1975 where we both independently met him. The bookshop was established by John Chancellor in 1973 and specialized in gardening books. He was sharing a flat with Mick Jagger's brother and loved the music scene in London at that time.

In a published interview for the 'Bookdealer' in September 1994 John describes Rick as follows:

"While all this was going on, I found an assistant to help at Kew. He was a tall, lugubrious American - a kind of intellectual hippy - who lived in Kew and spent hours every day looking at my books. As he never bought anything, I suggested it might be better if he came to work for me. His name was Rick Watson - a first-class person - and he stayed a few years and wrote some catalogues for me. He had always wanted to work at Quaritch so I contacted them and said 'Rick's a wonderful person - I just don't want him chain-smoking in my house. He would be much better in your office.' Quaritch took him and he made millions of pounds for them". We became independently friends with Rick when he was working at Quaritch, where we were frequent visitors. Occasionally we both would buy books together with Rick.



Rick Watson at Quaritch (director of Natural History), early 80s

and his love Sandra, buying and refurbishing a beautiful property near San Francisco. He recently sold his books at auction and could enjoy the fact that some items did very well.

Rick will always be remembered by those who knew him as a very gifted bookseller in his fields of interest, having acquired and sold numerous outstanding copies of rare works, including a presentation copy of a first edition Darwin *Origin*; a fine first edition of Vesalius, and Pacioli's rare work in original boards, to name a few.

During all these years, until recently, we three would buy many unusually rare and precious items. Apart from the fact that this combination was highly successful, it very much enriched our lives as we had all become close friends. We will miss him a lot and we are sure that his family, friends and collectors will remember his enthusiasm for art, opera, wine, and of course a beautiful book.

A tribute to Rick Watson by his daughter Beatie Wolfe

Rick Watson, with his boundless depth, breadth, and many lives, was a Renaissance man, an "old school" bookseller, but also a radical, a trailblazer. With minimal money, and no road map, Rick built up his business from scratch (after making the greatest sale in the history of Quaritch at the time) to become a leading independent dealer in Science and Natural History.

'Renowned for his erudition, his kindness, and—above all—his exacting standards of condition,' Rick's eagle eye was second-to-none, able to spot discrepancies often missed. This included the key role Rick played in uncovering the De Caro forgeries and many other discoveries which forever changed the trade. While avoiding the spotlight himself, Rick was always motivated and enthused to do the best work for the work's sake. As a quiet custodian of a world few knew, his vast contributions, while often unnamed, make up an infinite stream. Even as his child, it was impossible to fully know Rick Watson and yet I find his influence imprinted everywhere.

As a writer and poet, Rick had written a poem in the early 1970s called 'Amazons' which combined historical accounts of Francisco de Orellana's 1541 expedition with Indigenous perspectives. This was intended to be published at the time of writing and now 50 years on, with his final edits, will come to light. It is a hypnotic and haunting epic which ends with the following line, "the river widens so that the shores disappear." May Rick's legacy live on in all the lives he flowed into, shaped, and enriched.

"Bookselling has been a sustaining profession and pleasure for many decades." - [Rick Watson](#)



Rick Watson at California International Antiquarian Book Fair, 2020



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Meet our *New Members*

Welcome to the ABA! Can you tell us a bit about how you first found your way into the trade?

Thank you! I joined Peter Harrington ten years ago, a couple of years after finishing university, and I've been here ever since. A lot has happened in that time, from opening our Mayfair shop to taking joint ownership of William Reese Co., so it's been an exciting time to be part of the firm.

What is your favourite aspect of working in the world of rare books?

It's hard to pick just one! Being able to work with the depth and breadth of material that comes across my desk is pretty special. I love uncovering the stories behind the items that I'm cataloguing, and sharing that with my colleagues and our customers is really fulfilling. I also wear a lot of different hats at Peter Harrington - whether that's editing our latest catalogue, training new cataloguers, or researching books to acquire - so I enjoy the way that no two days are the same.

If you had to choose just one, what would you say your key specialism is, and what drew you to it?

As far as a specialism goes, I mainly work with literature, with a particular interest in works by women. A few years ago I created Peter Harrington's first catalogue of works by women, *In Her Own Words*, with my colleague Emma Walshe, and we followed that up last year with our second catalogue, *Louder Than Words*, both of which were well received.

Do you have a favourite item you have worked on recently?

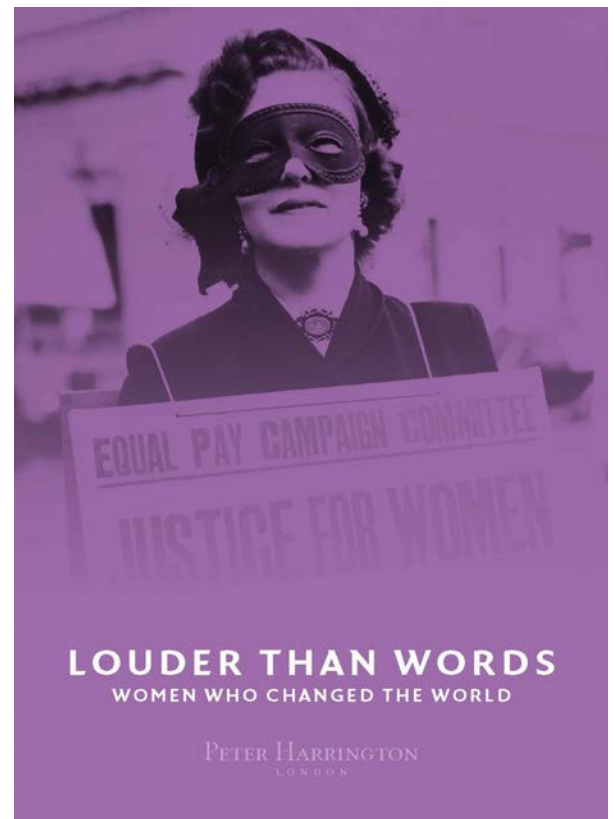
This one is a bit self-indulgent, as one of my hobbies is coxing! I really enjoyed researching a pair of photograph albums from the late 1800s that belonged to a student at Oxford who rowed in the Boat Race. The images were beautiful and unusually high quality. It was an incredible snapshot both of Boat Race history and of hedonistic student life at the end of the nineteenth century.

What are you most excited and most concerned about in the current landscape of the rare book trade?

I'm really excited about the influx of younger members into the trade. They're so keen and full of new ideas, which is really invigorating. I remember attending YABS in its inaugural year and it's been fantastic to watch it go from strength to strength: I think that bodes well for the trade. I think it's key to make sure that enthusiasm is nurtured and that the trade continues to evolve and hopefully become more diverse.

Do you have a favourite book fair?

It has to be New York! The buzz and the crowd make it an incredible experience. I also used to love the Brooklyn book fair - it was a fun "season opener"! - though sadly it didn't survive the pandemic.



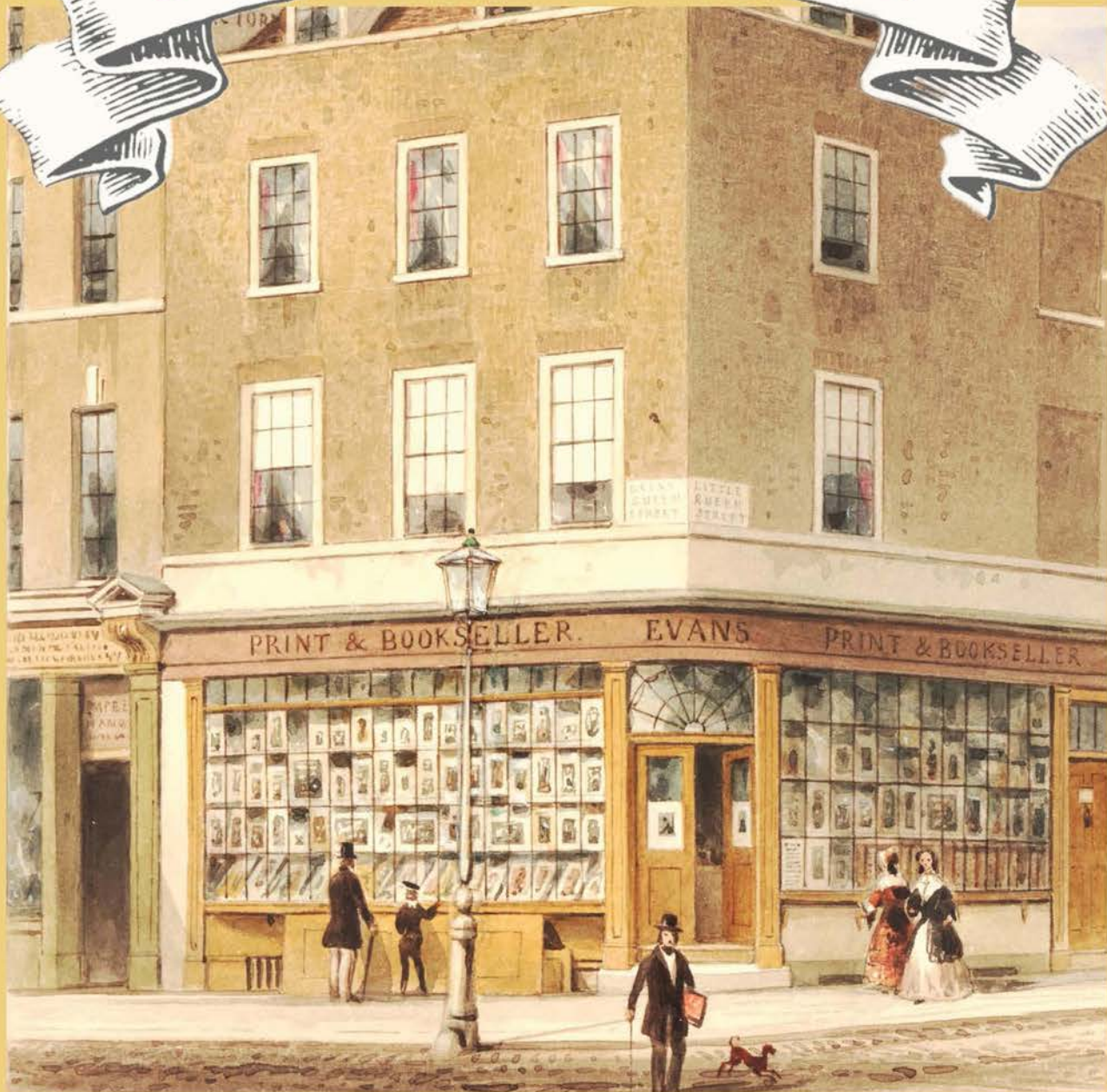
Peter Harrington's 2023 catalogue *Louder Than Words*, co-curated with Emma Walshe

50 Years a Bookseller *Rusty Mott*



I am extremely pleased to have received my 50 Years a Bookseller pin, and I'm only sorry I could not do so in person. My father was elected to membership in ABA by acclamation in 1953, and I happily maintain that membership to this day, a membership important to me for several reasons. I participated in my first London international book fair while assisting my parents as a 17-year-old in 1962. It was, I think, my first experience at any book fair, and it was an experience I greatly enjoyed. Entering the family business part-time in 1970, then full-time in 1972, my wife, Veta, and I began exhibiting at every June London book fair beginning in 1978, until 2002, when we began cutting back on taking a stand at book fairs. I have always had a soft spot for ABA, and all the members of it that we were lucky enough to meet and make friends with as we traveled the UK every year. My experience with the British trade really began with the visits of many ABA members to see my parents beginning in the late 1950s, many of them often staying with us. I am happy, and lucky, to have had the honor and privilege to spend time among them all.

**45th ANNUAL CONFERENCE
ON BOOK TRADE HISTORY**



BEYOND BOOKS

DIVERSIFICATION IN THE BOOK TRADE

Sunday 17 and Monday 18 November 2024
Stationers' Hall, Ave Maria Lane, London EC4M 7DD

*Organised by Giles Mandelbrote, Julian Pooley and Laura Cleaver
in association with the Antiquarian Booksellers' Association Educational Trust*

Collecting Notes

When Sotherans Became the Publishers of John Gould's Ornithological Works

By Robert Kirkman



John Gould's monumental vision for his ornithological works was to illustrate the majority of birds at life-size, and resulted initially in three double-page plates in *Birds of Australia* and a long vertical folding plate of the bird *Trogon Resplendens* in the first edition. John Gould, Elizabeth Gould, Edward Lear, H. C. Richter, William Hart, and Joseph Wolf made the finished drawings which, afterwards, were redrawn on stone. In the early years these redrawings were done by Elizabeth Gould, afterwards by Richter, and by Hart from 1851 onwards. Together, they produced over 3,300 different lithograph bird plates for Gould's ornithological works between 1832 and 1887 (I include the matching folio volumes of *Mammals of Australia* in the Gould canon). A leading specialist in natural history books once led me to believe that John Gould hand-coloured all of his own lithograph plates, which was a preposterous claim. We know that 750 copies of the *Birds of Great Britain* were printed, and 250 copies each of Gould's monographs. If we take an average of 500 copies printed of each of the 3,300 different lithograph plates throughout Gould's works we come to a total number of 1,650,000 individual plates (over 1.6 million lithograph plates).

None of the lithograph plates were ever reprinted from the lithograph stones and, in view of the vast quantity of printed lithographs available to Sotherans when they purchased Gould's publishing house (including the copyright) in 1881, there was no need to reprint. Practically speaking, not much could be done with over 3,300 heavy Solnhofen lithograph stones nearly the size of paving stones: Solnhofen limestone is soft and easily scratched or damaged. The lithograph stone for the snowy owl in *Birds of Great Britain* was dropped and cracked during the early stages of printing, which the colourists carefully disguised. This does not constitute a second issue but remains a production flaw. The stones were a liability and an embarrassment to Sotherans who disposed of them accordingly. Tradition within Sotherans holds that members of staff took some of the stones home for garden paths.

Experienced colourists, skilfully following the original publisher's "pattern" plates, could handcolour no more than an average of one plate a day during daylight hours, if a high standard of colouring was to be maintained. The paper needed first to be dampened before handcolouring could commence, and the colourist needed to be patient between applying different layers of watercolour. In some cases plates were heightened with gum arabic. The iridescent throats of some hummingbird plates were touched with gold leaf before the uncoloured lithographs plates were passed to colourists. Therefore, we must calculate that for John Gould to have handcoloured all of his own lithograph plates, even working 365 days a year, it would have taken him more than 4,520 years.

Even with a good team of colourists (which was a cottage industry with most working from home), to have completed colouring of all his published works during Gould's lifetime was unachievable. Gould originally published all his works in parts with cloth-backed boards and paper-covered sides, printed in black at £3.3s per part to subscribers, and Sotherans continued this practice. As an example, *Birds of Great Britain* was complete in 25 parts and *Hummingbirds* in 30 parts including supplement. Strictly speaking, only subscribers' copies can be guaranteed to have contemporary colouring or volumes bound from the original parts in morocco, with subscriber's bookplates, ownership inscriptions, or other convincing evidence. *Birds of Great Britain* was Gould's most popular and subscribed work, with 468 subscribers out of an edition of 750 copies, leaving 282 copies unsold for the retail market. In his introduction to *Birds of Great Britain* Gould wrote that every colourist in London was employed to meet customer demand.

During the 1870s and 1880s Sotherans were already publishing fine colour plate books, and these were the most active and productive years for them. When they purchased John Gould's publishing house in its entirety they became the official publishers of his ornithological works. *Birds of New Guinea*, five volumes, 1875-1881, was published by Sotherans and bears the Sotherans imprint. The supplement to *Hummingbirds* was published in 1887 and also bears their imprint. In 1891-1898 they published Richard Bowdler Sharpe's *Birds of Paradise* in two volumes, in an edition of 350 copies, uniformly produced to match Gould's canon of ornithological works.

As the official publishers, Sotherans continued to colour copies of Gould's works as required to meet

customer orders and to be sold in their bookshops in London Piccadilly, Manchester, and through their catalogues. Elegantly carved cabinets with plate glass doors were sometimes included with sets of Gould advertised in their catalogues. Colouring was not an inconsiderable expense and colour plate books were only coloured when required to meet customer demand. During my early years in the book trade there were some well-known West End London dealers, including Charles Sawyer, who held uncoloured remainder stocks of Butler's *South African Sketches* of 1841, and Quaritch, who held uncoloured remainder stocks of Mivart's *Monograph of the Lories* of 1896 with lithograph plates, which they continued to colour and bind well into the middle of the twentieth century.

With their vast quantity of books and plates, Sotherans continued to colour and bind Gould's bird books as the official publishers. The approximate date of the binding remains a clue to the age of Sotherans colouring. For the first half of the twentieth century and beyond, it was generally accepted that colouring could have been executed at any time unless it was specifically described as "contemporary". This was the accepted custom and practice of the antiquarian book trade when describing books with handcoloured plates, prints, and maps. Many antiquarian bookshops employed the services of a colourist. Nowadays, with few exceptions, the practice of ABA members employing the services of a colourist is less common, with colouring usually described as "later" in accordance with guidelines adopted in the early 1980s.

The term "contemporary" in relation to colouring can be loosely applied, but a modern entry in the Abebooks Glossary of Book Terms may be noted: "Contemporary – Refers to the time at which an action happened to the book in relation to its printing".

Mrs. Enriqueta Augustina Rylands built the John Rylands library in memory of her husband John Rylands. She started buying books with the assistance of J. Arnold Green for the library in 1889. Tradition within Sotherans holds that she went into Henry Sotheran & Co. not exactly dressed to impress. She was ignored by the manager, who would normally jump from his seat to welcome wealthy customers. Owing to a sharp-eyed junior assistant who came from Manchester, the manager was informed that she was in fact one of the richest women in the country. The manager promptly went forward to greet Mrs. Rylands, who told him she had been in Quaritch and had seen a First Folio Shakespeare of 1623 in a locked glass case. She was told by a Quaritch assistant that the manager had the key to the case in his pocket and had gone to lunch. Sotherans told her that she would be able to see the First Folio in her hotel before the day was out.

Sotherans, in the person of Alexander Railton, were taken on as agents for Rylands. They purchased the Althorp library of Earl Spencer on her behalf for £210,000 in 1892 and likewise the purchase of the manuscripts from the library of the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres soon followed afterwards for £155,000.

A near complete canon of Gould's ornithological works, uniformly bound in full dark green morocco and elaborate gilt by Zaehnsdorf, can be seen today in the John Rylands library under glass. It was purchased, probably new, by J. Arnold Green from Sotherans in 1891 on behalf of Rylands, with colouring executed by Sotherans after Gould's death.

I wish to thank Steven Hartshorne of the John Rylands Library who very kindly compiled a list for me of Gould's works in the Rylands library containing lists of subscribers, which are as follows: *Birds of Australia*; *Birds of Europe*; *Birds of Great Britain*; *Mammals of Australia*; *Partridges of America*; *Hummingbirds* and *Toucans*.

Victorian printers could print lithographs in far greater quantities than Victorian colourists could colour them. It took far longer than anybody could have imagined for colourists, carefully following Gould's "patterns", to handcolour over 1.5 million lithographs to fulfill Gould's vision. There are over 3,300 lithographs in a complete canon of Gould's ornithological works, in which I include the matching volumes of the *Mammals of Australia*. Aside from perhaps Audubon, what else in the world of antiquarian natural history compares to the vastness of Gould's monumental vision with the majority of birds depicted in life-size? It seems to me that a better distinction would be between publisher's early and publisher's later colouring, unless subscribers' copies can be proven. The remainder of flawless, uncirculated, and



uncoloured stock was in the hands of the publishers, and none other than Sotherans as publishers could have continued to colour copies of the books and plates.

Random Recollections of an Ordinary Dealer

Wining and Dining

By Christopher Saunders

Our new occasional series shares reminiscences, opinions, and experiences from around the rare book world.

Norwich Bookfair was at one stage a big two-day affair with upwards of 80 dealers. It was worth the long trek across East Anglia to spend three days in the city with the biggest number of urban mediaeval churches north of the Alps. Norwich had some good customers, including the expert on Rider Haggard, and Judge Blofeld, brother of sports journalist Henry Blofeld, whose father was at Eton with Ian Fleming and is assumed to have been the inspiration for Ernst Stavro Blofeld, villain par excellence in three of Fleming's Bond novels.

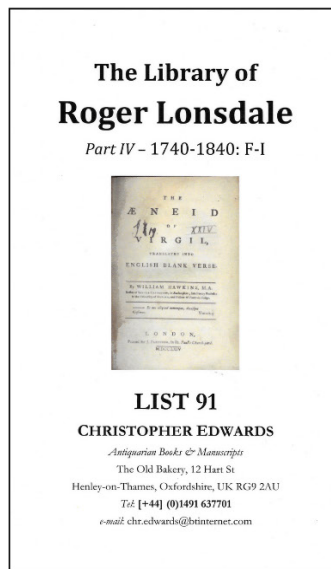
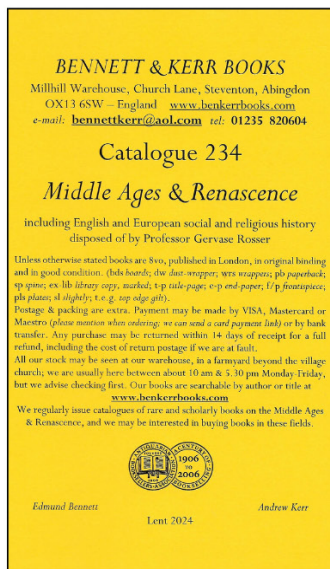
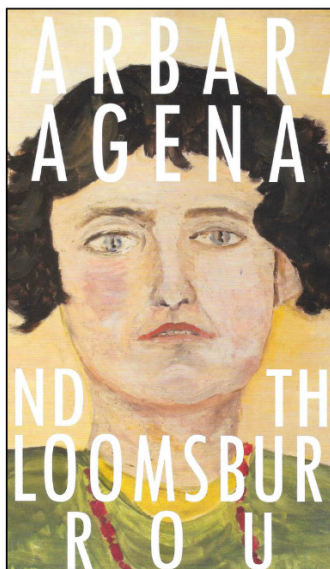
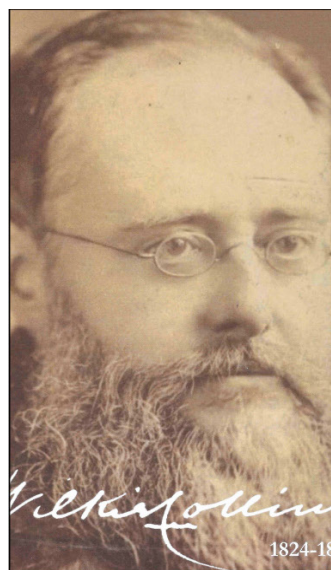
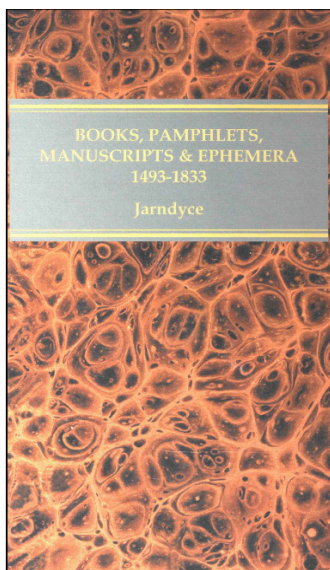
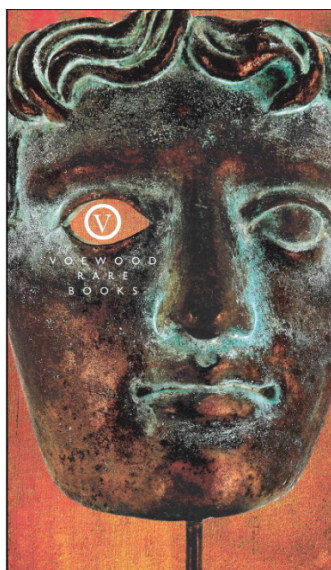


We used to stay in a pleasant hotel near the Catholic cathedral with a wonderful walled Victorian garden. One year Steve Liddle, Phil Mead, and myself were having a good dinner when the balding American on the next table asked our advice on the best way to get to Heathrow. We gave him three different answers, chatted a bit, and continued with our meal. It was not until a week later that Steve remembered seeing the American arrive at the hotel with a guitar case, and we realised we had spent all evening at the next table to James Taylor.

We usually got up a group to eat at Adlards, then the best restaurant in Norwich. I prefer to forget the night I spilt a glass of red wine over my wife's blouse, remembering instead the night one of our number bought a very good bottle of claret. He had had a good day and thought he would share his good fortune with us. Unfortunately he had not ordered the bottle until well into the meal, when he had already imbibed a lot, and after the first glass he subsided gently onto the table, snoring quietly. We gratefully finished the rest before calling for a taxi to take him back to his digs.

Writing about wine reminds me of a meal in Altrincham, not far from Manchester Airport. Steve Liddle and I were treating ourselves to a good meal with the proceeds from Haydock bookfair. I was a bit

disturbed when we turned up to find bouncers on the carpark entrance, but looking at the footballers' cars in the carpark it was probably wise. We went in to a place that looked like a Parisian brothel, with heavy purple drapes and swags and lots of dinner-jacketed staff. We were rather out of place, but decided to make the most of it. We ordered a reasonable bottle of wine, which arrived with two waiters, both wearing white gloves. One carried the bottle, the other its stand. The stand looked like a gun carriage, slanted at an angle, with a handle and ratchet on one side. Waiter one set this up, waiter two uncorked the bottle with due ceremony and put it in the cradle. He then turned the handle very slowly so that the bottle, which had been pointing towards the ceiling at a 45-degree angle, slowly came down to a position where the wine approached the open end and eventually fell into a glass. The waiter then passed it to me, asking Sir to taste. I did, and it was foul. I said it was corked, and the waiter blanched, sending for his superior, who made indeterminate noises and sent for his superior. The restaurant manager eventually agreed with me and a substitute bottle was found. I remember nothing of the food, but the machinery stayed with me as an example of the most useless, pretentious bit of kitchenalia I have ever seen.



Catalogue Review

James Fergusson

Simon Finch enjoys the limelight. It suits him. Now reborn as **Voewood Rare Books**, he is producing catalogues as eye-catching as those he published 30 years ago. His newest, 6, compiled by Andrew Taylor (andrew@voewood.com), runs lavishly to 77 items and features a bronze prototype BAFTA mask on the cover (price on application).

Here, in no particular order, but well described and delivered with unbooksellerly oomph, are John

Pine's engraved facsimile of Magna Carta, 1733, £22,000; a grangerised copy of *An Inquiry into the State of Mind of W.F. Windham, Esq.* [1862], an account of the lunacy case brought against a 19th-century North Norfolk Voewood neighbour by his disapproving uncle (the uncle lost and the nephew was bankrupted), £950; D.H. Lawrence's extraordinary and often-quoted letter to David Garnett about 'black-beetles', April 1915, with Lawrence's faintly homoerotic pencil drawing of Garnett's head, £17,500; *From A to B & Back Again* (1975) inscribed by Andy Warhol with a Campbell's pea-soup-tin drawing to Robert 'Groovy Bob' Fraser, £3,750; *The Fool*, original artwork

for *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967), inscribed by Ringo Starr (as Billy Shears) to his manager Hilary Gerrard, £110,000; T.S. Eliot's wedding photograph (his second marriage to Valerie Fletcher) by Angus McBean, 1957, inscribed by the couple to Bob Giroux, £7,500; an 'excellent copy in superb condition' of *Voina i mir*, i.e. *War and Peace* (1868–9), £37,500; the autobiography of Percy Muir, another North Norfolk man, *Minding My Own Business* (1956), in the dedication copy to John Carter, £750; and a deliciously elaborate signed ticket to the Fonthill Abbey Sale of 1823, in the name of 'Sir J. & Lady Sharip?', £950 – but perhaps Sir S[tephen] Shairp of Houston (1757–1826), sometime Consul-General in Russia, and his wife Harriet, parents-in-law of the novelist Captain Marryat?

Voewood is a fabulously extravagant Arts and Crafts house near Holt, designed by E.S. Prior and built in 1903–5. Loyal to its origins, Finch also offers a number of Arts and Crafts items, including letters from C.F.A. Voysey. In the idiom of the house, his catalogue is showy but curiously interesting.

Paul Rassam (paul@paulrassam.com), 37, 'Late 19th & 20th Century Literature', 140 items, teases with his usual tangle of delights, free associations elegantly drawn, with ambushes of surprise. The corrected typescript of 'Regy' Brett's not inexplicit volume of Uranian verse, *Foam* (1893), bears the numerous, mainly approving notes of his typist, and wife, Eleanor, £6,500. Vanessa Bell photographs Clive Bell and Duncan Grant, both naked, but somehow unsuggestively so, at 46 Gordon Square, circa 1913–14, £1,750. Somerville and Ross's *In Mr Knox's Country* (1915) encloses letters to Penelope Betjeman from Somerville,

1939 ('we can of course put up your horse'), and from her nephew Nevill Coghill ('my aunt . . . is an old darling of astounding and stubborn opinions, none based on any kind of fact or argument, terrifying and adorable to me, amiable to strangers especially to women interested in horses and in her books'), £200. Two photograph albums record the childhood of Julia (daughter of Oliver and niece of Lytton) Strachey and her married life with Stephen Tomlin, 'with attractive unselfconsciousness, and a degree of bohemian disorder', £3,750. Auden and Isherwood's 1935 play *The Dog Beneath the Skin* is the dedication copy (US edition), inscribed by Isherwood to Robert Moody, 'never, never, never, never, never', £2,500. A 'previously undiscovered' Keith Douglas archive relating to his American schoolfriend George Cunningham, 1938–47, is lovingly unpacked over five pages, £7,500. Colin MacInnes inscribes *England, Half English* (1961) to Ella Fitzgerald, on whom he includes an essay, £750. The catalogue is exhilarating.

Peter Ellis (peterellisbooks@hotmail.co.uk) specialises in modern literature and is unremittingly industrious. His catalogue 157, 448 items, has nine books inscribed by Ted Hughes to his daughter Frieda, from *Flowers and Insects* (1986, a dedication copy), £1,250, to *Wolfwatching* (1989) and *Winter Pollen* (1994), each £575; the 1996 Nobel prizewinner Wislawa Szymborska's *View from a Grain of Sand* (Faber, 1996), £375, is inscribed, 'For Frieda – Devour and inwardly digest the contents. But keep the book by your bed, From DADDY . . .' A copy of the last book he published in his lifetime, *Birthday Letters* (1998, most addressed to Sylvia Plath), in the signed limited edition and one of 10 copies reserved for the author, has the ownership signature of Frieda Hughes (Plath's daughter too and the designer of the dustwrapper

for the trade edition), £3,250. The same dealer's 158, 449 items, has Winston Churchill inscribing his *The Second World War* (1948–53) to his successor as prime minister, Clement Attlee – a mixed set, the first volume from Cassell and inscribed to Attlee by his wife, the other five from Houghton Mifflin, two inscribed by the author (none with dustwrapper: Attlee was a discarder), £42,500. And 159, 443 items, has Robert Byron's 'scarcest' book, *An Essay on India* (1931), inscribed to Thomas Whittemore, founder of the Byzantine Institute of America, £1,750, and, individually, all the novels but the first, all in dustwrapper, of Anthony Powell's *A Dance to the Music of Time – A Buyer's Market* (1952), £1,750, and *The Acceptance World* (1955), £1,250.

William Cowan (wcowanbooks@aol.com) is a light in the darkness for those interested in modern Scottish art and literature. His 71, 101 items, has no fewer than 14 Alasdair Gray items, most of them illustrated, in joyful colour. Among the artwork is a signed poster print in black-and-white, strikingly, dating from 1974 and, notes Cowan, 'bought over 30 years ago from the artist', £750. A funny advertising poster for Gray's *Ten Tales, Tall & True* (1994; 'This book contains more tales than ten / so the title is a tall tale too. / I would spoil my book by shortening it, / spoil the title if I made it true') is inscribed, 'To Bill from Alasdair 11 June 1994', £125. Other artists or writers represented include John Bellany, John Byrne, Alan Davie, Ian Hamilton Finlay (12 items), William Johnstone, Jessie M. King, Edwin Morgan and Eduardo Paolozzi. His 72, 150 items, has a wonderful letter from Gray to Tom Maschler, his editor at Cape, 21 September 1989, telling him what to read while he is in hospital: 'Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories and *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (the other novels aren't so good) and Stevenson's *Treasure Island* and *Kidnapped*;

Somerville and Ross, Dickens, Wodehouse, 'though I can't eat much of him at a sitting' – these are the books that he has 'sometimes disappeared into like a mouse into a cheese'. And, while advising Maschler 'to take things easy', he presses on him his concerns about his forthcoming novel *Something Leather*. The letter is sold with a print design for the book's cover, £450.

Jarndyce (books@jarndyce.co.uk), CCLXX, 'A Detective Story: the Jarndyce catalogue of detective fiction', 356 items, might have given Maschler a head's start. Jessica Starr, introducing her catalogue, is wary of the genre's 'Golden Age' – Agatha Christie and the Twenties and Thirties – and argues the merits of the previous century. 'Locked door mysteries,' she writes, 'country house thefts and murders, red herrings, cases of mistaken identity, brilliant detectives, bumbling sidekicks and radical plot twists were the creations of the authors included in the following pages.'

Conan Doyle, obviously, has his place. Here are *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (1892), £1,500, Jarndyce uncharacteristically not identifying the inscriber, 'Ferdinand Marsham, from his brother Hugh Sydney Marsham, Christmas 1892' (the 12-year-old Hugh Marsham, from 1893 Hugh Marsham-Townshend, 1878–1967, heir to the Frogmal and Scadbury estates, inscribing to his younger brother Ferdinand, 1880–1915, a pioneer motor mechanic who was killed in action with the Scots Guards at Festubert during the First World War), and *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1902), £2,000. But here, too, is 'the first modern detective story', 'The Murders in Rue Morgue', in Edgar Allan Poe's *Tales of Mystery, Imagination, & Humour*, a 'lovely' copy of the first UK edition, 1852, £3,500. Also 'lovely' are a copy in later half

calf of 'the first, the longest and the best of modern detective stories' (in the words of T.S. Eliot), Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone* (1868), £8,500, Richard Marsh's 'important' horror/detective novel *The Beetle* (1897, in original red cloth printed creepily in black), £2,200, and Richard Austin Freeman's *The Red Thumb Mark* (1907, in original black wrappers printed boldly in red), featuring Dr John Evelyn Thorndyke, 'one of the first forensic scientists in literature', £1,800. The catalogue reproduces some sensational covers and illustrations.

Wilkie Collins is granted a catalogue all to himself, Jarndyce CCLXVIII (Brian Lake doing the honours), 'William Wilkie Collins, 1824–1889', 171 items, marking the centenary of his birth. A close friend of Dickens, Collins had as complicated a private life and, because of his laudanum addiction, worse health, but he is a sympathetic character, as the 1874 carte-de-visite portrait by Sarony on the catalogue cover (£1,800, signed) attests. His first book was a biography of his father, the painter William Collins, 1848, Jarndyce's copy with the ownership inscriptions, 1932, of H.E. (Herbert?) Read, £750. His first published novel, *Antonina*, is present in a 'new' edition, 1863, inscribed by 'her old friend' the author, 1874, to Nina (grandmother of Rosamund and John) Lehmann, £6,500, the recipient too of an 1871 *Moonstone* (laid down on the pastedown an envelope front addressed to her by the author), £200. The penultimate item in the catalogue is Georgina Hogarth's 1892 edition of *Letters from Charles Dickens to Wilkie Collins, 1851–1870* inscribed to George MacDonald by A.P. Watt, literary agent to both Collins and MacDonald, £280.

Jarndyce have somehow found time to compile another fat miscellany, CCLXIX, 'Books, Pamphlets,

Manuscripts & Ephemera 1493–1833', 310 items (under the curation of Robert Swan). Highlights include Boswell's *The Life of Samuel Johnson* (1791), a first edition in recent half calf, £3,200, but it is the oddities that appeal. What about 'A good Scotch Haggies' from Susanna Maclver's *Cookery and Pastry* (1787, fifth printing), £680: 'Make the haggies-bag perfectly clean; parboil the draught; boil the liver very well, so as it will grate; dry the meal before the fire; mince the draught and a pretty large piece of beef very small; grate about half of the liver; mince plenty of suet, and some onions small; mix all these materials very well together . . .' Set to! Mrs Maclver ran a cookery school in Edinburgh, just off the High Street, near the Tron Kirk. From the following year, in Dublin, Jarndyce discover *A List of the Proprietors of Licenses for Private Sedan Chairs*. This was a publication for the Hospital for the Relief of Poor Lying-In Women, a.k.a. the Rotunda, which devised a novel means of funding in raising a £1 15s licence on each private sedan chair in the city – and there were 260. Jarndyce charge £1,750 for the list, the price of 1,000 licences. Back in England, we find a Hair Powder Annual Duty Certificate for 1800 made out to one Anthony Jennings of Fordwich, Kent, £200. Jarndyce's note blames the hair powder tax on the American War of Independence, but the annual duty certificate surely derives from the notorious Duty on Hair Powder Act of 1795, which required users of already expensive hair powder to pay dues of one guinea per annum for the right to wear it (unless you were a member of the Royal Family, or a clergyman, or below a certain rank in the armed forces). The Act was introduced by the government of William Pitt the Younger and effectively finished off the powdered wig as an item of regular apparel. (Anthony Jennings incidentally, 1757–1830, is commemorated in a fine

stone in the floor of the nave of St Mary the Virgin, Northwich.) From such snippets is social history made.

Roger Lonsdale, Fellow and Tutor in English Literature at Balliol College, Oxford, 1963–2000, and Oxford Professor of English Literature, 1992–2000, was the editor of both Oliver Goldsmith and Thomas Gray. The latest catalogue from the indefatigable **Christopher Edwards** (chr.edwards@btinternet.com), 91, 'The Library of Roger Lonsdale, Part IV – 1740–1840: F–I', 197 items, is therefore especially strong in these authors. Goldsmith runs to 51 items, Gray to 15. Goldsmith's *An Enquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe* (1759) is present in the first edition, £500 (bought from Bayntun, Bath, 1964, for £7 10s), his life of Beau Nash (1762), £1,250 (George's, Bristol, 1981, £65), *She Stoops to Conquer* (1773, bound with four other plays), £450 (Richard Booth, Hay, 1968, £15). *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766) is to be found in nine editions, the first at £1,250 (T.F.S. Scott, Oxford book fair, 1985, £425). Lonsdale's Goldsmith prize is probably *The Weekly Magazine*, six issues, December 1759–January 1760, of which the sixth, Edwards suggests, may be a unique survivor, £3,500. Lonsdale bought it from A.W. Laywood in 1982 for £75, and wrote it up in the *Review of English Studies*, identifying Goldsmith's contributions, in 1986. His Gray holdings are more modest, crowned by *Designs by Mr. R. Bentley, for Six Poems by Mr. T. Gray* (1753), £500, 'the first true *livre d'artiste* in British book-production' (Blackwell's, Oxford, ?1962, £20), and the first Foulis Press edition of Gray's poems, 1768, in a rococo binding by James Scott of Edinburgh, £3,500 (Heffers, Cambridge, 1967, £6 10s).

Blackwell's, of course, is still open for business.

Barbara Bagenal (née Hiles, 1891–1984) was at the Slade with Dora Carrington, nearly married Saxon Sydney-Turner, a founder Bloomsberry, had flings with David Garnett and Maynard Keynes, married Nicholas Bagenal (a horticulturalist) and became the last mistress of Clive Bell. **Blackwell's Rare Books** (rarebooks@blackwell.co.uk) devote a 144-item catalogue to her, 'Barbara Bagenal and the Bloomsbury Group', that will enliven the spirit of any Bloomsbury collector. Here are 'the first book of Bloomsbury' in the words of S.P. Rosenbaum, *Euphrosyne: a collection of verse* (1905), in shabby condition but with Bagenal's notes identifying most of the contributors – Leonard Woolf's cohort at Trinity College, Cambridge, Lytton Strachey, Thoby (brother of Virginia) Stephen, Bell and Sydney-Turner the principals, £4,000; Strachey's *Landmarks in French Literature* (1912), rebounded, inscribed to her by the author, £1,500; Virginia Woolf's *The Voyage Out* (1915), with Sydney-Turner's ownership signature, £2,500; Katherine Mansfield's *Prelude* (Hogarth Press, 1918, the press's third book), in poor shape but with the ownership signature of Bagenal, who, she said, set much of the text, including the title-page, £3,000; the Omega Workshop's last publication, *Original Woodcuts* (1918), again in poor shape but given Bagenal by Keynes, £11,000; Bell's *The Legend of Monte della Sibilla* (Hogarth Press, 1923), a battered copy given her by Sydney-Turner, £300, but also another nice copy with Strachey's Carrington book-label, given her much later by the art critic John Russell, £2,500; Roger Fry's *Duncan Grant* (Hogarth Press, 1923), given her by Keynes and with, on the back of a private view invitation, a drawing by Grant, £2,000; Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* (Hogarth Press, 1925), again a little battered, given to Bagenal by Sydney-Turner and with a postcard inserted to her and Bell from Grant, December

1963, £2,000 (since offered by Peter Harrington, £4,500); a letter from Virginia Woolf to Nicholas Bagenal, Christmas Eve [1936], wondering why he curses her, £7,500; and Picasso's *Les Quatre petit filles* (1968), inscribed to Barbara Bagenal by the author, £4,500.

'My daughter, Judith, who went to Angelica [Bell]'s parties, remembers . . . how amusing Virginia could be,' Bagenal wrote in Joan Russell Noble's 1972 collection *Recollections of Virginia Woolf*. 'When she was a child she met her one day in Lewes High Street. Virginia said to her, "Will you come to Woolworth's to buy a very large india-rubber? I want to rub out all my novels."'

Among other catalogues received, **Between the Covers** (mail@betweenthecovers.com), 260, 'Spring Miscellany', 121 items, had the publisher John K. Martin's H.P. Lovecraft 'Amateur Press Collection', amounting to 235 pieces, \$65,000, and 264, 'Literature, 118 items, a 'very good' *Hobbit* in 'Only Known True First State Dust Jacket' (the name 'Dodgeson' uncorrected), \$285,000, a 'fine' *Catcher in the Rye*, \$25,000, and 'one of the nicest copies we've seen' of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, \$60,000.

Bennett & Kerr (bennettkerr@aol.com) produced three catalogues in their expert area, 'Middle Ages & Renaissance', 234, 967 items, including 'English and European social and religious history disposed of by Professor Gervase Rosser', Professor of the History of Art at St Catherine's College, Oxford, 235, 816 items, and 236, 1031 items. **H. Baron** (musicwall@hotmail.co.uk), 186, 'Antiquarian Music', 213 items, offered four autograph letters from Sir Edward Elgar to his publishers, 1912–32, £250–£400.

And lastly **Ash Rare Books** (books@ashrare.com), 128, a happy-dip miscellany, 93 items, had Milton and Scott, two volumes in 'very handsome' full citron morocco bound for the Cambridge bookseller Robert Bowes as birthday presents for his wife, 1883, with fore-edge paintings (tulips for Milton, thistles for Scott), £1,000, while Terence Rattigan inscribed his evergreen play *The Winslow Boy* (1946) to Mary Herring, his secretary and 'keeper of his secrets', £400.

Please post catalogues for review to:

James Fergusson

39 Melrose Gardens

London W6 7RN

jamesfergusson@btinternet.com

FIRSTS

HONG KONG

Hong Kong Maritime Museum
6–8 December 2024



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Friends of the ABA

Library Visits

We have been pleased to instate in 2024 our program of events for the Friends of the ABA. Recent months have seen visits to Lambeth Palace Library, the Bodleian, and New College, Oxford. Our hosts have been uniformly welcoming and informative, and we would like to thank all Friends and Members who participated enthusiastically in these events.

With further Friends visits planned for later in the year and early 2025, we encourage all members to keep an eye on ABA communications and join us for future events. We also encourage you to recommend a Friends membership to customers, contacts, and any ardent bibliophiles you may know, or consider gifting a membership this Christmas.

You can review Friends membership benefits and find out more on the [ABA website](#).

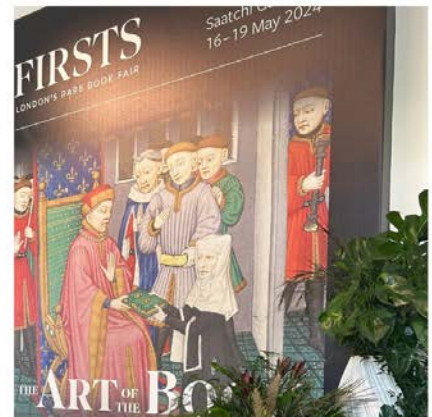
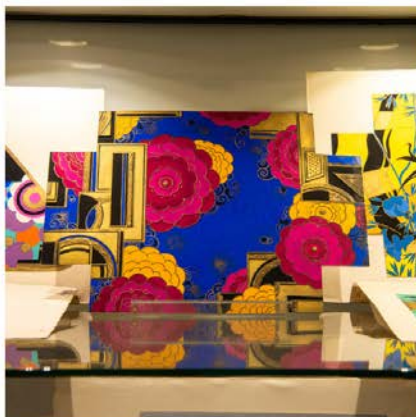


Fair Report

Firsts London 2024

Firsts London 2024 assumed its usual position in the annual calendar of the third weekend in May. Our theme this year, 'The Art of the Book', aimed both to enable exhibitors to showcase a broad sweep of material regardless of their specialism, to maximise the potential for visual impact, and to support press and promotional efforts.

We were delighted to be able to renew our partnership with the FT Weekend this year, which yielded crucial advertising and publicity opportunities. Additionally, we partnered with the Friends of the Bodleian Libraries for Firsts 2024. An extremely engaged partner, the Bodleian provided speakers for our events program, enthusiastic promotion, and a lively presence at the fair itself, as well as lending their branding to our printed material



With their incredible collection at our disposal, we were delighted to choose a main visual for our promotional materials from the Bodleian Libraries. The committee agreed that a rich and colourful image was needed to illustrate the theme, and we were guided by the chief curator of the Bodleian to the beautiful illuminated illustration of Christine de Pisan, court writer to King Charles VI of France (MS. Laud. Misc. 570.) The image depicts Christine gifting a book of her own creation to her patron Duc de Berry, connecting Firsts with the storied history of book design and transmission.

Fair Overview - Exhibitors

2024	2023	2022		2024	2023	2022
105	104	118				
NEW	NEW	NEW				
15	14	N/A	United Kingdom	75	69	76
RETURNING	RETURNING	RETURNING	United States	8	8	14
90	90	N/A	France	3	4	5
HIGHLIGHTS	HIGHLIGHTS	HIGHLIGHTS	Netherlands	4	4	5
911	965	569	Germany	2	4	4
			Austria	2	2	3
			Italy	2	2	2
			Sweden	1	0	2
			Denmark	2	1	2
			Australia	1	2	2
			Spain	0	1	1
			Canada	2	5	1
			Japan	1	1	1
			South Africa	1	0	0
			Serbia	1	1	0

Footfall and Ticket Sales

2024					
	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	TOTAL
FOOTFALL	681	1,001	1,134	1,578	4,394
CHANGE on 2023	6% ▼	21% ▲	56% ▼	18% ▼	28% ▼
TICKET SALES	30	185	279		

2023			
THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
731	827	2,624	1,933
Tickets	Tickets		
29	187		

2022			
THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
520	678	2,009	1,448
Tickets	Tickets		
3	83		

Exhibitor Sales

2024		£	
Total exhibitor sales		4,660,576	2.5% ▲
Advance website sales		280,603	
Private customers sales		2,427,277	
Sales to exhibitors		1,256,812	
Sales to booksellers		408,404	
Average		46,144	
Median		19,500	

2023	£	2022	£
Total exhibitor sales	4,517,190	Total exhibitor sales	7,219,166
Advance website sales	254,436	Advance website sales	408,498
Private customers sales	1,371,653	Private customers sales	3,217,327
Sales to exhibitors	1,480,368	Sales to exhibitors	1,205,657
Sales to booksellers	421,958	Sales to booksellers	1,380,075
Median	18,000	Median	18,300

Feedback

Excellent fair all round. Many thanks to the management!

Overall a great event, that gets better each year!

You are aware of the second floor heat problem. I am sure it could be difficult to prove but I am equally sure it has affected sales.

Great location, lovely space but a bit hot & stuffy at times. Café not great but fizz & canapes on Thursday night very good indeed. Could it be a day shorter? Thursday a very long day.

Walls could use some lights - could help sell wall pieces

Very pleased as always. Many thanks

Fair Report

Bath Book Fair 2024

Foreword from Dan Ahern, Fair Manager, PBFA

The new Bath Book Fair had 89 exhibitors from the ABA and the PBFA and was managed by a joint ABA/PBFA team, drawing on our collective skillsets. I'd like to thank Riley, Rachel, and Tom for their tremendous input, and my fellow PBFA colleagues for their help and support; Matthew Butler, Richard Selby, and Malcolm Orchard, while not forgetting Steve Liddle's wise thoughts on marketing based on his years of Bristol fair management experience. I'd also like to thank those exhibitors who arrived early and were a great help setting out the room — you know who you are.

This first joint fair in the Bath Pavilion was marked by a number of very strong takes recorded, and some very positive feedback from exhibitors. We had a happy, smiling team of porters and the onsite parking worked very well.

We recognise there were some teething issues around lighting which will be addressed for next year with support from an external lighting contractor, and though the fair was well attended by members of the public there's always more work to do to ensure these numbers increase. The fair is moving to the last weekend in June in 2025, which will mean we miss Bath Uni graduation too!

Many thanks to all of you who exhibited, see you next year.



FAIR OVERVIEW

Take

Day 1

£180,560.40	Trade Exhibitors	72%
£43,163.00	Trade Visitors	17%
£28,782.00	Private	11%
		100%

Day 2

£180,560.40	Trade Exhibitors	66%
£43,163.00	Trade Visitors	16%
£28,782.00	Private	11%
£19,295.00	Web Sales	7%
		100%

Average Take (85 Exhibitors):	£3,197.65
Take Averaged Up (86):	£274,998.05
Median:	£1,889.00

Footfall	
Friday	317
Saturday	405
	722



Upcoming Fairs & Trade Events

ABA FAIRS & EVENTS

CHELSEA RARE BOOK FAIR

01 - 02 November 2024

Location: Chelsea Old Town Hall, London
SW3 5EE

chelseabookfair.com

45TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON BOOK TRADE HISTORY: BEYOND BOOKS - DIVERSIFICATION IN THE BOOK TRADE

17 - 19 November 2024

Location: Stationers' Hall, Ave Maria Lane,
London, EC4M 7DD

forms.gle/9D7jQoz6k47j17R58

FIRSTS ONLINE | CHRISTMAS 2024

28 November - 01 December 2024

firsts-online.com

FIRSTS HONG KONG

06 - 08 December 2024

Location: Hong Kong Maritime Museum, 11
Man Kwong St, Central, Hong Kong

firstshongkong.com

TRADE FAIRS & EVENTS

TORONTO ANTIQUARIAN BOOK FAIR

20 - 22 September 2024

Location: Amsterdam

tabf.abac.org

ILAB CONGRESS 2024 - AMSTERDAM

14 - 17 October 2024

Location: Fredsgatan 12 Stockholm, Sweden

ilab2024.com

AMSTERDAM INTERNATIONAL ANTIQUARIAN BOOK FAIR

19 - 20 October 2024

Location: Passengers Terminal Amsterdam,
Piet Heinkade 27, 1019 BR Amsterdam

amsterdambookfair.net

SYDNEY RARE BOOK FAIR

24 - 26 October 2024

Location: MacLaurin Hall, University of Sydney

sydneyrarebookfair.com

MILAN ANTIQUARIAN BOOK FAIR 2024

25 - 27 October 2024

Location: Villa Necchi. Via Mozart, 14, 20122

mostre.alai.it/milano

BOSTON INTERNATIONAL ANTIQUARIAN BOOK FAIR

08 - 10 November 2024

Location: Hynes Convention Center

900 Boylston St, Boston, MA

abaa.org/bostonbookfair

Please refer to fair and association websites regularly for the latest information on fair dates and news regarding any changes or cancellations.



The ABA Chelsea Rare Book Fair

1–2 November 2024

Friday 1 November, 2pm–7pm: £10

Saturday 2 November, 11am–5pm: FREE entry

Chelsea Old Town Hall

King's Road, Chelsea, London SW3 5EZ

United Kingdom

[Chelseabookfair.com](https://chelseabookfair.com)

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ABA

*Council Minutes***Minutes of meeting of the members of Council***14:30 on Tuesday 30 January 2024 via Zoom.*

In Attendance: Deborah Coltham (President), Daniel Crouch (Treasurer), Stephen Foster, James Hallgate, Pom Harrington, Thomas Heneage, Ed Lake, Tom Lintern-Mole, Ed Maggs, Laura Massey, Sophie Schneideman, Bernard Shapero (Vice President), Sara Trevisan

Also in attendance: Rachel Chanter, Riley Grant, Adrian Harrington, Roger Treglown

Minutes of the ABA Council Meeting held on 7 December 2023

With SF and proposed and JH as seconder, the minutes were approved.

Report of the President

Dco thanked TH for hosting the ABA Christmas Party and was kind enough to assist with alcohol given the non-delivery.

Financial Report

Dco reported on the accounts for 2024, having produced a draft budget for Firsts Hong Kong with RG. The draft budget would have a positive impact on the cashflow and overall surplus.

PH inquired about payments for Saatchi Gallery. RG confirmed payment for 2024 had been completed.

Book Fairs

Edinburgh: 22-23 March 2024

RG verified that there were 19 exhibitors confirmed, though she hoped for further exhibitors.

PH asked if the AGM would encourage members.

Firsts: 16-19 May 2024

DCr, RG and RC had participated in a meeting with Flint PR. PH had suggested their services be used as an ABA contract, which would cover Firsts London, Firsts Hong Kong and Chelsea, so spread the coverage and the cost. DCr, RG and RC were awaiting a proposal.

RG reported that there were 88 confirmed exhibitors. PH felt this was above 2023. PH reported there had been a committee meeting the previous week, with members of the committee given a prospecting list to target.

PH noted that sponsorship was in progress, including ABE, Biblio, ATG and ideally Partners&.

RG had conducted a venue research project at Olympia, Evolution London and the Business Design Centre. Olympia had a minimum rental fee of £181,000. Evolution London had a minimum rental fee of £178,000 which did not include electricity or air conditioning in the price. The business design centre would only offer the top floor mezzanine space.

PH noted that the council had confirmed a contract with Saatchi until 2026. If, by 2027, less space was required, then research would be done for a smaller venue.

PH added that there would be strong shipping

options for 2025 forward.

SF felt it may be helpful to assess what ABA members would be exhibiting at ILEC and assist in problem solving for them.

Chelsea 2024: 1-2 November 2024

RG reported that she had initiated some research into branding tablecloths for Chelsea and moving away from the blue fireproof material.

Action: RG would get in touch with Chelsea Old Town Hall about the length of tenancy required for an election.

Hong Kong: 6-8 December 2024

DCr was hopeful that the expectation would exceed the space, and the long corridor could be used. This would positively impact the bottom line.

RG reported that the website was in progress and hoped to have a version the following week. She noted that the deposit for the venue had been paid.

DCr and RC were researching advertisements within HK, though this was prohibitively expensive. A WeChat consultant had been engaged and there would potentially be work with Flint.

Report of the Secretary

RG was pleased with the increase in membership application and membership retention after the subscription invoices. There was one complaint about the bank and one comment about the subscription increase, which had been dealt with.

RG had been researching a new YABS venue, St Saviourgate, which seemed like a plausible option. JH would be visiting the venue in the following

days.

RG and RC were working on a date for a Social Media Seminar.

Marketing and Newsletter Report

RC had started considering talks and tours for Firsts London and putting together a programming schedule. SS suggested Anthony Davis as a potential tour guide.

TH suggested using his commode for fair promotion.

RC noted that there would be a newsletter coming in mid-February, covering the last six months of ABA activities.

Charities

Benevolent Fund

DCo reported that after many years, Peter Miller had stepped down as the chair of the committee. DCr would become the chair and Robert Frew will join as a trustee after the AGM in March.

RG noted that a review was being conducted of some of the long-term beneficiaries.

Educational Trust

DCr reported that there was an historical error in confirming the number of trustees, and at all subsequent AGM agendas and Charity minutes, there would be a differentiation between Trustees and committee members.

YABS

SS reported that efforts were being made to have the event in September, linking with the York Book Fair. The faculty was being put together for 2024.

SS noted that Anthony Smithson, Alice Lavery, and Jonathan Kearns were no longer involved in YABS. SS felt that a scholarship should be listed in their name.

RG suggested calling it the Founders Scholarship. RG would discuss with the Educational Trust.

SF felt the Educational Trust should provide two scholarships, in line with the PBFA offering.

Import Export

RG and DCr to organise a question-and-answer seminar. Questions to be submitted in advance. DCr to update his document.

Membership Benefits

BS would speak to Bruce about a preferential membership.

RG to look into EEBO.

PH had looked into the Art Loss Registry, having used the service recently and being approached by a member, asking if the ABA would look into a group deal or work with them to improve the book related services.

Some members of council expressed hesitations about the service, but PH reiterated that it was the way client requests were progressing.

DCr felt it would be worth a conversation.

Action: PH to look into the service as a means of due diligence for higher priced item.

Book Security

PH noted there was an issue with doorstep

interception. Scammers buy items with the correct card and address, and wait for the item to be delivered, then steal it from the address. They are stolen credit card details and shippers will not take the responsibility for the loss. There needs to be the two-factor authentication system, which then covers the liability. PH would share the system details.

Committees and other ABA activities

Book Collecting Prizes

DCo presented the award to Emma Treleaven who would be formally awarded at Firsts London in May. DCo, RG and RC to promote and expand the program. LM was still involved, and Clare Marshall had become involved.

Digital Committee

TLM reported there would be another meeting, linked with Firsts Online.

Friends of the ABA

RG reported that there had been the first Friends event at Lambeth Palace Library. There would be a visit to Wormsley Library, in collaboration with the BADA Friends. RC was working on a visit to the Bodleian Library in April. PH noted that the 4 gift memberships he sent were incredibly well received.

Library

DCo reported that had been a donation to the ABA Library from Michael Nash, a new copy of his Bibliography. PH noted that by the end of 2024, the library would have a proper home.

Library Liaison

ST reported that there had been sad news from CILIP, confirming that the combined Book Fair

with the conference in Edinburgh could not be organised. They struggled to find a location and suggested another time in Oxford or Cambridge. ST had reviewed their book theft guidance. RG to be added to the CILIP Book security list.

Trade Liaisons

ABE

PH reported that there had been conversations with ABE over sponsorship of Firsts London.

BAMF

DCo reported that she had spoken to AON about having a sitting member of council on BAMF. AON would attend the final meeting in February, and DCr would take over the role after the AGM.

PBFA

TLM reported that there was no resistance to the increase in fees for the ABA Edinburgh stands.

Agenda Items proposed by Members of Council and/or Membership

Plagiarism Policy

DCo reported that there was an ongoing query from a member about plagiarism amongst the membership. SF felt the wording within the current articles would be sufficient. SF deferred to common sense and any reporting from fellow members. The council takes plagiarism seriously and the members should not participate in it. It would not be tolerated.

Any Other Business

DCo had a meeting with Euphemia Franklin and Clare Marshall about early careers initiatives. There would be events at Firsts London and the York Book Fair, as a collaboration between the ABA and

PBFA. This could be linked with the YABS alumni. RG felt Saturday at Firsts London with a talk or panel from YABS alumni would work best.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 17:20

Minutes of the meeting of the members of the Council

15:00 on Thursday 21 March at Holyrood Room 1, Radisson Blu, Edinburgh

In Attendance: Deborah Coltham (President), Daniel Crouch (Treasurer), Stephen Foster, James Hallgate, Pom Harrington, Tom Lintern-Mole, Ed Maggs, Laura Massey, Bernard Shapero (Vice President)

Via Zoom: Ed Lake, Sara Trevisan, Sophie Schneideman

Also in attendance: Rachel Chanter, Riley Grant, Roger Treglown

Apologies: Thomas Heneage

Introductory remarks by the President

Dco welcomed the members of council to the meeting and thanked them for making the journey to Edinburgh.

Minutes of the ABA Council Meeting held on 30 January 2024

With DCr as proposer and BS as seconder, the minutes were approved.

Matters arising from the Minutes

SF informed Council that John Bonham had requested six months of membership for 2024, as he would move down to retired membership in July. This had been approved by council.

SF also informed Council that Jeremy Peters had

stepped down to retired membership.

Report of the President

Dco reiterated that the association was in a good place with many initiatives going on and a healthy number of new members. This would be reported on in more detail at the President's meeting in October.

Financial Report

DCr reported that the association would be breaking even this year and Hong Kong would add to income, hopefully resulting in a slightly larger surplus than the £30k budgeted for.

Book Fairs

Edinburgh: 22-23 March 2024

DCr reported that the fair was not breaking even. PH noted this meant the association was subsidising the fair. RG reported that the number of exhibitors was decreasing every year, while costs were rising, and more could be done with regards to promotion. SS was not sure there was much potential to grow the fair, but TLM noted that there were a lot of private and institutional buyers in the area. The costs for the fair were not very high, and some alternate locations would be discussed. DCr would schedule a meeting to discuss this further to make a decision re 2025.

Firsts: 16-19 May 2024

PH reported that Firsts was in reasonable shape, with three stands still available on the first floor, but over 100 exhibitors already confirmed. Revenue would be up and sponsorship from Abe, Biblio, and the ATG was also up. There was a new ticketing system in place with personalised e-tickets being issued to support data collection. The FT, Bodleian, and ATG would also be distributing some tickets,

and it would save over £5k a year on ticket printing and postage costs.

PH felt there were two gallery spaces that could be sublet as a parallel, separate print fair and had spoken to Henry Gerrish. He felt there was money to be made from the print stands and this could be the future of the fair. PH also reported that 2024 would be his last fair as chairman, as he had contributed all he could and felt it should be handed over to someone else to evolve it further, though he would be on hand to co-chair with someone else. DCr thanked him for his work on the fair.

Bath: 26-27 July 2024

TLM reported that he had spoken to the PBFA who were considering a change of management of the fair in Bath, though this would all be in place well before the event.

TLM reported that interest from dealers was strong, SF noted that the spacing between Firsts and Bath was ideal.

Chelsea 2024: 1-2 November 2024

RG noted that the election would not impact the fair, as originally feared. She had secured some samples for new tablecloths with the ABA logo on them and would circulate the artwork for approval before ordering.

Hong Kong: 6-8 December 2024

DCr reported that the organisers would be erring on the side of caution for the first year. Stand rents had gone up since the last fair 6 years ago but invitations had been sent out to previous exhibitors to give them first refusal. RG reported that they had already received 16 applications,

and a few additional potential exhibitors were not currently members, so would have to apply before confirming attendance.

Report of the Secretary

RG reported that her focus had been on preparing for the AGM and Edinburgh fair, as well as finalising planning for Firsts, and launching applications for Hong Kong.

Marketing and Newsletter Report

RG reported that RC had been a very valuable addition to the ABA team and had sent out the most recent newsletter, which was improving with every issue.

Press Officer

DCo reported that Christian White had been confirmed as the Press Officer.

Charities

Benevolent Fund

DCr had received the accounts, which were badly delayed because Waverton had outsourced their tax documentation administration. The fund was not performing very well, and he suggested moving it next year, potentially to WH Ireland or Brewin Dolphin.

DCR reported that Robert Frew would be joining the committee, Peter Miller would be stepping down, and DCr would be taking over as Chairman. There were two ongoing beneficiaries which had recently been reviewed.

RG reported that there was one beneficiary who was not based in the UK, and they had not received their payments for a few months while the bank was being changed, but she had not heard

from them. She would try and get in touch with them by other means.

YABS

SS reported that RG had found a new venue, tied in with the York fair, and was finalising faculty participants. RG reported that bookings would be open soon, but they already had 40 expressions of interest so would likely be oversubscribed again. RG had a meeting with the University of York, who had offered non-credit bearing accreditation through the university, which was better than nothing, and a good step forward in the relationship with the university. SS reported there were also some academics interested in introducing an MA on the history of the book, which would be very interesting.

Book Security

PH reported that the Wealth of Nations was still being recirculated, but the owner was on the sanctions list, so it had been reported but there didn't seem to be much action taken.

Export and Legislation

DCr would be hosting a Q&A session in the next few months.

Membership Benefits

RG reported there would be a social media webinar, a Q&A on imports and exports, a photography seminar and a shipping seminar later in the year.

PH reported that he was looking into a deal on ABPC for ABA members. SS reported there was a current deal on for £90 for the first year.

Committees and other ABA activities

Book Collecting Prizes

DCo reported that emails had been sent out.

Digital Committee

TLM confirmed everything was on track.

Friends of the ABA

RG reported that there would be a Bodleian visit, as well as some further events.

Library

PH confirmed that works were underway.

Library Liaison

ST had no news to report, but was trying to set up a meeting with Lucy Evans.

Trade Liaisons

ABE

RG confirmed there would be an ABE event confirmed at Firsts, and they would be sponsoring two places at YABS.

BAMF

DCr asked to record a note of thanks to Angus O'Neill.

PBFA

RG reported that there would be two YABS events at Firsts.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 16:53.

Minutes of the meeting of the members of the Council

14:30 on Thursday 30 May via Zoom.

In Attendance: Deborah Coltham (President), Daniel Crouch (Treasurer), Stephen Foster, James Hallgate, Pom Harrington, Thomas Heneage, Ed Maggs, Laura Massey, Sophie Schneideman, Bernard Shapero (Vice President), Sara Trevisan

Also in attendance: Rachel Chanter, Riley Grant, Roger Treglown

Apologies for absence: Adrian Harrington, Ed Lake, Tom Lintern-Mole

In Memoriam

Paul Goldman

Laurie Hardman (Broadhursts of Southport Ltd)

Rick Watson (WP Watson Antiquarian Books)

The council held a moment of silence for those who had passed since the last meeting.

JH would get in touch with those working at Broadhursts of Southport Ltd. to determine the future of the business.

Minutes of the ABA Council Meeting held on 21 March 2024

With SF as proposer and EM as seconder, the minutes were approved.

Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Financial Report

DCr reported that the overall financial position was positive, as was the cash flow.

DCr noted that having received some feedback, approximately £100,000 could be held in an account earning more interest. DCr would also look to move the Benevolent Fund to a more ethical investment fund.

Book Fairs

Edinburgh: 22-23 March 2024

RG reported that a new venue was presented as an option which would see the ABA and the PBFA sharing the same space. The fair could be very successful but needed some work. DCr and RG had discussed ongoing financial issues with other Edinburgh organisers and stressed that the event needed some improvement and should at least break even.

Firsts: 16-19 May 2024

RG reported on exhibitor figures from the fair, noting that retention was high but there were more domestic exhibitors than international. Footfall was down on last year on the Saturday, but this was due to introducing a charge on the door on Saturday, which meant visitors were more engaged. The digital ticketing system had worked well and provided much valuable data around visitors to the fair. There would be more instruction to exhibitors ahead of next year to make sure invitations to the opening night were sent out in advance. Total exhibitor sales were up, showing strong

average and median sales across all floors.

PH joined the meeting and was pleased with the fair overall, especially with the increase in private sales, which were up on last year. Advertising costs, especially on the Underground, had increased on last year meaning there were less adverts, but there were more features in the FT. The numbers on digital tickets were still coming in but would be interesting to see.

DCo brought up the issues with the temperature on the top floor, PH confirmed that the air conditioning was not functional, and didn't feel Saatchi were being transparent on the issues. SF noted that the halogen lighting didn't help, and they were not investing in making the building more efficient. There was nothing that could be done from a contractual point of view, but there would be further discussions about improving things for next year.

BS suggested offering cold water or fans to exhibitors to make people more comfortable, PH also had suggestions on opening fire escapes and installing more fans to help prepare the room in advance.

RG asked for specific feedback so she could draft a letter to Saatchi. She would also look at bookshelf options for next year, but they had to be able to fit in the lifts and would inevitably cost more, driving up stand costs. She would look at options with Stabilo.

PH noted that moving in and deliveries had been much smoother than previous years.

RG confirmed that the fair had been featured well on social media, and the strategy of inviting specific contributors to the fair had paid off in terms of increasing exposure.

PH also noted that the timing of the fair worked well, coinciding with the Chelsea Flower Show.

Bath: 26-27 July 2024

TLM provided his report in advance. There were 100 exhibitors signed up and everything was in hand. There were a few spaces left, and plans were underway for the exhibitor party.

Chelsea 2024: 1-2 November 2024

RG reported that the announcement of the election in July was a relief, and she and RC would be preparing to launch the fair at the end of July. DCo asked for volunteers.

Hong Kong: 6-8 December 2024

RG reported that all was in hand, with only one stand left. DCr reported that he had received a proposal for PR for the fair, which could be combined with promoting Chelsea.

Report of the Secretary

There was not much to discuss in addition to the above.

Marketing and Newsletter Report

RC was working on the Firsts report, and there was a trip to the New College library with the Friends of the ABA ahead. The next task would be to start promoting Chelsea, and artwork would be confirmed next week.

Charities

Benevolent Fund

DCr reported that there was not a lot of activity, but he had been researching other investment options for the fund.

Educational Trust/ YABS

SS reported that YABS was progressing well, with two new faculty members, JH and Dr. Hazel Tubman from Maggs Bros Ltd.

RG reported that the course was likely to be full and asked that any sponsorship of the course was most welcome.

SS asked members of council for certain bibliographies.

SS noted that it would tie in with the PBFA York Book Fair.

BS asked SS and SF to look through their stock and surplus bibliographies.

RG and SS to contact Partners&.

Book Security

EM asked if there were ever further updates on book thefts. PH reported that ILAB also struggled to receive information from Interpol.

Export and Legislation

DCr reported that Digital Export Licenses were at last being implemented, but with the General Election, the exact timeline was now unknown.

RG reported that DCr and Hugh Best of Caladex would be hosting an Import/Export

webinar later in the year. This would support potential international fair exhibitors.

Membership Benefits

RG reported that there would be a Photography seminar for members, to be confirmed for the autumn.

Committees and other ABA activities

Book Collecting Prizes

DCo reported that they were still accepting entries.

Digital Committee

TLM sent through a report ahead of the meeting, crediting RC for the excellent digital presence of the ABA and Firsts, as well as those members who were really supportive.

Friends of the ABA

There had been a small flurry of sign-ups and new member packs had been sent out. PH reported that he had seen Friends with pins at the fair, so this was very successful. There were around 30 Friends at present but there would be a bigger focus on events and marketing over the next months so this was expected to grow over the course of the year.

Library

PH reported that there was no update on this, but the project was ongoing, if delayed.

Library Liaison

ST reported that she would need to step down from the role.

Trade Liaisons*ABE*

PH reported that they enjoyed their presence at Firsts London and hoped to have them back for 2024.

BAMF

DCr would be attending a meeting on AML the following week.

ILAB

PH suggested Robert Frew could be invited to join meetings and report on ILAB.

There being no other business, the meeting concluded at 16:41

Upcoming ABA Meetings 2024

Council meeting

26 September
Zoom

Council meeting, followed by
ABA Christmas party

11 December, 14:30
ABA Office, 21 John Street,
London, WC1N 2BF

Christmas party - Shapero Rare
Books, 94 New Bond Street,
London W1S 1SJ