

Antiquarian Booksellers' Association

Newsletter

Issue 414 Winter 2021



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Letter from the ABA President

Welcome to our final newsletter of the year. As I write this, I am missing our ABA Christmas Party due to Covid-19 travel and quarantine restrictions. This seems to sum up the year. Things are still going on, though attendance never quite as certain as it used to be.

This has made organising book fairs an enormous challenge. If you remember, the first few months of this year we were in lockdown, WFH and in some cases still furloughed. This included event companies, venues, contractors, caterers, etc. It became clear that our May Fair was not going to happen.

This did lead to an excellent idea! A new trade fair which was open to ABA and PBFA members, held at the York Racecourse. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, no members of the public were allowed to attend. For the 75 dealers who participated, this turned out to be a most welcome return to book fairs. For many, it meant first dinners out, hotel stays and seeing colleagues for the first time in 15 months. It was a useful first step back to normality. My thanks to Tom Lintern-Mole and James Hallgate for this initiative and for organising. Maybe we can do this again in 2022. The establishment of online fairs has also been

a feature of 2021. In February all members were invited to exhibit in a complimentary edition of Firsts Online. We have also run online fairs in May and December. In July we collaborated with the ABAA to form the first Transatlantic Book Fair. This also proved successful with over 165 dealers participating. We decided on July as it is normally a quiet time of year for fairs, and exhibitors could participate from anywhere. We hope to repeat this again in 2022. The event also provided some revenue for the association.



Together with the licencing of Firsts Online to other national associations, online fairs contributed over £50,000 of net income for the association. With the tightest of budgets, this has been a welcomed new income stream. My thanks to Tom again for taking over the running of Firsts Online from me in the spring, when my presidency began.

With mention of presidency, I must thank Roger Treglown who stepped down in March after serving through the toughest of circumstances. He continues as Immediate Past President of course and his support is greatly appreciated.

We were happy to see the return of YABS in

October, under the organisation of Anthony Smithson and Alice Laverty of Keel Row Books. The ABA assisted in organising scholarships for this year's students and going forward, the ABA will take over the organisation of YABS.

In January 2020, the book fair committee sent out a questionnaire to all ABA members and previous ILAB exhibitors to request feedback on the future of the summer book fair. The response was emphatic for a more up market, central London location, even if it the cost was greater.

At that time, we learned that Saatchi Gallery was opening to more trade related events, which brings us to October 2021. Planning Firsts London at Saatchi Gallery in October was quite a challenge for all the reasons mentioned above with the additional Covid-19 concerns, travel restrictions and BREXIT. The facility for our EU based colleagues to return to their home countries with their books has been complicated. All of this meant that we had 83 exhibitors. All things considered, this was a very respectable number given the circumstances, and I thank all our exhibitors for taking a leap of faith and participating.

From all the feedback we received, it seems that we have found our new home. Yes, some minor tweaks and fixes are needed, but nothing that cannot be overcome. We are confident that we can allow more flexible self-loading for 2022. We have a central London location over three levels, which allows us to offer the cheapest half stands including a glass case at a summer fair for a decade. For the

future, we are committed to Saatchi Gallery for 2023 and 2024 with provisional dates in the middle of May (to be announced very soon), avoiding all Bank holidays and half terms.

In 2022 we have plenty to look forward to. The return of Chelsea Book Fair for a one-off April date. In September the ABA will be hosting the ILAB Congress at Oxford, being organised by Daniel Crouch, Simon Beattie and Sian Wainwright. We will welcome 120 delegates from around the world for five days of unique library visits, tours, and collegiate dinners. For those who have not attended a Congress before, it is a great experience and a wonderful opportunity to meet other dealers for whom you never would otherwise meet. It is great fun!

ILAB Congress will lead straight onto Firsts London at Saatchi Gallery, 15-18 September 2022.

It is a busy time with plenty to look forward to. None of this would be possible without our ABA office. We thank Riley and Elise for their great work this year in the most difficult of circumstances. Many thanks to the ABA Council and all committees. There is a lot of work going on through all parts of the association, most of which is behind the scenes. Without these efforts, we wouldn't have accomplished everything we have.

Merry Christmas and to a Healthy and Happy New Year.

Pom Harrington
ABA President

TONY MULHOLLAND

Q&A with one of the ABA's newest full members, Anthony Mulholland of Wool House Autographic

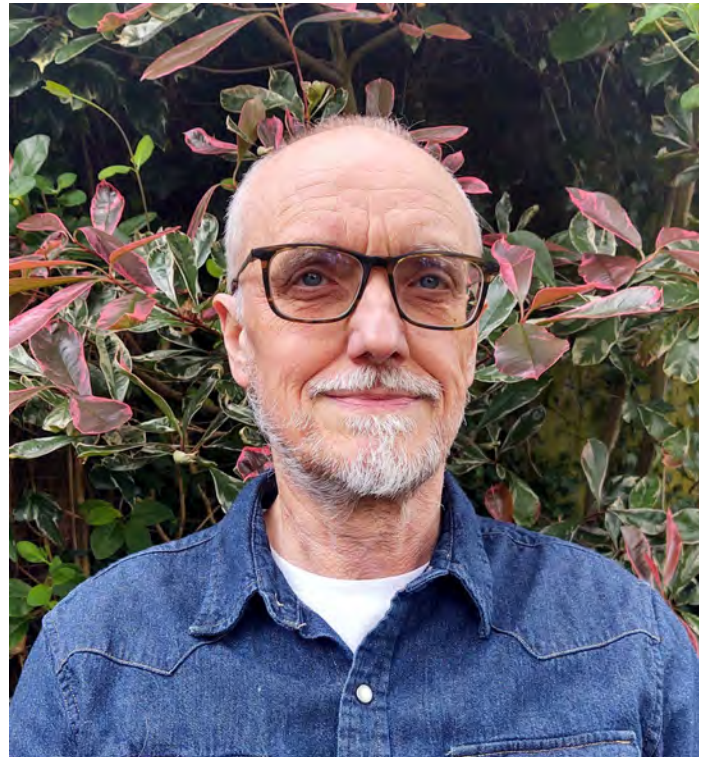
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You have been a bookseller for many years, what were some of the initial features that attracted you to the trade?

In my previous life I worked in the theatre after reading Drama at Bristol University and then a year in Paris at a French Theatre School. Then I was a radio dramatist and a TV researcher then latterly a scriptwriter for many years. I was getting tired of TV, however, and TV was, I am fairly certain getting tired of me. Pondering what else I might do and, having haunted book fairs and bookshops for years I began to consider bookselling. Eventually, knowing absolutely nothing of mechanics of the trade, I took the plunge, attracted by the idea of turning a pleasant hobby into a career.

Your business - Wool House Autographic deals mainly in autographs, letters of correspondence and manuscripts. Have you always been interested in these specialisms, or did they evolve over time?

I started out selling the books I had accumulated over the years and then, to replenish stock started buying at auction, which was initially terrifying. In the beginning I was very conscious that if I was to make a go of this I would have to learn very quickly.



I felt I was serving an apprenticeship in the book trade and tried out various avenues, but I gravitated more and more towards manuscript material, which I found more immediately satisfying to handle. Such material often requires some detective work, and I love piecing the available evidence together to give an item context and value and bringing it to life. I'm not especially interested in autographs per se, and while it is marvelous to hold a Dickens letter in one's hands, I am just as, if not more interested in those characters lost to history, but who, nonetheless contribute in some way to our knowledge of the past. History is my real passion, though it took some years before I realised that.

I have also come to understand that there is a certain continuity with my previous career. As a scriptwriter I would be fascinated by a subject for a time, but then, once the story was told, would happily move on to something else, my

interest exhausted. I am just the same now. I acquire, say, an archive of letters, tell their story as best I can then move on to something else. I like bringing out the essential narrative, revealing the historic value, and bringing something previously hidden into the light of day. The continuity is in my love of a strong narrative. When it comes down to it, I like telling stories and I feel I can do that best with manuscript material, where the story may not be immediately apparent.

Many of our members have a range of international clients and collectors, do you have local clientele that are interested in collecting?

The pandemic and the loss of fairs accelerated changes which were already taking place in how I worked. Of course, one has customers, collectors and the trade whom one sees regularly at fairs, but over the past eighteen months I have sold much more to institutions; libraries, museums and universities, which remained open for acquisitions. This has changed to some extent what I buy, and what I am looking for. Quite a lot of what I acquire now doesn't even reach the open market because I pitch it first to an institution. I get an enormous sense of satisfaction placing something in what I consider to be its proper home where true scholars of the subject can access it.

Many of our booksellers offer valuations or opportunities for the public to sell their items to dealers, have you come across one or two remarkable items from the Rye (or wider South England) public that have caught your eye?

In my line I don't get many house calls, though when I did buy books I was often astonished at what could turn up in a private house. I remember going into a house in a neighbouring village (I live in Deep Sussex) and the retired doctor showing me his collection of books on the subject of Clysters - enemas. Turns out there's a surprising amount of literature on the theme. Niche - in every sense of the word.

Nowadays, it is almost invariably in the saleroom that I find things. A saleroom is often enough a theatre of disappointment, but I have found some remarkable things in auction houses, and it is incredible what still - thankfully - goes under the radar. But you have to really look. There are two kinds of people in the world (probably more but I don't get out much); those whose eyes light up faced with boxes of paper and those who glaze over. I am of the former disposition.

If you had not become a bookseller, what other profession do you think you would have pursued?

In another life I like to think I would have been a historian. I occasionally picture myself in an ivory tower with a view over an ancient quad, where busy undergraduates wend their studious way, while I pore over a fragile manuscript (perhaps in an exotic language) occasionally emerging with a dense exegesis of an obscure text. My life choices have, however amply demonstrated to me that I would not have been cut out for the ivory tower.

But really, I count myself very fortunate after Radio and TV to have found a new career in this congenial trade and have not missed working in the media for a second.

What are you most looking forward to as a new member of the ABA?

Since starting on this marvelous game I have been lucky to meet many people, now colleagues and friends, who have been wonderfully generous with their expertise and encouragement. I suppose I hope now to widen that circle. But I hope, too after some years at this that I can bring something to the table. I have become pretty good at deciphering Victorian handwriting, so there's that.

Below Image: John and Alison Underwood



JOHN UNDERWOOD

Q&A with one of the ABA's newest Associate Members, John Underwood of John Underwood Antiquarian Books

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John Underwood Antiquarian Books have been working in the book trade for many years, what were some of the initial features that attracted you to working with antiquarian books?

As a child I became fascinated with a facsimile of a "Times" newspaper which included an account of the battle of Waterloo. Not the account of the battle so much as the front page which had all manner of fascinating adverts. Later in life I found Robin Hunt's lists of newspapers and began to collect different titles and sell from typewritten catalogues. In searching for newspapers I happened upon Peter Scupham, poet and bookseller, (trading as Mermaid Books) who had some for sale. He asked me "why newspapers?" and I replied that I couldn't afford to buy books. He said "well you could if you bound them, I have a binder living in my barn- you should meet her". Peter introduced me to Jane Griffiths who over the next year, (the early 1990's) taught me to bind books. Peter also introduced me to the world of antiquarian book selling and buying. I owe it all to him...

Your business deals mainly in manuscripts and rare books. Have you always been interested in these specialisms such as 14th-20th century manuscripts, or did they evolve over time?

Ally and I first started buying manuscripts some twenty five years ago. Andrew Stewart used to arrive at the Russel Hotel book fairs with a small attaché case full of medieval leaves, and we used to buy from him, and learned as we went along. In those days some booksellers didn't bother much with manuscripts because of the difficulty of reading and transcribing them. We became fascinated with the everyday lives of ordinary people whose lives were detailed in indentures, recipe books, diaries, logs, accounts and commonplace books. I also attended a short course on Latin palaeography and spent my evenings trying to decipher the cost of pea husks in the c14th and other minutiae but I never progressed further than what I would call "Bayeux Tapestry Latin". "Hic Harold rex interfectus est"- with a handy image of Harold with an arrow in his eye...

Any advice for young booksellers looking to get into the trade?

The traditional route today seems to be to work with established booksellers, and to attend the introduction to bookselling courses offered by trade associations. The new booksellers that we meet seem very well equipped to progress rapidly in bookselling. We have been really pleased to see more women booksellers stirring things up a bit too. Learning how books are constructed was immeasurably helpful to me, and I would

certainly suggest some knowledge of binding methods if you are working with antiquarian books. The best advice I could offer would be to buy in areas that interest you, develop buying relationships with dealers, learn to trust your eye for a good book, and read, read, and read.

Some booksellers offer valuations or opportunities for the public to sell their items to dealers, have you come across one or two remarkable items from the South Norfolk public that have caught your eye?

A member of the public approached us at the Norwich book fair with a wonderful manuscript which was the c18th record book of a gardener. It noted all his orchard planting and where he was buying his trees and who he was corresponding with. If I had it now, I would spend much more time researching it. We also had a couple of delightful notebooks full of the notes of an elderly antiquary, in which he recorded finds brought to him by local people. He had some of the artefacts drawn in ink and wash to illustrate his notes. Ally and I carried out a small literary pilgrimage, and took the notebooks to his gravestone for a photograph and a few words.

How do you see the book trade evolving in the next ten-twenty years?

New markets are emerging constantly, with books written by women being much more widely recognised, and books by early black... authors or about black history are already almost unobtainable. Booksellers will certainly have to be nimble in their buying and selling- it won't do to bring the same tired books

to market and expect them to sell. Clever booksellers create their own markets and will continue to do so. Predicting them is another matter entirely.

What are you most looking forward to as a new member of the ABA?

We have many trade customers who are members of the ABA, and we are looking forward to building upon those relationships. We also recognise that some attendees of ABA fairs rarely visit other book fairs, and so we are looking forward to offering our books to new customers. We thoroughly enjoyed our first ABA book fair at the new Saatchi gallery venue and hope to participate in the excellent online fairs in the future as well.

Below Image: Stephen Butler



STEPHEN BUTLER

Q&A with one of the ABA's newest full members, Stephen Butler of Stephen Butler Rare Books & Manuscripts.



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How long have you been trading in rare books and manuscripts and what were some of the initial qualities that attracted you to working with antiquarian books?

Book collecting and dealing are part of my DNA. To walk from my grandmother's front door to her living room meant walking through a path made of tall piles of books, literally covering every square inch of the house. She had the largest collection of Victorian and Edwardian (mainly female) novels I can recall seeing.

My parents were both junior librarians at Paddington Library in London (where they met) and my father rescued books from the skip which the senior librarians had thrown away. I recall a set of Dickens' *Household Words* on our shelves amongst other treasures pulled from the skip.

My parents also used to do the PBFA book fairs in the 1980s and I would stand in for them when they got called abroad to Africa – they told me they worked as missionaries but I think they were spies.

Your business deals mainly in manuscripts and rare books. Have you always been interested in these particular specialisms, or did they evolve over time?

I have always been interested in early printed books but I owe a debt of gratitude to Christopher de Hamel who, over lunch one day, said to me that I ought to move into the manuscript space. Clearly Christopher had a vested interest because I was selling him textual manuscripts and hoped I would find more for him, but it is largely because of his encouragement that I added that specialism to my dealing.

What is one book or manuscript that would be hard to part with?

The last book or manuscript I bought is always the hardest to sell. I remember saying to Andrew Hunter (at Blackwell's) that I thought it was a shame I wasn't wealthy enough to keep all of the books I had to sell and Andrew said he thought it was more fun being a dealer than a collector because we had the opportunity to find, handle and keep moving books on. On a personal collecting note, I do collect Trollope in the World's Classics series which are not for sale. You can read more about that interest of mine here ([Link Here](#)).

Any advice for young booksellers looking to get into the trade?

Read. Read. Read.

Any work projects or trade events you are looking forward to in 2022?

I am looking forward to exhibiting 'live' again – the last time was probably a book fair in Bath in about 1988 when my parents were

'proselytizing' in Africa.

How do you see the book trade evolving in the next ten-twenty years?

It is hard to predict what the world will look like in the next 12 months, let alone 10 years from now. A continuing of the polarisation of book prices, and of the trade (more shabby practices on the one hand, more professionalism on the other). The digital world will obviously create opportunities and more competition, but there will be a retro-aspect to all of this digitisation. Customers wanting printed catalogues, meeting dealers in-person; and there is nothing like browsing a row of books in the flesh, which is where ABA shines. Maybe a comeback of more bricks and mortar bookshops?

What are you most looking forward to as a new member of the ABA?

It might sound cliched but I am looking forward to making new 'book' acquaintances. My book life is peppered with the recollections of influential dealers, the eccentric characters who have now passed on or retired but have left me with incredible anecdotes and stories to tell my grandchildren.

The ABA's new Library Liaison: Nick McBurney

I am delighted to be the ABA's new Library Liaison and look forward to building connections between the book trade and libraries.

Looking ahead, we have begun discussions with the Friends of the National Libraries about the possibility of joint events and promoting their work to the wider trade and our clients, and are exploring ways in which the book trade might support more rare books outreach outside of libraries through the use of our own books.



I've also had informal discussions about the possibility of donating defective books for use in teaching collections, and of doing a joint event with the Institute of Conservation's Book & Paper Group. As pandemic restrictions ease I hope that we will be able to arrange more social events, such as outings, tours, and drinks.

I'm particularly interested in outreach and ways the trade can help bring the worlds of rare books to wider audiences. My email is nick@ngmcburney.com - questions and suggestions very welcome.

ABA 'Fifty Years A Bookseller' Awards

Two ABA members were awarded their '50 Years a Bookseller' pins on Saturday 23rd October at Firsts London: Laurence Worms of Ash Rare Books and Adrian Harrington of Adrian Harrington Rare Books.

Upon awarding Laurence his pin, ABA President Pom Harrington praised him for having "contributed greatly to council over the years, in particular our rules and providing clarity to our



standards as to what we require as booksellers."

Member Adrian Harrington on receiving his pin, remarked on the of fond times as a young bookseller with brother Peter Harrington along King's Road in Chelsea and on the growth of their businesses as "two pounds well invested" and "loving every minute of it". Speaking to the room of exhibitors, Adrian addressed them as "the extended family, all over the world, and it's terrific".

2021 ABA National Book Collecting Prize

Written by Deborah Coltham

We are delighted to announce that the winner of the 2021 ABA National Book Collecting Prize is Edinburgh University student Karissa Adams, for her impressive collection 'Leonora Carrington: A Surreal Life'.

The ABA have been awarding an annual National Book Collecting Prize for students of £1000 since its inception in 2016, with the fourth prize awarded to Manon Schutz at the Chelsea fair in 2019. £500 goes to the winner to expand their collection, with £500 going towards a purchase from an ABA member for the University Library. Due to the unprecedented situation, we found ourselves in last year, however, the competition was postponed. As most of the participating Universities awarded prizes last year, the judging panel opened up submissions to winners from both 2020 and 2021.

We were pleased to receive several high-quality entrants, prompting much discussion and debate. Karissa's passion and enthusiasm for her collection shone through, however. The winner of the David Laing Student Book



Winner Karissa Adams

Collecting Prize 2019-20, as Karissa notes: 'I first became aware of Leonora Carrington several years ago when I came across the Penguin Modern Classics edition of her 1976 novel *The Hearing Trumpet*. This particular edition has an introduction by Ali Smith, one of my favourite writers, and I was intrigued by the zany sounding plot about old women revolting inside a retirement home. As I read more about Carrington and her life, from rejecting her bourgeois family in England to joining the Surrealists in Paris, to her mental breakdown and subsequent incarceration in Spain, to fleeing to New York to escape World War Two, before eventually settling in Mexico, I felt annoyed and disappointed with myself that I had never heard her name before. It was frustrating to discover this amazing artist and writer at such a late stage in my life when I had learned so much about Salvador Dalí, André Breton, and Man Ray during my time at school and university. Surrealism has not exactly treated women with the most care, with their objectified headless bodies served up for the male genius to use in the name of art. There was something about Carrington that I became completely drawn to, perhaps slightly obsessed with, and I loved the magical and otherworldly feelings her paintings

and stories evoked within me.' The panel felt that Karissa showed a real sense of purpose as a collector, with a confidence and self-awareness of the collecting process to widen its scope to reflect Carrington's visual art as well as her writing, and the importance of Carrington's collaborative publications. Karissa has a very evident understanding of the value of the books as historical objects, and the relationship between word and image, and text and publishing medium.

A special mention was given to Alexandra Plane, the London entrant, for 'Books which built a zoo: collecting the works of Gerald Durrell'. The panel got a real sense of Alexandra's enjoyment and thrill, of trying to track down books, and were impressed by the potential to expand it further through finding works written by some of the women associated with Durrell.

Other entries were received from students at Aberdeen: 'Memento Mori' a thoughtful and well curated collection of material inspired by a lifelong interest in the death rituals and commemoration of different cultures both past and present; a second entrant from Edinburgh: 'Beagling', an eloquent and thought-provoking collection focused upon a less fashionable topic today, but displaying an excellent appreciation of the book as an historical object, and consideration

of condition, rarity and provenance: St Andrews: 'From Salt to Satan: An introduction to a collection of "lesbian pulp" as cultural items', which displayed an understanding and appreciation about the development of the genre, together with an awareness of the importance of preserving such popular publications for future research and scholarship. The panel received two entrants from Oxford: 'Self-Portrait of a city in Print: Berlin, 2001-2010', and 'In search of the Heroic City: Cartagena de Indias, 1821- 2021', both of which were beautifully written and transported the panel to their respective cities, conveying a deep love for both places through their collected books and ephemera.

All the entries displayed great enthusiasm, erudition, and passion, and it was again inspiring to see the upcoming generation of young collectors creating unusual collections, with limited means, yet revelling from the thrill of finding hidden treasures.



Special mention was given to Alexandra Plane

An awards ceremony is planned for Karissa at the Edinburgh Book Fair in March 2022. The Judges are; Lisa Baskin, (collector), Deborah Coltham, Brian Lake, Laura Massey (booksellers) and Ed Potten (independent researcher formerly of Cambridge University Library). Our thanks go to Justin Croft, Brian Lake, Deborah Coltham, John and Sandy Critchley, and Laura Massey for their generous donations this year.

In Memoriam

Judith Hodgson

We are sad to report the passing of ABA member Judith Hodgson. The funeral will take place on Friday 3rd December at the West London Crematorium, London W10 at 15:15. Judith was a long-standing ABA member since the early 1990's and active in the world of Spanish and Portuguese books.

Betty Maggs

Betty Maggs, widow of John Maggs, bookseller, died on the 25th of October; aged 95. Younger members of the trade won't have known her, but she was a key supernumerary member of Maggs - not only doing all the catering but also acting as a 'confidential advisor' for Dad. She was a real force of nature, and we will not see her like again (indeed, it's unlikely we ever saw her like before!

Written by Ed Maggs.

John Saumarez Smith

It is our sad duty to report the death of John Saumarez Smith, aged 78, after a short illness. John was a legendary bookseller who joined Heywood Hill fresh from Cambridge in September 1965, managing our bookshop from 1974 until his retirement in May 2008. He took to bookselling, and to Heywood Hill, like ink to the page.

John joined the team here briefly as a Christmas temp in 1963, in the days when most customers had accounts and their own page in the shop's hand-written ledgers. Old-fashioned bookselling, recommending worthwhile books in person to appreciative readers and collectors, had rewards as he put it both literary and social, 'I find the equation between books and people perpetually fascinating.' John had a first-class mind including

a truly prodigious memory for both books and people. He came to personify Heywood Hill for his many admirers across the world. John's scholarly air, mischievous grin and deep, broad book knowledge made Heywood Hill a magnet for the affluent well-read. His style was perfectly suited to the book-lined stage of this little shop. Annual trips to America added many transatlantic customers to our ledgers and John was warmly welcomed into bookish drawing-rooms, and indeed libraries, everywhere.

John had a huge acquaintance, and many customers became friends. His great tip was to ask new customers to name six books that they genuinely enjoyed, rather than what they were told to enjoy. People trusted John's judgement implicitly. They still do. Not a week goes by without someone referring to John's taste or opinion.

Throughout his lifetime John devoted his considerable intellectual energies to sifting the literary wheat from the chaff, in search of the beautiful, the important or the plain enjoyable. After he left Heywood Hill, John continued to deal in books from John Sandoe and Maggs Bros. He was a natural writer who reviewed books widely and provided always considered advice to librarians and their patrons. Many across the book world will mourn him today.

John was very happily married to Laura, his devoted wife. His talented sons, Joe, a businessman, and George, an architect (whose beautiful sketchbooks have been published recently) were the source of much pride. We send sincere condolences to them all. At Heywood Hill we salute John in gratitude for his unstinting tenure at our helm, his devotion to the bookish cause, and the indelible mark he left on the place and all who knew him. *Written by Nicky Dunne.*

John Smart

I am sad to report the passing of John Smart – 'Book Restorer Extraordinaire' who died peacefully in hospital after a long illness on Tuesday, 11th May at the age of 80.

The name Smart has a long history with the London book trade. Born on February 24th, 1941 in Catford, London where his father Charles Edward Smart ran a book bindery from his home. Charles had started in the early 1900s' as an apprentice vellum binder with Zaehnsdorff and then Sangorski & Sutcliffe. Charles started his own bindery shop in 1934 and worked almost exclusively for the London book trade.

In 1956 he was joined by his son John who took over the business when Charles passed away, after a long illness in 1961.

John Smart became the number one book restorer for the London book trade with regular visits to the historic names of Bill & Keith Fletcher, Norman Storey, Pickering & Chatto, Maggs Brothers, Charles J. Sawyer and of course my family firm E. Joseph. I well remember the late sixties and early seventies when every other Friday, John, always dressed in a suit, white shirt, and tie would deliver what he had repaired or rebound and collect whatever needed his expertise. He was a very polite and agreeable figure – and always with a smile on his face...

John also had many 'collector' clients from all over the globe...

He lectured at the Camberwell College of Arts throughout the 1970s before relocating his family and the bindery to the comparative peace of Wiltshire. Relocating once again to Aylburton, Gloucestershire in 2010.

His son Richard joined him in 1985 and richly absorbed a steep learning curve in his quest to reach perfection however unobtainable that may have seemed. Richard moved to Canada in 2000 and started his own firm The Old English Bindery in Vancouver.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to his wife Jacqueline, his three sons, Simon, Richard and James his granddaughter Caitlin and all of their families. *Written by David Brass.*



The Ken Spelman bookshop is turning a new leaf in its 70 year history

After buying and selling books from the same Micklegate location for 73 years, Ken Spelman Books of York (Tony Fothergill) is embarking on a new chapter in its long history.

At the end of January 2022 the current lease ends, and the shop premises are in the process of being sold. But the name and business, Ken Spelman Books Ltd, continues with the owner, Tony Fothergill, who after 43 years in Micklegate will continue very actively trading in rare and unusual books & manuscripts via catalogues, book-fairs, on-line, and by appointment.

The shop was founded in 1948 by Ken Spelman. During the 1930s, Spelman worked at Bumpus and was very familiar with the grand London carriage trade. After the War, he unexpectedly inherited some money and used it to open the shop in York. I suspect he would probably have liked to run a rather political bookshop – he'd been a conscientious objector during the War. Instead he opened a more general secondhand shop, without much emphasis on antiquarian books... a customer once asked to see the antiquarian section, to which Mr Spelman replied, 'We don't arrange the books in chronological order'

After a mere 25 years, Mr Spelman retired, and Peter Miller bought the business, himself retiring in 2012 after working at the shop for 44 years. So there is some symmetry with my own 43 years in Micklegate. But in my case this is not retirement, but relocation. Contact details remain the same, and a new website is currently being designed - so do keep in touch. www.kenspelman.com

Change of Address: ABA Immediate Past President, Roger Treglown

Roger Treglown would like to advise the membership that he has now moved to the southern end of the Lake District.

His new address is as follows:

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Titans of the Trade #22: Josh Clayton

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T: 020 7631 4220
E: books@jarndyce.co.uk

46 Great Russell Street
Bloomsbury, London WC1B 3PA



Interview by Giles Lyon

1. How did you get into the book trade?

Like many, I suspect, through sheer accident. I had known Ed Lake (now a partner at Jarndyce) from school and did bits and pieces for Jarndyce from about the age of 16; my first job was holiday work, putting up shelves in our storeroom. After university, where I studied Russian, Brian Lake asked me to help catalogue a collection of European Literature that he'd been building up over the years. That was my first catalogue, and I've been lucky enough to be at Jarndyce ever since.

2. What type of books do you tend to specialise in?

At the moment, Romantic literature, but ask me in a few months' time and it's likely to be Dickens, or Tolstoi and Dostoevskii. It tends to reflect the latest cataloguing project

3. What book(s) do you first remember reading?

Some of my earliest memories are of being read to by my parents. The Thomas books and *Ivor the Engine* were firm favourites. Once I was reading for myself, the Narnia novels and the works of Roald Dahl stayed in constant rotation.

4. What aspects of our trade do you like / dislike?

There are many things to like about bookselling, and I feel very privileged to work in an industry where I'm surrounded by beautiful objects and interesting people on a daily basis. I think there is a great deal of generosity in the trade, and have always found that colleagues have been happy to share knowledge and expertise when asked. On the down side, the rare book world remains quite an insular one, and I would like to think that it can more closely reflect the diversity of wider society in the future.

5. What media do you tend to follow?

FT, Guardian, BBC. I don't have social media.

6. Which five people would join you for your dream dinner party?

Assuming these should be people I've never met, I think Gary Kasparov, Trevor Brooking, Barack Obama, Mary Beard and Richard Corrigan (who I hope would also cook), would make for an entertaining evening.

7. Favourite holiday destination?

I've been going to the far West of Cornwall for 40 years, and it will always have a special place in my heart. Further afield, I absolutely love Venice.

8. Favourite hotel / pub / restaurant?

The Pineapple, tucked away in the Victorian back streets of Kentish Town, is the real life friendly local that Hollywood can only dream of.

9. What football team do you support?

I'm for West Ham United, and for the first time in ages (I'm sure temporarily) content.

10. How have you adapted your business in light of the pandemic?

The most obvious change has been far more working from home. As a catalogue-based business, we have still been able to trade relatively effectively, but the shop has of course been shut, and we've had to experiment more on short emailed lists and online selling.

11. What's the strangest thing you've ever eaten?

I shared a goat heart tagine in Morocco. Very chewy.

12. Name your favourite movie / TV series

I could watch the original BBC adaptation of Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy again and again.

13. How do we attract the next generation of booksellers?

That's a tough question. For the larger traders, maintaining a relationship with initiatives like the London Rare Book School is important, to provide work experience for those embarking on a bookselling career. Open-mindedness in recruitment is essential.

14. Describe the rare book you dream of handling?

I would love to have a first English edition of Crime and Punishment back in my hands; we sold a horribly underpriced copy from my first catalogue.

15. When did you last cry... and why?

I honestly can't remember, but I know I struggled to hold it together during my wedding speech.

16. Glass of wine or pint of beer?

Surely the correct response here is 'yes please'.

17. Do you see actual bookfairs coming back into play in the future?

Yes, I absolutely do, although it may take some time. They are vital to maintain a physical bridge not just between booksellers and the collecting public, but also between booksellers themselves. I'm surely not alone in having already developed online bookfair fatigue and can't wait to be back out in the field, handling books and catching up with

familiar faces.

18. What do you do for exercise?

Pre-pandemic, I played 7-a-side football every Monday. It has only recently restarted. Lugging boxes of books is a constant workout.

19. How do you see our trade developing over next ten years?

I can't imagine there are going to be any

seismic shifts over the next decade. The greatest change has clearly been the advent of the internet, and I guess the next ten years will see booksellers strive to better define/understand how they fit into a world of increased online retail.

20. What is your guiltiest pleasure?

Vodka in my morning coffee.

Catalogue Review

By James Fergusson

Philip K. Cohen remembers exactly how it all started. He was a student of James G. Nelson (1929–2015) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Nelson had a thing about the 1890s, and was writing a book about John Lane and Elkin Mathews' publishing house, *The Early Nineties: a view from the Bodley Head* (1971). 'Jim's 'Nineties seminar met in a semi-basement with windows on one wall just below ceiling level,' Cohen recalls. 'One day he brought to class a fine copy of John Davidson's *Fleet Street Eclogues* [1893] in polished dark blue buckram with a superb gilt-stamped cover design by Walter West. The moment he set the book down, the clouds parted and a fiery shaft of sunlight struck the cover from above, illuminating it to an incandescent brilliance. I had an epiphany. I was born to be a book collector.'

For the first book he wrote, *The Moral Vision of Oscar Wilde* (1978), Cohen relied on the

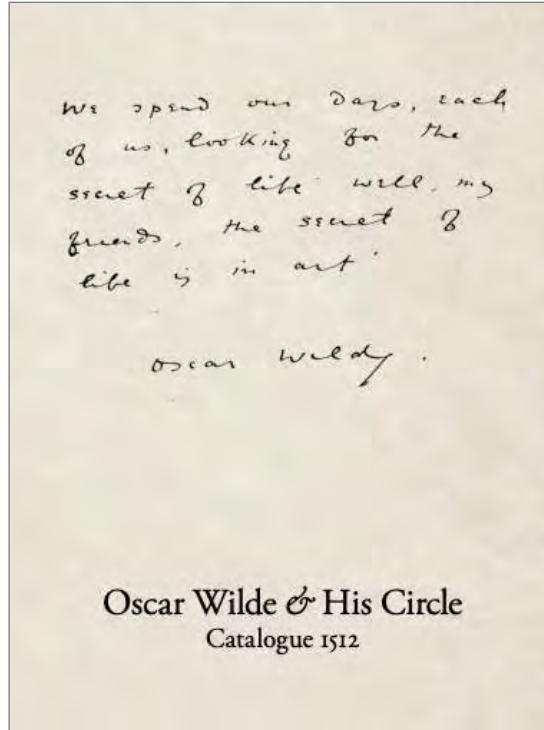
holdings of the University of Wisconsin Library. For his second, however, *John Evelyn Barlas: a critical biography*, he 'depended heavily' on his own collection. 'By the time that book appeared, 34 years after the first, the collection had grown to become an indispensable scholarly resource.' Collecting books was useful! Nine more years on, and with his eighties in sight, he is selling his collection.

Ed Maggs is the lead cataloguer in **Maggs Bros** (ed@maggs.com), 1512, 'Oscar Wilde & His Circle: the Cohen Collection part i', 321 items – with at least three catalogues promised to follow. He has a distinct voice, teasing, amused, unafraid to take sides in antique arguments. Wilde, he points out, has always held his place in the market, only falling into doldrums in the three decades after the Second World War. Maggs Bros 'had been specialists in Wilde since the 1910s,' he

says. 'When I joined the firm I was initially surprised at how Wilde was accommodated alongside establishment figures such as Churchill, Kipling and T.E. Lawrence. The famously curmudgeonly and non-intellectual Bill Lent, to whom I was apprenticed, saw no paradox in this.'

This is no conventional completist catalogue. Fat, heavy and well-illustrated, and with a preface by the collector, it has a main Wilde section running to only 38 items. Nothing is priced; if one is interested in buying, one looks to a separate inserted list, revealing many items, and some entire sections, as previously sold. Cohen's collections of 'Performance History', including some haunting cabinet portraits and cartes de visite, and of John Barlas, 'the finest in private hands', had already gone at publication. His collections of John Gray, with five copies of *Silverpoints*, one inscribed to Lady Gregory (ex Michael Sadleir, Simon Nowell-Smith, Judith Adams Nowell-Smith), another on vellum, a third Walter Pater's, and of Vincent O'Sullivan, a notoriously difficult writer to find, were offered at fixed prices (£28,750 for Gray, £9,000 for O'Sullivan) until 1 June; even if they had not sold en bloc by then, some items in them were already reserved. The most expensive surviving item under 'Wilde' was *The House of Pomegranates* (1891) inscribed by the author to the 27-year-old

Margot Tennant, the future Margot Asquith, 'from her friend and admirer', £23,000.



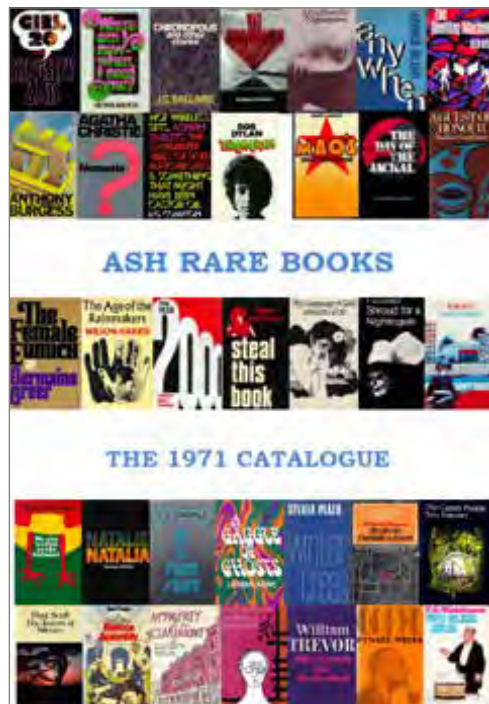
Members of Wilde's circle otherwise featured include Beardsley (the volumes of Balzac bought and then sold for him by Smithers; *The Savoy* in wrappers, £4,300; Arthur Symonds's *Poems*, 1902, with Olive Custance's extraordinary Beardsley bookplate), Beerbohm, Olive Custance (a character with whom Ed Maggs has much fun), Alfred Douglas (to whom he is almost sympathetic), Lillie Langtry (with some wonderful images, some signed),

Marc André Raffalovich, Robert Sherard and Theodore Wratishaw.

We look forward to the next Cohen instalments, 'The New Woman' and 'The Poets of the Rhymers' Club.'

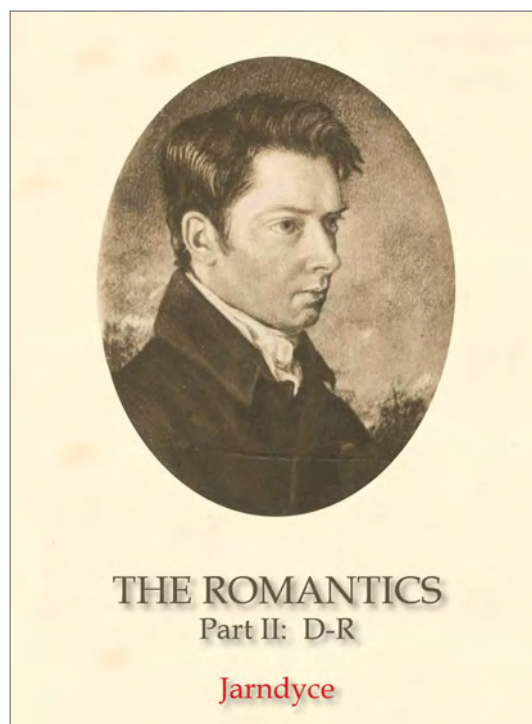
Laurence Worms celebrated the 75th anniversary of his business, **Ash Rare Books** (books@ashrare.com), and the 50th of his becoming a bookseller with 'The 1971 Catalogue', listing 108 books published that year – a nice conceit, drawing attention to under-regarded titles and giving the cataloguer license for gentle reminiscence. In 1971 Kingsley Amis published *Girl*, 20, £50, W.H. Auden *Academic Graffiti*, £25, J.G. Ballard *Chronopolis*, £50, Anthony Burgess *MF*, £75, Maureen Duffy *Love Child*, £40 (publisher's file copy), Lawrence Durrell *The Red Limbo Lingo*,

£75, Bob Dylan *Tarantula*, £100, William Golding *The Scorpion God*, £75, Simon Gray Butley, £25, Graham Greene *A Sort of Life*, £50, Thom Gunn *Moly*, £25, Arthur Hailey *Wheels*, £50 (signed), Geoffrey Hill *Mercian Hymns*, £200, P.D. James *Shroud for a Nightingale*, £400 (inscribed), Doris Lessing, *Briefing for a Descent into Hell*, £50, Henry Miller *My Life and Times*, £100, V.S. Naipaul *In a Free State*, £100, Harold Pinter *Old Times*, £50, Anthony Powell *Books Do Furnish a Room*, £50, Tom Stoppard *After Magritte*, £75 (John Osborne's review copy), Elizabeth Taylor *Mrs Palfrey at the Claremont*, £400, Paul Theroux *Jungle Lovers*, £200 (signed), John Updike *Rabbit Redux*, £50, and P.G. Wodehouse *Much Obligated, Jeeves*, £100. John Banville put out his first novel, *Nightspawn*, £500 (signed), Ivy Compton-Burnett her last, *The Last and the First*, £20, and Frederick Forsyth the 'publishing jackpot' of the year, *The Day of the Jackal*, £200. The Private Libraries Association issued *The London Bookshop*, words and photographs documenting a vanished age of antiquarian retail, £40 (R.F.G. Hollett's copy; Percy Muir wrote the introduction); and the first UK edition appeared of 84,



Charing Cross Road, £200.

Byron led the field by several furlongs in the first part of the latest Romantics catalogue from **Jarndyce** (books@jarndyce.co.uk). In the second, CCL, 'The Romantics Part II: D-R' (catalogue by Joshua Clayton and Jessica Starr), 623 items, the race is tighter. Leigh Hunt emerged the winner, with 55 items (a run of the first 12 years of *The Examiner*, 1808–19, was £8,500), followed by Charles Lamb, 50, Thomas Samuel Rogers, 43 (with five letters and others), level with Hazlitt, (*Endymion*, second issue, was Hogg, 28, and De Quincey, 22 ink-and-wash portrait, c1825, al, the catalogue made an de; it is particularly strong in commonplace books.



John Drury (mail@
johndruryrarebooks.com)
issued two more absorbing
catalogues in their tried
and trusted field of 'books,
pamphlets and broadsides
on a wide range of subjects
but broadly in the fields of
political economy and the
human and social sciences':
203, 125 items, featuring
James Ramsay, *An Essay
on the Treatment and*

Conversion of African Slaves in the British Sugar Colonies (1784 – slavery, he wrote, was 'an unnatural state of oppression on the one side, and of suffering on the other; and needs only to be laid open or exposed in its native colours, to command the abhorrence and opposition of every man of feeling and sentiment'), £1,950, and a silhouette of the Irish nationalist hero Wolfe Tone, c1798–1800, £450; and 204, 125 items, offering the historic announcement by John Walter, in a folio circular addressed 'To the Readers of News-Papers', that on 1 January 1788 *The Daily Universal Register* would, whatever 'envy or malevolence' might be occasioned, change its title to *The Times*: or, *Daily Universal Register*, £3,500, and a 'magnificent' extra-illustrated set, bound by Ramage, of *Memoirs of Charles Mathews*, Comedian, the 1839 life by his widow of a pioneer of the one-man show, £2,400.

Between the Covers

(mail@betweenthecovers.com), 245, 'African-

Americana', 102 items, included two abolitionist salt cellars, 'or Toothpick Holders', c1845, perhaps British for export to the US, bearing images of a kneeling, chained female slave and the Thomas Clarkson quotation, 'Take courage – go on – persevere to the last', \$7,500, and, a sobering document, the signed certificate from the Office of Auxiliary

Commissioners of Compensation in the British colony of Mauritius, 1837, awarding £95 12s 8¾d to William Harrison Hollier Griffiths (one of the founders the following year of the Mauritius Commercial Bank – still functioning) in compensation for five slaves, *pro rata* 'according to the average value of every Negro in each class', \$1,500. The same dealer's 247, 'Miscellany', 108 items, had Graham Greene and Dorothy Craigie's 1950 children's book *The Little Fire Engine* inscribed by Greene to John Carter 'with awe and affection', \$5,500, Harold Pinter's 'Own Prompt Copy' of *The Caretaker* (1960), \$35,000, and a 'comprehensive' collection of W.G. Sebald, \$15,000.



Peter Ellis

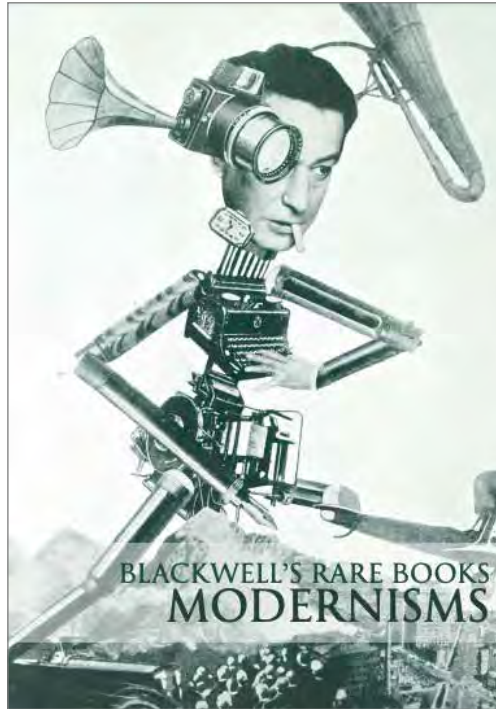
(peterellisbooks@hotmail.co.uk), likewise, produced two catalogues: 144, 447 items, had the Black Sun Press's 1930 *Alice in Wonderland* in the 'A' of 20 special copies signed by the artist, Marie Laurencin, and with an extra suite of signed illustrations, £9,750, Sigmund Freud's *An Autobiographical Study*

(Hogarth Press, 1935) signed by the author and from the library of Leonard Browne of the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, with his ownership signature and a letter to him from the author's daughter Mathilde, £9,500, and a group of 49 Updike items, many signed and some inscribed, £45–£450; while 145, 450 items, had R.S. Thomas's first book, *The*

Stones of the Field (1946) in a proof dustwrapper, the dustwrapper by his wife, the copy from his own library, £750, and Sylvia Townsend Warner inscribing Reynolds Stone's *Boxwood* (1960: Warner 'illustrated' the wood-engravings in verse) to her partner Valentine Ackland, £950.

Blackwell's (rarebooks@blackwell.co.uk), MF7, 'Modernisms', 265 items, advertised John Baxter's collection of 'Books and Objects related to the Use and Abuse of Opium and other Drugs', for £5,000, as well as a number of items by or relating to Jorge Luis Borges from the collection of his translator Norman Thomas di Giovanni, including his only novel, a 'notable rarity', *El Caudillo* (1921) in his daughter's copy and binding, £800, and Louis-Ferdinand Céline's *Death on the Instalment Plan* (first English edition, 1938) with the ownership inscription, 1939, of Ian Fleming, £2,000,

Christopher Edwards (chr.edwards@btinternet.com) concluded his 'Selections from the Library of Brian Findlay', sometime Dean of Divinity at Magdalen College, Oxford, with scrupulously provenanced lists 81, 'Part II: English books, M-Z', 149 items, and 82, 'Part III: Early continental books', 73 items, the latter including, for example, Bernardo Segno's 1559 translation of Aristotle's *Politics* with the ownership inscription of William Michael



Rossetti 'from his mother', i.e. Frances, née Polidori, sister of Byron's physician (one of the party at the Villa Diodati), £300, and Henri Estienne's 1566 edition of the *Greek Anthology* with the ownership signature and notes of Thomas Gaisford, Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford, 1811–55, and Dean of Christ Church, £1,500.

Forest Books (bib@forestbooks.co.uk), 'Miscellany Twelve', 236 items, had Joseph

Sampson Gamgee's *History of a Successful Case of Amputation at the Hip-Joint (the limb 48 inches in circumference, 99 pounds weight)* (1865), inscribed by the author and with four mounted albumen prints, that of the patient after his amputation most striking, £1,495, and attractive Dawson Turner material in a volume of 21 quarto pamphlets by him related to Norfolk, 1837–40, with his ownership inscriptions, £1,200, and his *List of Norfolk Benefices* (1847) in a unique copy printed on vellum, £2,500.

Maggs Bros (jonathan@hazel@maggs.com), 1514, 'Continental Books', 69 items, was small and grand, with manuscripts of Cicero's *Tusculanae Disputationes* (by the scribe of the Abbey Martial, c1470–80, ex Huth, £45,000), an unpublished 14-line poem by Torquato Tasso's father (c1520–5, £4,500) and a German/Latin treatise on sundials with delightful *trompe-l'oeil* illustrations (by N.D.

Österreich, 1708–17, £25,000). A late outlier was Apollinaire's *Alcools* (1913, £7,500), with a frontispiece portrait by Picasso of the author – but surely not, given the date, with his head bandaged 'following shrapnel wounds sustained at the front line . . . in the First World War'.

Sokol Books (books@sokol.co.uk), LXXIX, 54 items, large-format and glossy, offered a decorated English manuscript bible, 'perhaps Oxford', c1260, notable for its annotations about the Hebrew canon, £175,000, and a pretty illuminated manuscript from the first half of the 15th century of Hugh of Saint Cher's commentary on Peter Lombard's *Sentences* – 'A very fine copy of a fundamentally important medieval text, yet to be edited or extensively studied; and most probably the sole copy to appear on the open market since records began', £79,500.

Jarndyce (above), CCXLIX, 'Travellers, Part I: Women, Part II: Men' (catalogue by Niamh Stroud and Brian Lake), 381 items (women 196, men 185), had 30 letters to Maria (Mrs Augustus) Hare from her sister Catherine (Mrs Edward) Stanley and eight from her brother Edward Penrhyn (né Leycester), 1821–52, £10,500 – 'These letters,' writes Maria's nephew/adopted son Augustus John Cuthbert Hare on a label, 'are

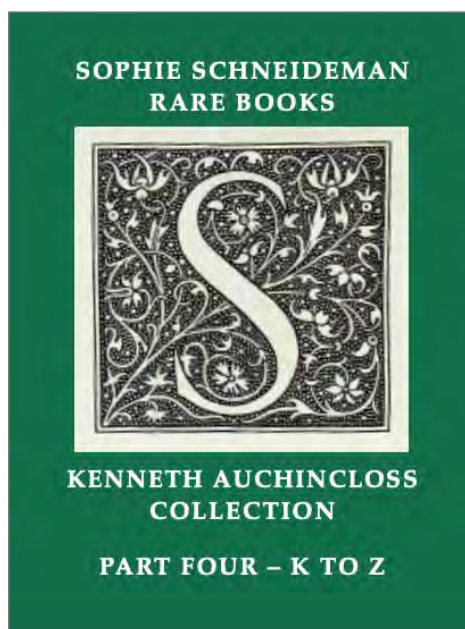


of far more than family interest especially those from Italy describing a state of things in places which have long ceased to exist.'

Sophie Schneideman

(sophie@ssrbooks.com), 'The Kenneth Auchinloss Collection of Fine Printing & Press Books, catalogue 4: K–Z', 179 items, continued a pleasing series begun in 2013, sampling such presses as Appletree Alley, Libanus, Merrymount, Nonesuch, Officina Bodoni, Old School, Old Stile, Rampant Lions, Stanbrook Abbey and Whittington.

Other catalogues received included **Bennett & Kerr** (bennettkerr@aol.com), 220, 846 items, and 221, 986 items, both 'Middle Ages & Renaissance'; and **Alastor Rare Books** (alastorrb@btinternet.com), 36, 167 items, rich in ephemera.



Please post catalogues for review to:

James Fergusson
39 Melrose Gardens
London W6 7RN

jamesfergusson@btinternet.com

Firsts, London's Rare Book Fair 2021 | Post-Fair Report

The 64th edition of Firsts, London's Rare Book Fair came to a close on Sunday 24th October following the four-day event. There were a record number of visitors to the Antiquarian Booksellers' Association's premier event this year with a footfall of over 4,500 attendees. Exhibitors and the fair organisers were thrilled to notice an increase in younger visitors to the fair than in previous years, demonstrating Saatchi Gallery's appeal to a wider audience. Combined with strong sales recorded from all participating exhibitors, the fair's new location has proven itself to be successful in attracting museum and institution attendees, existing and new private buyers, as well as enthusiasts from across the UK.

Pom Harrington, Fair Chairman, commented on the event's success at its new venue Saatchi Gallery "What a pleasant surprise, I think it is safe to say our expectations have been exceeded" and equally on the "very positive" feedback from the 82 UK and international exhibitors on the change.



KEY FIGURES

	2021	2019	2018	2017
Venue	Saatchi	Battersea	Battersea	Olympia
Exhibitors	82	145	173	157
Footfall				
Thursday	489		1,173	924
Friday	903	1,114	901	838
Saturday	1,700	1,500	902	722
Sunday	1,550	958		
Total	4,642	3,572	2,976	2,484

EXHIBITOR TAKE

	2021	2019	2018	2017
Exhibitors	82	145	173	157
<i>Domestic/International</i>	67/15	96/49	104/69	103/54
Total Take	£2,960,823	£2,810,214	£3,193,746	£3,136,635
<i>Total Returns</i>	79	130	149	138
Average	£37,479	£21,617	£21,435	£22,729
Median	£18,000	£12,645	£8,340	£11,717

**The full Firsts London 2021 Post-Fair Report can be requested to view by emailing the Company Secretary at secretary@aba.org.uk.*



UPCOMING RARE BOOK FAIRS

ABA FAIRS

EDINBURGH PREMIER FAIR

25-26 March 2022

ABA and PBFA

www.pbfa.org

CHELSEA RARE BOOK FAIR

29-30 April 2022

Location: Chelsea Old Town Hall, London

Open to ABA and PBFA members

www.chelseararebookfair.com

BRISTOL RARE BOOK FAIR

1-2 July 2022 (Tentative)

ABA and PBFA

www.pbfa.org

44th ILAB CONGRESS

9-14 September 2022

Location: Oxford, UK

ABA and ILAB

www.ilab2022.com

FIRSTS LONDON

15-18 September 2022

Location: Saatchi Gallery, Duke of York Square

www.firstslondon.com

TRADE FAIRS

THE CALIFORNIA INTERNATIONAL ANTIQUARIAN BOOK FAIR (ABAA)

11-13 February 2022

Location: Oakland, San Francisco

www.cabookfair.com

VIRTUAL STUTTGART RARE BOOK FAIR

18-22 February 2022

Verband Deutscher Antiquare e.V.

www.antiquariatsmesse-stuttgart.de

STOCKHOLM ANTIQUARIAN BOOK FAIR

12-13 March 2022

Svenska Antikvariatforeningen

Location: Royal Academy of Art, Stockholm

www.svaf.se/eng/fairs.html

TOKYO INTERNATIONAL ANTIQUARIAN BOOK FAIR (ABAJ)

18-20 March 2022

Location: Tokyo Traffic Hall

<http://abaj.gr.jp>

THE NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL ANTIQUARIAN BOOK FAIR (ABAA)

21-24 April 2022

Location: Park Avenue Armory

www.nyantiquarianbookfair.com

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

MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

14:30 THURSDAY 27 MAY 2021 AT
14:30 [**VIA ZOOM*]

President: Pom Harrington

Officers: The Vice-President, Deborah Coltham (Deborah Coltham Rare Books), The Treasurer, Daniel Crouch (Daniel Crouch Rare Books), Immediate Past-President Roger Treglown (Roger Treglown Rare Books).

Members of Council: Jenny Allsworth (Jenny Allsworth Rare Books), Simon Beattie (Simon Beattie Ltd), Michael Graves-Johnston (Michael Graves-Johnston), James Hallgate (Lucius Books), Tom Lintern-Mole (Antiquates Ltd), Edward Maggs (Maggs Bros), Sophie Schneideman (Sophie Schneideman Rare Books and Prints), Bernard Shapero (Shapero Rare Books).

Also in Attendance: Adrian Harrington (Adrian Harrington Rare Books), Ms. Riley Grant (Company Secretary).

Apologies: Angus O'Neill

OPEN MEETING

Welcome by the President to Members attending the "open meeting"

Welcomed Elise Bousquet, Nigel Garwood, Paul Mills, Sara Trevisan to the open portion of the meeting.

In Memoriam

Andrew Cumming (A & Y Cumming Rare Books)

Reg Remington (Remington Books)

Peter Selley (Sotheby's)

John Smart (EC Rare Books)

Council held a moment of silence to pay their respects.

Minutes of the meeting held on 25 March

2021: There were no **Matters Arising** from the Minutes.

Report of the President

PH reported that it had been a busy start to his presidency, with many meetings in recent weeks including trade fair planning, Firsts Online, Firsts London, ILAB Congress, Book Security, Management Committee and Membership Benefits. There had been enquiries from members, with one member dealing with ongoing title issues. The previous two weeks had been focused on Firsts and ILAB Congress.

Financial Report

DCr reported that there were changes to be announced and that the circulated accounts were not reflective of certain changes. He confirmed that if Firsts London were to go ahead in October as planned, the association would be in a stronger financial position. If it could not, the association would get through. PH added that Firsts Online had provided ongoing cashflow for the association.

Report of the Secretary

RG reported that Firsts Online had closed the previous day and dates had been confirmed for December. She noted that applications for the upcoming Transatlantic Book Fair were open. The following weeks would be dominated by launching Firsts London applications, the trade fair and the newly schedule charity dinner for the Educational Trust. Planning for ILAB Congress and YABS was also underway.

Marketing Report

EB reported that Firsts Online had closed the previous day and had achieved good numbers and attendance. She would be working on the marketing report to distribute to members. She intended to focus on ABA content throughout June and improving engagement on the ABA social media platforms. DCo thanked EB for organising the webinars and said that they were enjoyable, bringing a great audience to Firsts Online.

ILAB Congress

DCr reported that he and SB would be visiting Waddesdon and that Wormsley had confirmed a complementary visit, with more to be announced.

Missing Books Registrar

AON had circulated notes earlier that day reporting that the register was in development. Angelika Elstner (ILAB Secretary), Sally Burdon (ILAB President) and Biblio had put in a great deal of work. AON had been in contact with library professionals to discuss their complex requirements. The

ILAB committee would be drafting separate guidance notes for library professionals and law enforcement authorities on effectively using the register. AON hoped that the register would be live within weeks rather than months.

Committees and other ABA activities

Book Collecting Prize

DCr reported that while the prize had been cancelled in 2020, the organisers including DCo, Justin Croft and Brian Lake had generously offered to sponsor the prize for 2021.

ABA Library

RT reported that as he would be moving house, the ABA library would need to be rehoused before the end of the year. PH estimated that there would be 200ft of shelving to be rehoused.

AH noted that the association should formalise an archive.

ABA Newsletter

EB asked members of council to review the next newsletter, and to flag any use of language that members might take issue with.

PH noted that he had received compliments on the most recent newsletter from other members.

Digital Committee

SB reported that he had taken over the website committee and retitled it the Digital

Committee to cover a larger remit. SB had asked Laura Massey to restructure the ABA Website, making it more accessible for users.

RG reported that there would be a series of tech talks, beginning in Sept. This would include subjects such as selling online, SEO and social media. Rob Sandall would be responsible for the content of the talks.

Book Trade Liaisons

ABE: PH had spoken with Udo Goellman of ABE about VAT into Europe. ABE had sent an email regarding collecting VAT on behalf of the seller.

BAMF: AON reported that HMRC have warned the art market about registering for money laundering directive, but the consensus was that booksellers were not art market professionals, unless they dealt in works of art as well. DCr added that Maps were under the same category as books, as were prints and views.

PBFA: TLM reported that there had been no progress with the PBFA. JH had asked to be a liaison, and the PBFA indicated that they would discuss the offer at a future meeting.

Charities

Benevolent Fund

DCr reported there had been a low number of calls upon the fund.

Educational Trust Dinner – Brook's

RG reported that TH had kindly offered to hold a dinner at Brook's club in St. James's, in aid of the ABA Educational Trust. PH added that

this would raise the profile of the Trust, with Adam Douglas, the charity chairman speaking about the trust's activities. The room was being offered without a booking fee until the 20 June hence the short notice.

Export and Legislation

DCr reported that he would be distributing an updated guidance for members. He had been inundated by emails from members about ongoing issues with shippers such as UPS, FedEx, DHL and Royal Mail.

DCr, PH and RG would approach all major shippers with set wording to facilitate shipping and reduce issues. DCr hoped that in asking, as a trade body, there could be some progress.

PH suggested organising a seminar with ABE and Biblio for members.

Dates of Next Meetings

29 July 2021 - Zoom

30 September 2021 - In person

9 December 2021 - Christmas Party

Any Other Business

RT congratulated PH on his first council meeting as president.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 16:50.

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

THURSDAY 29 JULY 2021 AT 14:30
[*VIA ZOOM]

In Attendance

Pom Harrington (President), Deborah Coltham (Vice President), Daniel Crouch (Treasurer), Jenny Allsworth, Simon Beattie, Michael Graves-Johnston, James Hallgate, Thomas Heneage, Tom Lintern-Mole, Ed Maggs, Bernard Shapero, Sophie Schneideman, Roger Treglown.

Also in Attendance: Riley Grant, Angus O'Neill.

Apologies: Adrian Harrington.

OPEN MEETING

Welcome by the President to Members attending the "open meeting"

PH welcomed Elise Bousquet, Laura Massey, Nick McBurney, Paul Mills and Sara Trevisan to the open portion of the meeting.

Minutes of the ABA Council Meeting held on 27 May 2021.

The minutes were approved and confirmed by DCr and JH

Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Report of the President

PH reported that there had an Educational Trust dinner and thanked TH for organising

and offering Brooks's as the venue. PH reported that Firsts planning continued, with regular meetings at Saatchi. There had been a visit to Dunstable to better understand the bookshelves for Firsts. The Trade Fair and Transatlantic Book fair had taken place in July.

PH reported that the New York Book fair was experiencing ongoing issues with immigration visas for exhibitors. PH had been working with the ABAA and it appeared that anyone intending to exhibit who had been applying for visas had been turned down. A few exhibitors had decided to use lawyers, with their applications still ongoing at the time of the meeting.

PH had been dealing with some member enquiries in recent months and re-developing the Library Liaison position with NMB.

Financial Report

DCr reported that if stands at Firsts were sold out, there would be a good financial reserve. If the fair was not sold out, the association would be limited in cashflow but remain solvent. Between July and September, as many stands as possible needed to be sold, which would translate directly into profit for the bottom line. Expenses for the association and Firsts were as low as they could be.

DCr reported that Sarah Keefe (SK) the ABA bookkeeper, pointed out that there should be a deadline on the discount. This would provide an incentive for exhibitors to book.

PH concurred that costs were as low as

possible. The budget for the fair was relatively fixed, but there were some savings to be made on advertising on the preview.

Firsts 2021

PH reported that 65 applications had received, 60 of which were UK based. PH assumed another 10 UK based exhibitors, with the remainder coming from overseas. PH and RG were aiming for 80-100 exhibitors. Contact had been made with other ILAB associations, and emails translated for distribution in France, Germany and Italy.

PH reported that Caladex had supplied some information on shipping, which would be shared with exhibitors.

The council agreed that Firsts could be the beneficiary of European dealers unable to attend the NYBF.

Q&A session had been hosted in the previous week which was attended by a handful of exhibitors.

Report of the Secretary

RG reported that there had been ongoing work on YABS, the Trade Fair and Online Fairs. The coming months would be focused on Firsts.

Marketing & Newsletter Report

EB reported that the next newsletter would be released at the end of August. She had been creating the Firsts marketing plan and would be assisting with the Book Trade History Conference.

Firsts 2023 & 2024

PH reported that Firsts London and ILAB Congress had been moved to September 2022.

Earlier that day, PH had received a contract from Saatchi and would be reviewing it. DCr would be confirming the various contracts for Congress.

PH reported that for 2022, Congress would overlap slightly with the York Book Fair. This would be followed by Firsts London and then SLAM. Chelsea 2021 had been postponed to April 2022.

May vs September

PH felt there was a lovely advantage to dovetailing with the York bookfair, but it could be congested, with York, Firsts and SLAM in the same month. The Bibliophiles held their events in September as well, and it would be outside of school holidays.

PH felt May would always be outside of school holidays, with no event on either side. PH added that June would never be an option at Saatchi due to their exhibition program.

LM asked about the future of Chelsea, should Firsts move to September. PH noted that Chelsea would be moved to the end of April 2022 to determine if the event could be hosted then as a long-term solution.

SS felt that May would be preferable for Firsts, for the Northern American exhibitor base.

SB enquired about YABS and the impact the change in calendar could have on that. PH concurred, as the ABA would be organising YABS.

PH reiterated that this decision would not need to be made until December 2021. A large question around the event was whether a bookfair worked over three levels.

ILAB Congress 2022

DCr reported that planning had been in a holding pattern, waiting for the Saatchi Contract to be signed. DCr and SB had visited Waddesdon. The next stage would be confirming the hotel and liaising with Oxford colleges. Being out of term time would increase availability. DCr added that there was a prototype website, which would be launched once event bookings were confirmed.

ILAB Missing Books Register

AON reported that Biblio had been assisting ILAB with the build of the MBR. There would be a beta version in August, which could be shown to librarians to increase interest. The intention was for the site to be live in the coming months.

PH reported that there had been a meeting with ILAB in recent weeks to work through the logistics of the database.

Committees and other ABA activities

South Eastern Branch

DCo reported that she would be organising an event for the area.

Book Collecting Prizes

DCo reported that the prize going ahead for 2021 and thanked those who had donated. LM would be assisting DCo.

Digital Committee

SB reported that the committee was awaiting an update from Biblio about progress on the ABA website and the requested changes. LM had drawn up a restructuring of the ABA website which RG had passed onto Biblio.

Library Liaison

NMB reported that there was not anything concrete to report. He had been in talks with IFLA and the Bibliographical Society. He would be working on book-based outreach in schools in 2022. Short term conversations had been had with Friends of the National library, promoting their Grant scheme at Firsts in October and a talk, likely for 2022. He had been encouraging librarians to attend with donors and curators with the idea of bringing in high net worth individuals that their institutors were working with. NMB would be drafting something for the upcoming newsletter. NMB noted that he would be open to suggestions from other members.

Social Events

Educational Trust Dinner

TH reported that everyone had enjoyed themselves and requested further events of that nature. The event had raised just over £1,000 for the Educational Trust. TH and RG had tentatively booked the 22 October for an event to coincide with Firsts.

Book Trade Liaisons

BAMF

AON reported that conversations at BAMF had been centred around Brexit and Covid. There was another meeting scheduled for October.

PBFA

TLM had submitted a report prior to the meeting, as he had left early. There had been a new appointee for the committee and a meeting would occur at York in September. There were continued good relations with PBFA demonstrated by their participation in the trade fair and a shadow fair for Firsts in October on the Sunday in Bloomsbury.

Export & Legislation

DCr reported on internal import taxation and OSS and Brexit and issues they have caused. DCr noted that he was partway through a revision on his original advice, which would be circulated shortly. He had received a large amount of correspondence from ABA members citing similar issues. The main issue beyond delays was the automatic input of VAT on books, which should be exempt. DCr would not recommend UPS or DHL. He suggested members use FEDEX. The document would be circulated to council in advance of being circulated to membership.

Dates of Next Meetings

PH felt it would be time to return to in person meetings, dependant on Covid cases. He asked that anyone who felt uncomfortable with the decision to contact him privately.

30 September 2021 - Meeting in Person

2 December 2021 - Meeting in Person, followed by the Christmas Party at Shapero Rare Books.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 17:27

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF COUNCIL THURSDAY 30 SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 14:30 [*VIA ZOOM]

In Attendance: Pom Harrington (President), Deborah Coltham (Vice President), Daniel Crouch (Treasurer), Jenny Allsworth, Simon Beattie, Michael Graves-Johnston, James Hallgate, Thomas Heneage. Tom Lintern-Mole, Ed Maggs, Sophie Schneideman, Bernard Shapero, Roger Treglown.

Also in Attendance: Riley Grant, Angus O'Neill

Apologies: Jenny Allsworth

OPEN MEETING

PH welcomed Elise Bousquet, Nigel Garwood, Sara Trevisan and Paul Mills to the meeting.

Minutes of the ABA Council Meeting held on 29 July 2021

There were no **Matters Arising** from the Minutes.

Report of the President

PH reported that there had been the Transatlantic Book Fair in July, immediately after the previous council meeting. The event resulted in just under £10,000 in income for the ABA. PH discussed repeating the event with the ABAA, to be confirmed at a later date. The focus has been books fairs, particularly Firsts. There had been meetings with Saatchi pertaining to their marketing program. PH had attended the Paris Book Fair and enjoyed the French hospitality.

Financial Report

DCr presented the ABA management accounts and reported that the situation was not as positive as projected, as the Firsts exhibitor numbers were lower than projected.

The income from online book fairs had been useful in keeping the association afloat and would cover many of the losses that could be incurred by Firsts 2020.

TLM added that there were prepayments from 2020 that would need to be applied to the 2021 finances.

PH noted that the cashflow in the coming months would be based on the success of the book fair.

Report of the Secretary

RG reported that recent months had been focused on fairs including the Trade Fair, Transatlantic Book Fair and Firsts. RG had assisted in organising the YABS scholarships for 2021. Following that would be the Book Trade History Conference, The ABA Christmas Party and onto Chelsea in 2022.

Marketing and Newsletter Report

EB reported that the recent months had been fair focused, and she planned to have the next ABA Newsletter out in November.

EB reported that social media followers had increased to over 10,000 on all accounts and increased our reach to 4,000 on the Firsts account. MailChimp had experienced a dip in subscribers over the last 18 months and newsletters about online fairs appeared to be less interesting to those who attended physical fairs.

PH felt that the long-established mailing list was a great asset to the fair and the association. He added that the marketing for the book fair had not been compromised, despite exhibitor numbers being lower by a third. Approximately £35,000 would be spent with an emphasis on digital marketing.

EB reported hesitancy in utilizing Saatchi's social media, but that the media buyer Cymbeline Kellet had formulated a strong marketing campaign.

BOOK FAIRS

Firsts 2021

PH reported that there were ongoing issues with international exhibitors due to Brexit and Covid restrictions. The issue was not with bringing books into the UK, rather returning their books to their home countries.

SS had hand carried her books to and from Paris using the carnet system. Both the UK and France were concerned about paperwork, but the customs teams had been friendly and helpful. The London Chamber of Commerce were confident that it would be a system of

self-certification in the future.

PH was confident that by 2022, import and export would resolve itself.

BS felt that returning to fairs would be key for dealers, to reintroduce themselves to each other and collectors they had forgotten.

SS agreed with BS and felt that dealers wanted to participate in the community again.

PH was hopeful and that the income would be larger than predicted and the costs lower. He hoped there would be a small profit, with the absence of an administration cost.

RT noted that the feedback at York had been regarding the shipping of books, rather than stand prices. PH confirmed that this had been noted and that he and RG were waiting on confirmation of a potential solution.

TLM added that the response of York exhibitors was positive about the move and felt it was an improvement.

EM applauded the optimism and industriousness of the organisers and committee.

Firsts 2022

PH reported that a contract had been signed for 2022-2024, but there was an exit clause for 2023 and 2024 would need to be actioned at the end of 2021.

PH felt that May would be the better option, over September. Planning a fair during the

summer was difficult and SLAM would be maintaining their September slot.

Richard Thompson Insurance Brokers/Fine

Art Special Adjusters Ltd: DCr reported that there were issues with a loss adjuster employed at Hiscox, the company that backed the RTIB ABA policies. His actions could be considered vexatious and queried the expertise of shippers and packers.

PH asked if Joe Thompson had assisted. DCr confirmed that he had.

ILAB Congress 2022

DCr reported that the hotel had been confirmed and plans were progressing. Both Waddesdon and Wormsley had been confirmed, as had a few colleges. The organisers were awaiting a response from museums. PH asked if DCr would be promoting the event at Firsts.

SB expressed caution in promoting an event that would be open only to ILAB affiliates.

RG suggested that information be printed, which could be added to the exhibitor's welcome pack.

ILAB Missing Books Register

AON reported that the register was taking longer than expected, but there were ongoing issues found within the site. AON would be drafting guidance notes for usage of the site.

DCr had attended a meeting with the Department of Culture, Media & Sport regarding manuscripts. DCr had suggested

they contact AON about manuscripts that should be exported, as a category for the MBR.

AON noted that there would be a section of the MBR that would not be accessed by the public.

Committees and other ABA activities

Book Collecting Prizes

DCo reported that there had been seven entries for the prize and donors for the £1,000 prize. PH offered the fair as an award giving venue.

Digital Committee

SB reported that the committee had been awaiting an update from Biblio.

Library Liaison

TLM reported that NMcb, SS and himself had been liaising with librarians and passing on specific names for RG to invite to Firsts.

Social Events

Christmas Party

BS reported that Shapero Rare Books would be the hosting the Christmas party on 1 December on New Bond Street.

Book Trade Liaisons

BAMF: AON reported that there would be a plenary meeting the following week.

PBFA: TLM there had been a liaison meeting at York and discussed the calendar for 2022

and ensuring there are no clashes. There was excitement about September 2022 with York, Firsts and ILAB Congress.

PH asked if there could be pooled advertising, as SLAM was included in the September plan.

Export and Legislation

DCr reported continued issues being reported from members. DCr had attended a document working party earlier that day. There were reports of queries from The Arts Council on shipments that had used the standard books HS code. There had been suggestions that the books sold by members should be classified as collectable books, which would fall under the antiques code. The implications were serious, as there would be a 5% import tax on collectable books and divide the trade into two parts. Thus far, it had only been a query and there had not been a case in which the HS code had not been permitted.

DCr added that CALADEx were not comfortable with the current procedures, and that he would liaise with them over a solution.

Dates of Next Meetings

1 December 2021 - In person & Christmas Party

Any Other Business

DCo reported that Sheila Markham had accepted honorary membership.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 16:40.

