

ANTIQUARIAN BOOKSELLERS' ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER



SUMMER 2023
ISSUE 417

news - events - articles - minutes





A letter from the ABA President
Deborah Coltham

I am delighted to be writing to you in my new capacity as ABA President. It is such a privilege to be taking over the role, and I am really looking forward to the next couple of years.

As they seem to be all the rage, I should probably have a grand five-point plan for my term of office. I confess, that I don't. What is important, however, is that we build upon the solid foundations of the last few years, to ensure that the Association is financially resilient, prudent, and able to adapt and deal with what comes our way. We are acutely aware that members, only just emerging from the pandemic, are now facing rapidly increasing costs and sustained inflationary pressures. Pressures from which, however, the Association itself is not immune, and which we would be foolish to ignore.

It is important that the Association keeps pace with changes as to how people work and run

their businesses. Stating the obvious, the Association is nothing without its members, and it is encouraging that applications for membership remain constant. We have a growing number of dealers setting out on their own, or gaining experience in established firms, and who bring with them new ideas and ways of connecting with customers. A number of those entering the Association are graduates of YABS, the brainchild of Anthony Smithson and Alice Lavery of Keel Row Books, with fellow director Jonathan Kearns. Now under the aegis of the ABA Educational Trust, I am confident that it will prove to be an invaluable conduit for potential new members of the future, and am excited at the prospect of the new generation of booksellers coming through.

Turning to book fairs, which are so vital and important to many of us, thanks to all who exhibited, firstly at Edinburgh, and then at Firsts London. Attention now turns towards Chelsea

“...all that matters is whether as a dealer, you are trusted, have integrity, know your material, treat your customers and colleagues with respect, and have good books that sell.”

in November. A firm favourite in the calendar, particularly enjoyed by both exhibitors and visitors alike, it is great that it is back in its rightful slot. I for one, am looking forward to exhibiting again (it was my very first ABA book fair) and look forward to seeing many of you there. Something to celebrate and support. The various book fair committees, in conjunction with Riley and Rachel, work very hard behind the scenes, signing up exhibitors, working on marketing and publicity, facilitating transportation, transporting stands, and helping the fairs themselves to run smoothly. Unlike other Associations, it is all done ‘in-house’ by our teams of loyal and hard-working volunteers. A big thanks to them all. They are among the strong cohort of ABA members who, though perhaps less visible, nevertheless provide considerable time, help, and support whenever called upon, and without whom, our fairs would not run so smoothly.

In terms of gender equality – I think we are



Deborah addressing ABA members at the AGM in March 2023.

definitely on the right path. Looking back at a talk I gave in 2018, on women in the book-trade, not only am I now not the only woman on Council (there are now four, including myself), but I am very proud to be the seventh female President of the Association following on from Miss Evelyn Banks (1932); Miss Winnie Myers 1950-52 (there is a wonderful account of her life by Robin Myers on the ABA website); Clare Perkins 1984-86; Senga Grant 1986-88; Margaret Eaton 1993-95; and Elisabeth Strong of McNaughtans 2000-01. The last five years has seen a continued growth in the number of women joining the trade, an increase in female Directors, and the establishment of more women-owned businesses. More work to do, but going in the right direction. It is a shame that this should matter at all, but somehow it still does, and if my being a more public face of the Association helps in any way then that

is great. What would be ideal, though, is if in the not too distant future, all that matters is whether as a dealer, you are trusted, have integrity, know your material, treat your customers and colleagues with respect, and have good books that sell: without that, nothing else matters.

In terms of cultural diversity, we still have a long way to go to try and make the Association, and indeed the book trade and book collecting as a whole, more accessible. That is going to be a challenge, but one positive effect of the pandemic is that clearly a whole new generation of book collectors have emerged, feeling comfortable and confident to buy online. Yet again, YABS is helping to address this imbalance, with various scholarships aimed at historically underrepresented communities. We need to continue to work at making physical fairs and book buying encounters less intimidating and more welcoming. Work is currently underway by Council, to provide members with some cataloguing guidelines, and I draw a lot of inspiration from the various diversity initiatives that have been adopted by the ABAA in particular. Admittedly not all would be appropriate for our needs or requirements, with different cultural sensitivities and considerations at play, but these are conversations that need to continue, and also must not be ignored. I am sure that as an Association we will continue to adapt and evolve, as we have been doing successfully since 1906!

As I have said before, I am only one cog in a larger wheel, however. We have a wealth of knowledge and experience amongst our members that is second to none, and which forms

the bedrock of the Association. The current members of Council represent the various facets of the book-trade from across the country, including sole traders working from home, smaller independent shop owners, long established family firms, and larger, internationally renowned companies. We are always open to constructive ideas about how we can better help members, and if you feel you would like to get more involved do let the office know.

Do we please all of the people all of the time? Probably not. We do, however, work hard to stand up for our members best interests and help as much as we can. I may be the visible spokesperson for the next two years, but it is very much a collective effort, and we are all looking forward to the months ahead.

"We have a wealth of knowledge and experience amongst our members that is second to none, and which forms the bedrock of the Association."

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The Antiquarian Booksellers' Association



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ABA Office

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Meetings and Minutes

- 45 Council Minutes
26 January
22 March
AGM
7 June
25 July
- 64 Upcoming Council Dates



In Memoriam

Robin Myers

On 1 May 1926, Jean Athena, daughter of Jesse Israel Myers and Clare Myers, née Aronowitz, was born in London. Underweight and undersized, she kept opening her mouth for food, looking like an unfledged bird. Her Uncle dubbed her Robin and thereafter she was never called anything else.

In 1934 the family moved to Cambridge, where her father took over the family tobacco business, but, not a businessman, made heavy losses. The already shaky marriage broke up and Robin lived with her mother until she broke free from her influence by moving to London in 1958 and then spending a year abroad.

She went to school at the Perse in Cambridge (1934-44), where she was happy and made several long-lasting friends. She liked history and English, was no good at science and loathed sport. At Lady Margaret Hall in Oxford, she read English and, on coming down, embarked on a teaching career, first with short-term appointments at boarding schools in the West and North of England (1949-51). After 18 months as a publicity officer at Bowes and Bowes, a Cambridge bookshop, she went back to teaching, this time to teach English as a foreign language, a job she enjoyed, as she found the adult students more interesting. In 1959 she went to Spain for a year to teach EFL and, at the same time, to learn Spanish herself, a language in which she remained fluent. Back in London she gave private lessons and then in 1969 went to teach English and Spanish at the North London Collegiate School, until the late 1980s when she became the school archivist.

In 1964 she had started to work at the National Book League: this was her entrée into the world of books, a world she felt thoroughly at home in and which she enjoyed for the rest of her life. While there she compiled her dictionaries of books in the English language and of the British booktrade. She became involved with the ABA, which in the early days held its annual bookfairs at the National Book League. After these became bigger and moved out, the PBFA moved in and Robin enjoyed both. She became an honorary member of the ABA, contributed to the *Antiquarian Book Monthly Review* and enjoyed the dinners and parties. She also joined the Bibliographical Society, on whose Council she served for many years as Hon. Librarian, and whose first

woman President she became in 1996.

In 1978 she became Archivist of the Stationers' Company and later also a Livery Man.

She joined the Court, was a regular and enthusiastic attender at their dinners and festive occasions and helped many scholars with their archive research.

In 1979 Michael Harris started the Book Trade History conferences and Robin joined him in this enterprise from day one. They ran the yearly conferences, later with the help and support from Giles Mandelbrote, and Robin remained a driving force, giving talks, chairing sessions and preparing papers for publication. From c. 2005 the ABA agreed to underwrite the conferences and their office provided very efficient and much appreciated administrative support.

In 1997 she was presented with a Festschrift, a great occasion with a celebration not even rivalled by that at the award of her MBE in 2010.

Robin had a great gift for friendship. She made and kept contact with innumerable friends all over the world. She loved parties, liked nice clothes, enjoyed travel, was fond of music, and was happiest in congenial company.

From an early age Robin wanted to become a writer and in due course developed a quite distinctive and elegant style.

As well as catalogues, lectures, reviews, many articles, several pamphlets and 3 books on the Stationers' Company archives, she edited

and contributed to 2 books focused on James and Andrew Coltée Ducarel. The second one, now ready for the press, is entitled "*I do not eat the bread of Idleness*" - a quotation from Andrew Ducarel which is equally applicable to Robin herself.

She will be missed by all her friends.

By Mirjam Foot

"Robin had a great gift for friendship. She made and kept contact with innumerable friends all over the world. She loved parties, liked nice clothes, enjoyed travel, was fond of music, and was happiest in congenial company."

50 Years a Bookseller

Hugh Pagan

Collected at Firsts London in May 2023, the ABA 'Fifty Years a Bookseller' pin was given to Hugh Pagan, of Hugh Pagan Limited, in Brockenhurst.

Speaking of Hugh's experience, ABA President Deborah Coltham said: 'Hugh has long been acknowledged as one of the leading specialists in the field of architecture, architectural history and the allied arts. Entering the trade in 1973 working for Ben Weinreb, Hugh became a regular face at London auctions. He set up his own business in 1987 and has been a regular exhibitor at ABA and ILAB fairs, and has issued 75 scholarly printed catalogues and nearly 100 occasional lists. Aside from being a long-standing member of the ABA, Hugh is also an authority on British coinage, and was



President of the British Numismatic Society (1984-1988), and is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London'. Many congratulations on your fifty years as a bookseller!

"Hugh has long been acknowledged as one of the leading specialists in the field of architecture, architectural history and the allied arts."



The ABA Chelsea Rare Book Fair

3 – 4 November 2023

Friday 3 November, 2pm – 7pm: £10

Saturday 4 November, 11am – 5pm: FREE entry

Chelsea Old Town Hall

King's Road, Chelsea, London SW3 5EZ

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

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Meet our *New Members*

*D*escribe your business in a nutshell.

An open shop selling exclusively new and old books and related material on wine, food and the culinary arts, open every day. The business started in 1983. We bought it in 2000.

What was your route into the book trade?

Before joining the book trade, I was a commercial disputes lawyer, a dabbling collector of sorts, and a 'haunter' of second-hand and antiquarian bookshops. I also had a passion for cookery and wine and a burgeoning practical library of cookbooks. One day in 2000 I read the Saturday issue of our local broadsheet newspaper cover to cover and hidden in the shipping notices was an ad "Cookbook shop for sale" – a business we had never seen or heard of. An hour or two later my wife Amanda and I had a very sore credit card and about 8,000 second-hand cookbooks and

a business name. Four weeks later we opened our bookshop. Our friends had always joked that I would have a traditional dusty bookshop next to my wife's artisanal bakery/café and I'd have cake of the day and she'd have book of the week. It took me two years to join my wife Amanda and become a full-time bookseller. We never opened the bakery.

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

Wine. Although we are interested in all aspects of gastronomy, cookery and food, and drink, I find myself over and over being drawn to wine related material. There are several reasons for my interest: first, an interest in wine outside of books; second, in the Australian canon, there were many wine books published in Australia decades before any cookbooks; third, wine allows me to consider material in other specialties e.g., natural history, botany, religion, poetry,

cartography, art (wine labels) economics etc.

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

The never-ending learning. Every book I pick up raises questions, piques my interest, adds to my knowledge, and often results in an addition or two to my reference library. The prospect of endless learning and using that knowledge to place books with the right customer excites me.

Describe one item from your stock, past or present, that you think is outstanding.

A tricky question. Cookbooks by their nature, are practical working books, often made cheaply, almost always used - sometimes quite hard - and invariably stored in the most dangerous room in the house full of heat, fire, fat etc. Not many of the books we handle would be considered 'physically' outstanding. For cookbooks to survive these conditions is of itself often 'outstanding'.

Is there a book or item that you regret not buying?

A long time ago during the GFC, there was a chance we could have bought a building for our bookshop. I've always regretted not chasing that opportunity.

Is there a 'holy grail' item for you that you're always on the lookout for?

Yes. I would love to have the first cookbook to arrive in Australia. Playing the odds, it is probably a Glasse or Raffald, but we just don't know; and we will probably never

know what books were brought out on the various convict and early supply ships. The oldest extant 'Australian' cookery book is Edward Abbot's *The English and Australian Cookery Book* (1864, published in London). However, there are references in publisher and bookseller advertisements in colonial Australian newspapers to an earlier specifically Australian edition of an English cookery book printed in Australia from the 1830s that the advertisements suggest has significant Australian content. There are no known copies of this.

Have you observed any recent collecting trends that have surprised, delighted or bewildered you?

Recently publishers have been producing cookbooks related to all sorts of modern popular culture: the cooking of Tolkien, Marvel comic hero cookbooks, Star Wars recipes, Star Trek cookbooks (which is itself odd as in the movies they have computers replicate foods) World of Warcraft cookbooks, Discworld cookbooks, Game of Thrones recipes etc. Some are based on a close textual analysis of the original text; most are a stretch or a gimmick. There are more every year. We've had several customers interested in collecting these sorts of books... and cooking from them.

What do you think are the biggest challenges facing booksellers today?

The inexorable rise of online auctions; the cost of freight; cross border sales taxes; inertia.

Describe your business in a nutshell

(Our full business name is a bit of a mouthful) Shepherds, Sangorski & Sutcliffe and Zaehnsdorf is a business comprising: traditional craft bookbinders and conservators; a retail store selling fine art papers, stationery and bookbinding materials; and a purveyor of fine books and bookbindings.

What was your route into the book trade?

I started working at Shepherds as a bookbinder 29 years ago, but after the business bought Asprey's SSZ workshops in 1998, gave up the bench completely to become bindery manager, and thereafter director in charge of production and sales. I assisted Rob Shepherd in buying books from auctions that required repair or binding, which we sold from our small premises in Mayfair (until the rent became too pricey and we had to give it up), and now from Rochester Row in Victoria.

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

you to it?

I do not have formal training in bookselling, but believe I have a good instinct for what appeals to the customer looking for a beautiful, unusual or rare book to give as a gift or have as something to treasure.

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

Discovery. Learning. The endless scope of the human mind. Talking about books (four things and risking pseud's corner!)

Describe one item from your stock, past or present, that you think is outstanding

We re-created an original S&S jewelled design for a 1903 Bumpus copy of Spenser's *Epithalamion and Amoretti* which was an extraordinary piece of workmanship that took months to complete. Every bit as good as the original binding - I was so proud of what we achieved.

Is there a book or item that you regret not buying?

Probably any S&S jewelled



Ali Strachan *Shepherds Bookbinders*

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binding that I couldn't afford!

Is there a 'holy grail' item for you that you're always on the lookout for?

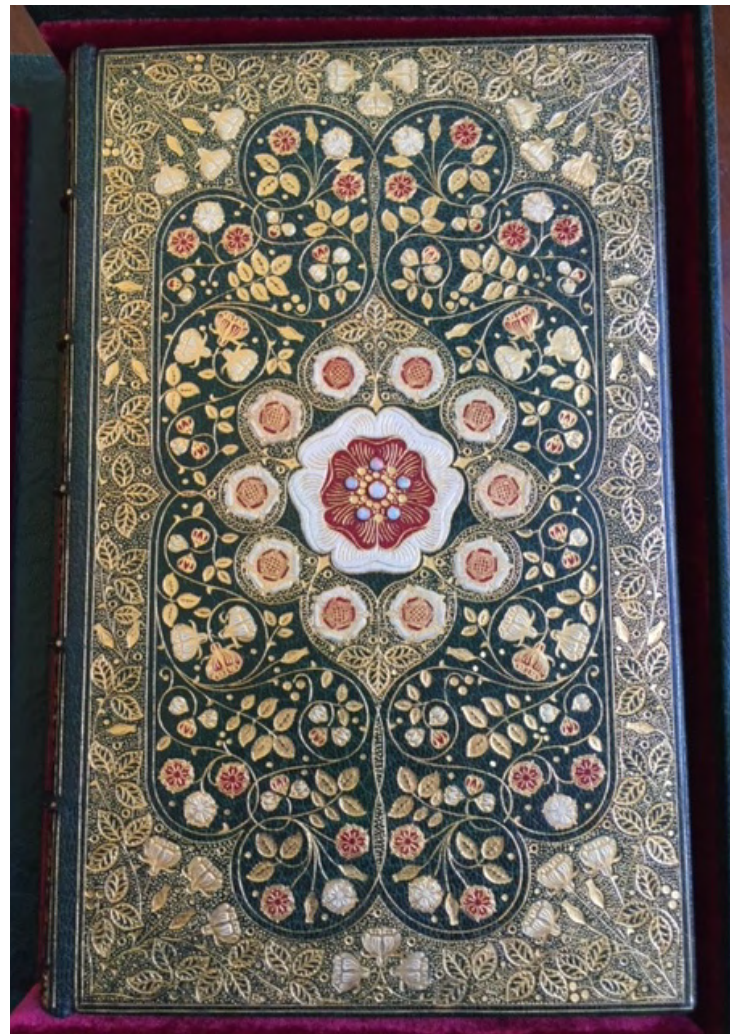
No, I like the discovery of something I hadn't known about before.

Have you observed any recent collecting trends that have surprised, delighted or bewildered you?

I am still learning about collecting trends – I am pleased that there seems to be a growing number of younger generation bibliophiles though.

What do you think are the biggest challenges facing booksellers today?

Rising overheads and the demise of the high street bookseller.



Sangorski & Sutcliffe jewelled *Epithalamion* by Edmund Spenser.



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Describe your business in a nutshell

I am a dealer in rare books, manuscripts, historical photographs and artworks, with a bookshop in Melbourne, Australia.

What was your route into the book trade?

Before I was buying books to sell, I was buying books to read, which I did every waking moment as a child. Literature, history, zoology - everything. When I was twelve or thirteen years old I had run out of shelf space, started selling my pre-read books to other bookshops and at auctions and, on occasion, and with surprise, for more than I had paid for them. This boost allowed me to buy more books, and gradually I began buying more books for selling than I did for reading. I learnt that hardbacks sold for more than paperbacks, and signed hardbacks sold for more still. I taught myself what books were saleable and what books weren't, and spent my weekends on the tram around Melbourne visiting bookshops and auction houses. By the age of sixteen I had a commercial account and permanent

bidder's number at the local auction house, which I still have today.

At eighteen I entered university, and during Orientation Week toured the Rare Books Collection of the Library. As well as being a First Year student I also introduced myself as a Rare Book Dealer, and asked the Librarian if they were adding to the collection. They said yes, and the next week I brought a box of my best picks for the Library.

The librarian selected the books that were of interest, and I submitted an invoice to the finance department. I sold books to the university library, and other libraries all through my years at uni, and well beyond. I've been selling books to that library for twenty-three years now.

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

Like most Australian booksellers we have an emphasis on Australian/Pacific travel and history, however there are too many other interesting books out there

to be limited to one specialisation. Currently in stock we have pages from the Gutenberg Bible, artists books by Andy Warhol, eighteenth century pocket globes as well as general shop stock. Sometimes we are approached by local collectors to sell their collections on consignment, and so we have to learn the subject area pretty quickly; one time it was angling, another it was rare books from the Philippines. I don't have the attention span to focus on one area - I'm fairly omnivorous and enjoy handling new material.

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

I love having rare and beautiful books around all the time, without the feeling that I have to hold on to each and every one like some collectors do. I wouldn't be able to afford to collect the books I would want, so I don't have to worry about it. I get to buy rare books, explore them, and then part with them without feeling like I've done the wrong thing. I like having the changing scenery of the books on the shelves, and don't get separation anxiety when we part ways.

Describe one item from your stock, past or present, that you think is outstanding.

About ten years ago a lady contacted us with a unique document she wanted to sell. Her grandfather was the private secretary of Edmund Barton, the first Prime Minister of Australia, and when he retired, the Prime Minister handed him a framed document from the wall of his office, as a parting gift for his years of loyal service. The document was

signed by the Prime Minister and the Governor General, and we struggled to work out exactly what it was. We thought it might be a souvenir of the opening of the first parliament in 1901.

After some back and forth with the National Archives and other museums, we discovered that it wasn't a souvenir, but the actual instrument of power which established the Federal Parliament and gave them the power to create legislation to govern the newly created Commonwealth of Australia. It was, in essence, one of the founding documents of Australia.

There was some discussion with the museums as to whether this could actually be legally sold or not, somewhat complicated by the fact that the founding Prime Minister of Australia personally gave it away, while he was sitting in office. As it was owned by the secretary and his family in good faith for all this time, and we



were in discussions with the Commonwealth about its sale, an arrangement was made where we sold it to the Museum of Australian Democracy in Canberra. It is now back in the national collection where it should be, but it was fun getting to handle such a document while it was out in the wild.

Is there a book or item that you regret not buying?

Not really. I know I can't have everything, I'm happy with what we get to handle.

Is there a 'holy grail' item for you that you're always on the lookout for?

I'd love a *New South Wales General Standing Orders* if you've got one, please. Printed in Sydney in 1802, it's the first book printed in Australia. There are three known copies, the last one changed hands in the 1890s. That would be fun. I bet there's one still out there.

Have you observed any recent collecting trends that have surprised, delighted or bewildered you?

When I was starting out I was always on the tram every weekend, visiting bookshops to see what was out there. Now that everything is online, you don't see that type of regular visitor, who drops in to see what's new. Online selling has been good for business but I would like to see people still doing the rounds and making contact with dealers.

What do you think are the biggest challenges facing booksellers today?

We often talk about rising expenses meaning shops have had to close, but perhaps of even greater concern is that shops are no longer opening. How often do you see a younger new dealer opening a rare bookshop in town? It happens occasionally, but it is a rare event. Businesses that are established mostly do okay, but for smaller dealers it will be a case of listing books online and maybe doing smaller regional fairs.

I think this results in a centralisation of the trade, with increasing traffic flowing to the larger bookshops, auctions and online sites, and less local business and regionally diverse booksellers. It's probably inevitable, and of course nobody begrudges successful booksellers, but I think the trade is more interesting and stimulating with an eclectic mix of different faces.

I think educational programs, networking events and sponsorship opportunities the ABA offers are so valuable in supporting the growth of the trade. Having booths that younger dealers can afford to rent at the larger fairs is also a great initiative, even if it gets a little sweaty on the second floor. There will always be larger and smaller businesses in the book trade, and there is a place for them all.

44th ANNUAL CONFERENCE
ON BOOK TRADE HISTORY



SCANDAL AND GOSSIP IN THE BOOK
TRADE

FROM THE MIDDLE AGES TO THE PRESENT DAY

19–20 November 2023

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*





What brought you into the rare book trade?

I'm a Book & Magazine Collector baby. Those 'For Sale' listings earned me beer money at uni, and gave me the thrill of making a sale.

Favourite holiday destination?

The Italian Lakes - best of all, Lake Garda.

Which aspects of the trade you most like/dislike?

Nothing beats buying manuscripts - it's gambling, not investment. That 1620 letter from John Webster - is it the only surviving example of the handwriting of the Jacobean playwright or written by a clergyman from Rutland? It was the latter.

The worst thing is cataloguing boring books - I'm getting to be quite a snob and it alarms me a bit.

Titans of the Trade

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Interview by Giles Lyon

Dream dinner party for 8: who are your seven guests?

Zadie Smith, Martha Gellhorn, Mary Ann Evans, Anna Lapwood, Martin Amis, W. G. Sebald (might be catatonic) and Frank Lloyd Wright.

Favourite bookfair and why?

Edinburgh - just the best city, and a book-fair reborn thanks to Derek's hard work.

Couple of useful pointers to new ABA members: Don't be intimidated when you do your first ABA fair. We're all just jobbing book dealers together. And if you're prepared to make the effort to join the ABA, do make the effort to exhibit at the Chelsea Fair. It's tremendous.

Which overseas bookfair works best for you and why?

New York - incredible levels of engagement and commitment from the super-sociable American public. And they really do buy books, but don't expect to predict who it is that will buy.

Online bookfairs are quite the thing now - do they work for you?

I found them really useful during Covid and the immediate post-Covid period. The virtual ABAA California Fair in 2022 was incredible for me, but I'm not sure they're going to survive.

What book or document do you dream of owning?

A Shakespeare lifetime quarto play (pre-1616). And WHEN I find one it's going to be bound, unnoticed, with a bundle of boring imprints - between the funeral sermon and civil war tract.

Which book did you read as a child that has stayed with you?

Brendon Chase - I still want to run away to the woods.

Three all-time favourite bands/composers?

Max Richter, Mozart and Kate Rusby (the Barnsley nightingale).

Pint of beer or glass of wine?

A pint of Ilkley Brewery's Mary Jane.

Any hobbies away from bookselling?

Planting trees.

As a northern-based dealer, where should the ABA be looking to have a fair north of London?

I'm not sure that another fair is really the answer - let's make our existing fairs as good as possible.

As a manuscript specialist, what methods to you usually employ to verify scarce material?

I've made a real effort to improve my palaeographical skills - I'm getting pretty fluent reading Elizabethan secretary hand, but don't test me!

When did you last cry?

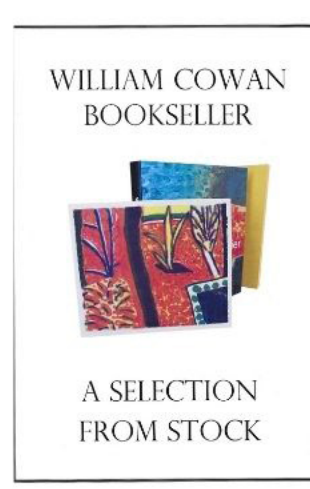
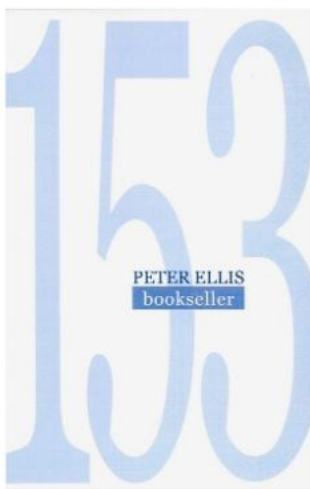
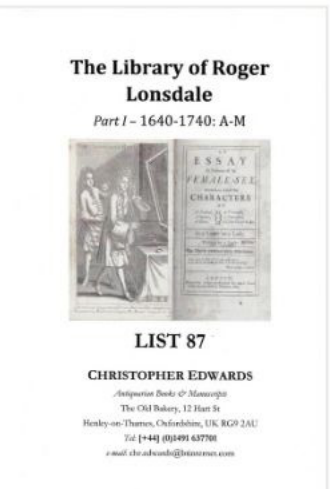
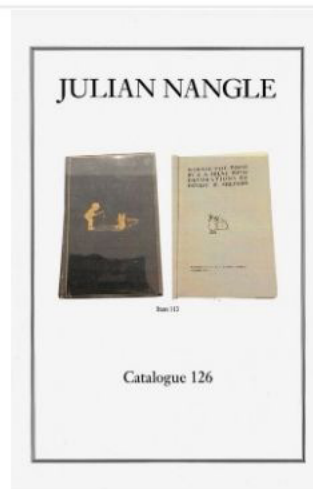
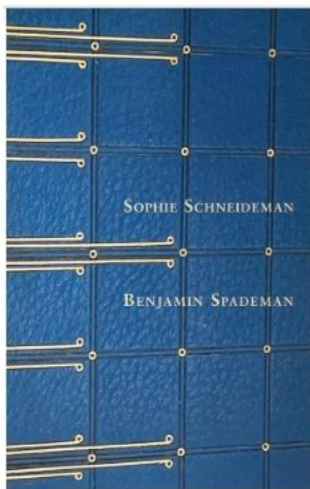
My first daughter's graduation, because my dad didn't live to see the day.

Who (or what) inspired you to become a bookdealer?

Finding boxes of books discarded on the pavement in Coslany in Norwich. I selected a dozen decent looking things; presented them at the front counter of Tombland Books and they gave me a tenner in cash. I was 19 and I was hooked.

And if you weren't one, what would you be?

Choral conductor.



James Fergusson *Catalogue Review*

Roger Lonsdale (1934–2022) was the editor of two innovative anthologies, *The New Oxford Book of Eighteenth-Century Verse* (1984) and *Eighteenth-Century Women Poets* (1989). He spent almost his entire academic career at Oxford, as Fellow and Tutor in English at Balliol College, 1963–2000 (Emeritus), and Professor of English Literature, 1992–2000. His career as an antiquarian book collector advanced in parallel; one supported the other, indeed, suggests Michael F. Suarez SJ, introducing a new catalogue

by **Christopher Edwards** (chr.edwards@btinternet.com), 87, 'The Library of Roger Lonsdale, Part I – 1640–1740: A–M', 206 items, the pursuit of old books was what got him up in the morning. 'He was an obsessive reader of bookseller's catalogues,' notes Suarez, 'and knew the importance of looking for finds the moment the morning post arrived in college. Never a morning person, he confessed to several friends that the prospect of the latest booksellers' offerings waiting for him at the Balliol porter's lodge was, more often than not, a great motivator that got him out the door and into college, typically far earlier than he would otherwise have chosen to appear.'

A customer of Edwards, Lonsdale left him the responsibility of disposing of his books – to each of which he had assigned an index card, recording the date, place and price of acquisition. A compulsive delight in reading Edwards's catalogue, and the instalment that has already succeeded it, 88, 'The Library of Roger Lonsdale, Part II – 1640–1740: N-Z', 165 items (more instalments are promised), is seeing what Lonsdale paid, and where, in his long buying history, he bought from – names that, for older collectors and booksellers, have the resonance of a Remembrance Day roll-call: Blackwell, Booth, Carter, Crowe, David, Dobell, Eaton, Figgis, George's, Grinke, Hancox, Hannås, Hatchwell, Heap, Kohler, Korn, Laywood, Low, Norman, Poole, Rota, Sanders, Sexton, Sotheran, Swift, Thornton, Thorp, Traylen, Waterfield, Weatherhead . . . 'In the seven-and-a-half years between May 1963 and December 1970,' it is computed, '[Lonsdale] bought 1,006 antiquarian books. By the end of 1981, he had cumulatively spent £12,500.'

Suarez pays particular tribute to Lonsdale's *Eighteenth-Century Women Poets* as 'a revolutionary work of scholarly excavation'. Many of these poets had disappeared from view; an antiquarian Carmen Callil, he did for the women writers of the 18th century what Virago did for the neglected women writers of the 20th. Edwards illustrates the splendid engraved frontispiece to *The Excellent Woman Described* (1692, an Englishing of Jacques Du Bosc's *L'Honneste femme*, 1632): an expensively dressed woman sits alert at a table, hand on book, behind her a tightly filled bookcase, neatly organised by subject – Divinity, Morality, History, Poetry, Physick,

Surgery. Excellent indeed.

In Roger Lonsdale's time **Blackwell's Rare Books** (rarebooks@blackwell.co.uk) was constantly relocating around Oxford. Now it is back in the bosom of Broad Street. Its latest catalogue, cheerful and full of colour, is B202, 'Modern First Editions', 120 items, with a promising run of B.H. Blackwell's annual *Oxford Poetry*. The 1915 number, £650, sees the first faltering steps of J.R.R. Tolkien ('Goblin Feet'), Aldous Huxley and Dorothy L. Sayers, and bears a manuscript poem by the art historian Katharine A. Esdaile (her papers at the Huntington Library include an envelope marked 'Juvenalia [*sic*] and perhaps puerilia'). Those for 1924 (Graham Greene, Brian Howard, £100), 1925 (Greene, Harold Acton, £100) and 1926 (W.H. Auden, £125) are in the copies of Eric Schroeder, later Keeper of Islamic Art at the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard, and himself a contributor to each, the last with a letter to him from another contributor, R.W. Ketton-Cremer, future writer and squire of Felbrigg – pleasingly complicated associations. From the same dealer comes 'Private Press & Illustrated Books', 235 items, including, under Saint Dominic's Press, Philip Hagreen's elaborate woodcut *Our Lady of the Rosary* (c1932), signed at foot, unusually for this artist, £1,750. The deluxe issue of Taylor and Sewell's 1995 bibliography of the press ('authoritative and beautifully produced') is offered at £475, whilst the bibliography's publisher, the Whittington Press, is celebrated for its journal *Matrix* – 'Now that it has come to a close, it is possible to understand *Matrix* for what it is: one of the great achievements of the Private Press world in any era.' *Matrix* ran for 36 numbers, until 2020. The special issue

of the first, published in 1981 and limited to 30 copies, Blackwell's price at £2,000; a generous selection of later numbers follows.

Sophie Schneideman (sophie@ssrbooks.com) and **Benjamin Spademan** collaborated on an exhibition at Spademan's London gallery, '360 Years of Bookbinding,' which made a handsome catalogue, 55 items: from a fine mottled calf binding for John Evelyn, with his crest, on Salomon de La Broue's *Le Cavalerice françois* (fourth edition, Paris, 1646–7), £15,000, and *Gramática de la lengua castellana, compuesta por la Real Academia Espanola* (Madrid, 1771) in elaborate red morocco for King Charles III of Spain, £2,800, to Kyffin Williams's *Kyffin: a celebration* (2007) in Mark Cockram's hand-dyed leather and hand-printed vellum, £2,900, and Eri Funazaki's black goatskin with red leather onlay on *One & Two* (illustrations by Funazaki, text by her partner Danny Flynn, 2011), £1,300. Two bindings by George Fisher for the Gregynog Press are discreetly serene – blue levant morocco, a play of gilt rules and circles, on Thomas Gwynn Jones's *Detholiad o Ganiadau* (1926), £9,000, and scarlet levant morocco, large Celtic crosses in gilt, on *The Life of Saint David* (1927), £8,000; while Paul Bonet's dark green morocco ('sides tooled in two different designs of irradiant oval curved gilt curves, with a swirling abstract design of inlaid lighter green, brown and red morocco and calf tooled in blind . . .') on Balzac's *Le Chef-d'oeuvre inconnu* (etchings by Picasso, Paris, 1931), £39,000, is just magnificent. Other binders include Susan Allix, the Doves Bindery, Loyd Haberly, Arthur Johnson, Peter Jones, Marius-Michel Père et Fils, Roger Powell, Rivière & Son, Sangorski & Sutcliffe, Philip

Smith and Zaehnsdorf.

Peter Ellis (peterellisbooks@hotmail.co.uk) is reliable and prolific. His 153, 440 items, boasts Samuel Beckett inscribing the first English edition of *Waiting for Godot* to his friends Lazarus and Margaret Aaronson, £9,750, and Gordon Ray's *H.G. Wells and Rebecca West* (1974) inscribed by West to her sometime secretary June Fenby and packed with a fascinating small archive of letters, £2,500. In 154, 453 items, Ted Hughes inscribes *Crow* to the Cheltenham bookseller Alan Hancox, £575, and Seamus Heaney *Station Island* (cartoonishly) to the same, £1,250. And 155, 449 items, has David Jones's *The Anathemata* in Gwyn Williams's copy with the author's autograph list of corrections ('the more irritating ones only, or perhaps those that I have so far noticed as mattering'), £3,250, while Beckett inscribes *Malone Dies* to his cousin John Beckett, £3,750, and *Happy Days* to Rosemary Goad of Fabers, £2,500, and Hughes, again, *Crow* with a drawing of a crow to Charles Monteith (but did he ever receive it? Goad swallowed it into her collection), £2,500.

William Cowan (wcowanbooks@aol.com) fills something of the gap left by John Updike Rare Books of Edinburgh. His catalogues specialise in modern first editions, but with a Scottish tilt. Books are carefully described, with thoughtful additional notes and plentiful illustration. 'A Selection from Stock,' Winter/Spring 2023, 134 items, has Hugh MacDiarmid's first collection of verse, *Sangschaw* (1925), a first-issue copy in dustwrapper and surely from the Updikes' astonishing private collection, inscribed to William Will, the Scottish-born London

manager of Allied Newspapers, enclosing an eloquent letter hoping for employment and looking forward to reaching 'the top of the hill of a great Scots Revival', £1,500. 70, Summer 2023, 146 items, has a signed parliamentary election leaflet from 1945 for Christopher M. Grieve JP (i.e. MacDiarmid) standing as Scottish National Candidate for the Kelvingrove constituency ('VOTE FOR A FREE SCOT AND A SQUARE DEAL FOR SCOTLAND'), £175, next to nice items by Henry Miller, William S. Burroughs, Ian Hamilton Finlay and Alasdair Gray. Of the last, Cowan opines, 'I would contend that *Unlikely Stories, Mostly* [1983] is the most perfect marriage of visual and written art in Gray's oeuvre.' He offers a 'fine' copy with a postcard proposing 'SO WHY NOT REVIEW IT, JIMMY?' for £300.

Julian Nangle (julian@nanglerarebooks.co.uk) enjoyed a busy summer at his new perch in Dorchester. His 126, 200 items, had Charles Causley's first book, *Farewell, Aggie Weston*, inscribed to Laurie Lee, £165. 128, 87 items, followed 'swiftly on from my previous catalogue which has to go down as one that may have got lost in the post or the ether' (perhaps lost? I for one can't find it), and centred on books from the library of Edward Bawden, mostly with his own contributions and some very scarce, e.g. *Kynoch Press Note Book 1935*, with the artist's signature, £850. 129, 179 items, drew on the rich collection of Philip Le Brocq, including attractive early Hogarth Press titles – T.S. Eliot's *Poems* (1919), £15,000, Leonard Woolf's *Stories of the East* (1921), £2,500, Virginia Woolf's *Monday or Tuesday* (1921), £2,500, Ruth Manning-Sanders's *Karn* (1922),

£3,000, Roger Fry's *Twelve Original Woodcuts* (1923), £4,500, Robert Graves's *The Feather Bed* (1923), £450, Nancy Cunard's *Parallax* (1925), £750, and Laura Riding's *Voltaire* (1927), £3,000.

Forest Books (bib@forestbooks.co.uk), 'Miscellany Fourteen', 207 items, ranged from Wood's *The Ruins of Palmyra* (1753), in the copy of Sir William Bagot Bt, later first Lord Bagot, £7,500, and Repton's *Observations on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening* (1805), £7,750, to a rare elephant folio architectural pattern book (Samuel Charles Brees, *The Portfolio of Rural Architecture, a Series of Drawings in the Italian Style, for Villas, Etc.*, 1841), £3,250, and a 'vibrant' German trade catalogue of paper lanterns, circa 1900, £1,195. **Jarndyce** (books@jarndyce.co.uk), CCLIX, 'Books, Pamphlets, Manuscripts, & Ephemera, 1598–1844', 403 items, offered a choice set of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* (first octavo edition, 1783–90) from the library of Nathaniel Cholmley (1721–1791) of Howsham Hall, North Yorkshire, successively MP for Aldborough and Boroughbridge, £2,800 (Gibbon was successively MP for Liskeard and Lymington, but they did not overlap).

Christopher Edwards (above) found time to produce two more catalogues, both diverting, 86, 'Provenance: 25 books with ownership histories that are relevant, interesting or unusual', and 89, 'Sixty Rare Books & Manuscripts: all recent acquisitions.' The first had Mrs Piozzi's *Anecdotes of the Late Samuel Johnson* (fourth edition, 1786) with a presentation inscription, Edwards intimates, to Robert Ray, a lawyer, £1,500, *Lyrical Ballads* (vol. i only, fourth edition, 1805), 'an extraordinary and evocative presentation copy', inscribed by Samuel Taylor Coleridge to his

nephew John Coleridge and with his annotations and 'one important correction', £7,500, and George Webbe Dasent's *Popular Tales from the Norse* (1859) extensively annotated and with correspondence inserted, £3,500. The second had Jonathan Swift's first surviving poem buried in John Dunton's 'superbly entertaining' *The Dublin Scuffle* (1699), £4,950, and William Barnes's second book, *Orra, a Lapland Tale* (Dorchester, 1822), bound with four other titles, ex-John Sparrow, with the binder's ticket of Charles Zillwood, £9,500; Edwards is excited to deduce that at time of publication author, printer and binder were all living in the same street.

Bennett & Kerr (bennettkerr@aol.com) published three catalogues in the six months since the last Catalogue Review: 229, 'Middle Ages & Renaissance, with books on Anglo-Saxon from the collection of Professor Janet Bately [1932-]; Sir Israel Gollancz Professor Emerita of English Language and Medieval Literature Emerita at King's College London, 732 items; 230, 'Medieval and Irish Books from the collection of the late Richard Sharpe (1954-2020), Professor of Diplomatic at Oxford University', 1,191 items; and 231, 'Middle Ages & Renaissance', 960 items. And **Ash Rare Books** (books@ashrare.com) two: 125, 'Nothing Too Expensive 15', 228 items, including Tom Stoppard titles from the library of one of his biographers, Ira Nadel; and 126, 95 items, from Edna O'Brien's *The Country Trilogy* and Sebastian Faulks to maps and (exotic-looking) pulp fiction.

Please post catalogues for review to:

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Your collection, 'Swizzle and Serve: Party Planning Books and Ephemera, 1950-1970' is unusual and charming! What drew you to this area of collecting?

I have been interested in the midcentury period since high school and began by collecting cookery books and ephemera from the 1950s and 1960s. I have always loved the off-the-wall flavor combinations and the showmanship of that era of cooking—much of my early collecting was purely for the hilarity of how gross the foods were!

While studying on the MSc program in Book History and Material Culture at the University of Edinburgh, I wrote my master's dissertation on party planning books published by men's and women's magazines, specifically *Playboy* and *Cosmopolitan*. I was interested in how sexuality, gender, and class influenced the bibliographic design and paratexts of the books. I already had party planning texts in my collection, but began to seriously collect around parties around this time, in part to have source texts from which to draw.

My dissertation research underscored to me that these materials were not held in any meaningful number by most libraries and that no one else seemed to be collecting them. They are such important records of social history broadly and women's history specifically (while also being incredibly visually appealing), I felt almost an obligation to preserve them! Since then, my collection has grown to approximately 186 pieces of ephemera and fifty books related to party planning in America in the twentieth century.

National Book Collecting Prize

Hannah Swan

An interview with the 2022 National Book Collecting Prize joint-winner Hannah Swan.

Congratulations again on winning the 2022 National Book Collecting Prize. How did you find out about the Prize?

I was aware of the prize for a few years, having won the David Laing Student Book Collecting Prize while completing my master's at the University of Edinburgh in 2018. I didn't end up putting myself forward for the National Prize that year, but decided to go ahead and throw my hat in the ring after winning the Anthony Davis Book Collecting Prize this past year.

What is your absolute favourite item from the collection?

This is such a hard question—it's like picking a favorite child! Some items I love for their uniqueness; some have sentimental value—especially those passed down to me by female relatives or given to me as gifts; some actually have great ideas that I have used for planning my own parties; and some are hilarious for the absurdity of the suggestions!

I'm always seeking out unique material types, so one of my favorite items is the LP of "Hear How to Plan the Perfect Dinner Party," an audio party planning text written by Dorothy and Gaynor Maddox and published by Curtis Publishing Company in 1959. Gaynor Maddox was a nationally syndicated food writer and editor who also wrote a handful of cookbooks. His wife Dorothy also wrote food columns, though was not as widely published. It's also an exceedingly rare item, only held by two libraries globally according to WorldCat. Other favorite unusual materials include cocktail napkins, "Ident-a-Drink" name tag stickers for drinks, needlebooks, and various paper-based party games.

I have a deep love of tablescapes—to me, the design and laying of the table for the visual pleasure of one's guests gives a really interesting historical perspective on taste (in all its literal and figurative iterations). Plus, of all the tips, tricks, hints, and helps, the table setting suggestions are those I turn to most often in my own party-throwing. I have carved pineapples into rafts of piña coladas, sculpted quivering towers of Jell-O, spent hours at the

thrift store sifting through dishware to find the perfect vessel for my garnishes—all in the name of the table!

Some of my all-time favorites have to be the booklets written by Nancy Prentiss, who styled advertisements for the Westmorland Silver Company. I had been searching for one in particular, "The Perfect Hostess", for several years, only to come across a near-fine copy in an antique mall in rural South Dakota. I am only slightly embarrassed to say that I audibly gasped and did an excited little hop upon seeing the distinctive bright purple cover! More recently, while in London for Firsts this May, I also visited the PBFA's London International Book Fair, where I picked up an incredible plate from an unnamed nineteenth-century book. It illustrates an "Artistic Arrangement for Dinner Table," featuring a decorative pond (!!) for the table centerpiece, complete with tiny Venetian gondolas and sculptural mermaid fountain.

Finally, I love to see the small pieces of evidence the female readers left on these party-planning texts. Splatters of grease on a page dedicated to making donuts, manuscript adjustments to recipes, a shopping list and receipts pinned into the back of a Depression-era little cookbook, or, a personal favorite, table diagrams and measurements sketched out in pencil on the back of "The Hostess and Her Table" (a 1927 booklet advertising Tiffin glassware), all give material trace to the ephemeral act of cooking, hostessing, throwing a party and, above all, of reading.

You mentioned in the essay that accompanied your entry that you have been a collector of books and ephemera from a young age. What were some of your early collecting interests?

My favorite anecdote to tell when discussing my collecting is that in fourth grade (year 5 in the UK system), we were asked to bring in a collection for show and tell. Most of my peers brought in what you would expect of 9-year-olds in 2002—Beanie Babies, baseball cards, or rocks—while I was the only student to bring in a book collection. I still remember giving my presentation and being incredibly proud that I had over one hundred books. So, I guess the bibliophilia was innate!

Beyond books, I've also collected stickers, pins (badges), patches, and assorted ephemera since I was a kid. For whatever reason, I always had the impulse to archive my material life, so I have notes passed to me by school friends, bookmarks, postcards, brochures from trips taken, even interesting foreign packaging that I

squirreled away. Someday, I hope to scan it all and have a photo book printed up—it's such a fun story of my youth as told in ephemera.

Is your approach towards collecting more completist or curatorial? And what do you think the collecting urge is all about?

I would say my collecting leans both ways. My party-planning collection is actually just part of a broader collection that encompasses over eight-hundred books and pieces of ephemera. There are five main sub-collections (cookery and home economics, liquor advertising, gelatine advertising, erotica, and party planning), with a fair amount of overlap between the categories (e.g. "The Jell-O Girl Entertains").

Looking at the collection writ large, I would say it tends toward the curatorial. I have been interrogating my collecting interests a lot lately, thinking about the coherence of the different pieces taken together, and I've come to see it as an attempt to understand



how the female gaze and feminine desire are rendered visible through the material text. And this is not to say in any exclusionary way; the broadside of a performance by Bambi Lake in San Francisco in the 90s or the August 1962 issue of *Confidential* magazine in which Coccinelle reflects upon her transition both materially represent what it means to be a woman in print, to design printed materials about women, for women, for trans women and cis women alike.

In this way, it's very much curatorial, as that interest in feminine desire reflects back upon my own collecting practice and positionality as a female collector. So much of the literature about collecting is male-focused and uses highly gendered (and sexualized) metaphors, so it's been interesting to think about what it means to be a woman who looks upon texts avariciously, with an intent to possess. I could never collect a "complete" textual record of the feminine gaze, but I can curate a collection that reflects my own tastes (and thus my own feminine gaze), as well as the trends in women-oriented, popular bibliographic design in the twentieth century.

My party-planning collecting specifically, however, is much more completist. As I mentioned earlier, I found while doing my master's research that there were no major collections of these materials held at research institutions. I quickly decided that I would try to create as complete an archive of twentieth-century American party planning books and ephemera as possible.

Looking to the future, I hope to donate my

collection to my alma mater, Scripps College, a women's college in Southern California. Putting my collection in conversation with other women's history materials, while also making it available to students in the milieu where I first fell in love with rare books and special collections, seems the most meaningful end point for my collecting. And so, with an eye towards this becoming a research collection, I am always aiming for as complete a historical record as possible.

Your collection highlights midcentury social and sexual conventions through the lens of party planning. Can you tell us what the collection has taught you about this period?

Because most of the texts in my collection were published as advertisements—for food products, cigarettes, liquor, tableware—they are artifacts of corporate understandings of consumers, rather than records of the actual tastes and parties of the readers at midcentury. In this way, it doesn't teach me a whole lot about what consumers were actually doing, thinking, feeling about their party giving, apart from the occasional manuscript inscription indicating a recipe that worked (or didn't) or perhaps a starred table setting in a catalog.

Taking this top-down perspective, I've learned a great deal about how dominant culture was transmitted via these seemingly innocuous printed ephemera. The best example would be my small sub-collection of Hawaiian party materials. As the 50th state to join the US in 1959, there was a lot of fascination with Hawaii and Hawaiian culture during the midcentury period. This was fuelled in part



by the United States' interest in assimilating Hawaii into American culture and compounded by companies' desire to cash in on the hype. One such booklet in my collection, "How You Can Give Hawaiian Parties," was published by the Hawaiian Pineapple Company, now known as Dole Food Company, a key player in the annexation of Hawaii. The booklet is full of watered-down luau traditions and Americanized Hawaiian dishes. In this way, the Hawaiian party digests the traditions of the Indigenous Hawaiians into a vehicle for soft power and justification for their colonization.

On a lighter note, my collection has really driven home to me just how much everyone smoked in this period! Table settings will include ashtrays and cigarette cups, etiquette books will remind the hostess that it's her job to periodically empty all the ashtrays during the party. It's something I did know, but didn't fully grasp until I started collecting...

The Book Collecting Prize came with £500 to help expand your collection. Have you already put this money to use, and if so,

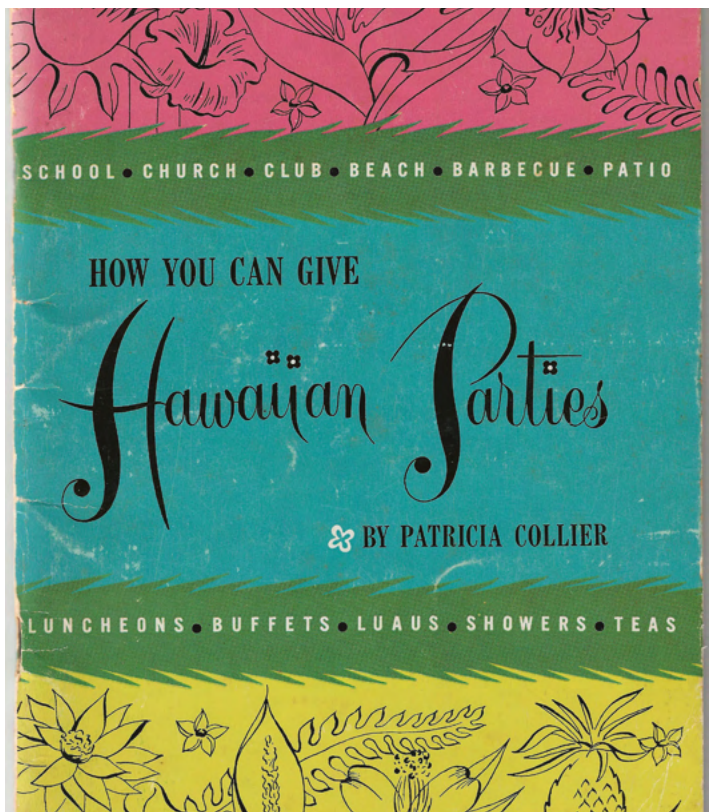
what have you acquired?

Honestly, I spent most of the money even before it arrived! It's been a dream moving to Wisconsin; I've been able to source some really incredible ephemera, in particular. It's now gotten to the point where I've had to start limiting my trips to local antique malls...

One recent favorite is "Pizza Party Ideas," an advertising booklet for "Chef Boy-Ar-Dee Pizza" from the 1950s. My mom is Italian-American and I've long been interested in the introduction of Italian food to Americans. "Chef Boyardee" was Ettore Boiardi, an Italian immigrant to the US in the early twentieth century, who was a major force in popularizing Italian food to Americans. And, indeed, when I checked out at the antique mall, the ladies working at the register told me that the first time they had ever eaten pizza it was that exact "Chef Boy-Ar-Dee Pizza."

I also finally purchased a Tupperware party planning book—the fifth edition of *Know How! The Guide to Making Money with*

Tupperware. Tupperware parties were such an important part of midcentury culture and have a fascinating, gendered history. The “party plan” sales concept was invented by a woman, Brownie Wise, who worked for the Tupperware Company in the 1950s. Her idea, however, was essentially stolen by the Tupperware founder, Earl Tupper, who became jealous that she was (rightly) credited with the company’s success and fired her, going on to expunge any trace of her from the company’s history. He went so far as to take remaining copies of the autobiography she had written about her success and bury them in a pit near the Tupperware headquarters! Many of the party planning books are connected to entrepreneurial women, who took the limited roles available to them at the time and translated them into major success—Amy Vanderbilt, Laura Scudder, Virginia Stanton, and Brownie Wise all come to mind.



An interview with the 2022 National Book Collecting Prize joint-winner Joseph Bills.

Congratulations again on winning the 2022 National Book Collecting Prize. How did you find out about the Prize?

While I was studying for my masters I was told about something called the Rose Prize, a book collecting award run by Cambridge University Library. I had already been building my collection for a couple years at that point so I thought I might as well enter, and was fortunate enough to be shortlisted and eventually selected as the winner. The library then informed me of the National Book Collecting Prize and recommended that I apply to it too. I had vaguely heard about it before but no specifics, so I looked into it and thought I should give it a go.

The title of your collection is 'Illustrated texts as living objects in eighteenth and nineteenth-century Japan'. What drew you to Japanese print history?

Japanese books, or even Japan itself, was never something that I was interested in when I was younger. That only really started with my degree in Japanese Studies. When I originally went to university I had very little idea I would become interested in literature, I thought I was more cut out for history than anything else, but it was really thanks to my supervisor Professor Laura Moretti that I got interested in this field. I remember very vividly her showing us examples of Japanese early-modern books from her own collection and me finding them fascinating, and wanting to have one myself. I



National Book Collecting Prize *Joseph Bills*

think it's the variety of books being produced in early-modern Japan that really drew me in. The selection I submitted to the National Book Collecting Prize is only a tiny fraction of what was being published: there were illustrated "comic books", guidebooks, textbooks, novels, encyclopaedias, religious texts, medical treatises, calendars, songbooks, jokebooks and so many more. These were printed in all shapes and sizes, using all different scripts and writing styles, utilising a plethora of binding technologies, and in high quantities. That's without even mentioning hand-written manuscripts. It was naïve and indicative of how new I was to the field, but I didn't expect

that of an early-modern society. I would then come to find out that the literary landscape of Japan at the time was extremely advanced and commercialised. It all felt very modern, and I suppose my enjoyment boils down to being constantly surprised by the range and quality of what is/was out there. So overall, it was a combination of a rich print history with the right mentor to introduce me to it.

Before beginning work on this collection, had you collected books before and if so, what were some of your earlier collecting interests?

Actually no, this is the first time I've properly become invested in something like this. That's not to say I wasn't interested in books before, I always read a lot while I was growing up, but the closest I ever got to collecting was wanting a full set of a series. Active curation was never really something I did. So this all came with a steep learning curve as I basically pieced together my own way of cataloguing and organising, and I am grateful to all the other collectors I have had the pleasure to visit and learn from in this regard. The honest truth is I started with things I thought were interesting, and active collecting came after that. I also think there's a little bit of a hoarder tendency hiding below the surface here, and you could definitely accuse me of that in the past!

Can you tell us more about the Tokyo sale where you were first inspired to begin collecting?

I only wanted to get one book I promise! As I mentioned above I was started on all of this

by my supervisor at university, and she kindly introduced me to some bookstore owners in Jimbocho, the bookseller district in Tokyo. I went along to visit them and see what they had on sale, which were a lot of well-preserved and beautiful and very, very expensive items. Basically inaccessible to someone like me. Yet I'd been told there were plenty of books out there that you could get on the cheap so I asked one of these booksellers about it. He told me about a sale that goes on every Friday and Saturday at the booksellers' union HQ and suggested I go along. I did, descending into this basement in a random building on a side street in Tokyo, and saw masses of piled up books. It was a bit of a kid-in-a-sweet-shop situation, not just because of the amount on offer but also because they were actually accessible and I could handle them. The first thing I bought was a maths textbook from 1890 just because I liked the look of it. So while I originally only went for one book I then kept coming back and seeing what was on offer, helped by how the selection changed every week. It was only through this physical interaction that I managed to build up an understanding of Japanese print history, so it became as much a continuous study session as anything else. And indeed, I still go whenever I can.

Your collection emphasises the material history of each item. What have you learned about the importance of the book as object through building your collection?

As I continued my studies I found myself more and more interested in "the material turn" in literature, i.e. the understanding



that an author writes a text not a book. The actual content is important, but we often forget that it works together with the shape, material, size, marginalia, paratext and more to form the physical object that we hold in our hands. Bearing this in mind, what I wanted to emphasise in my submission to the National Book Collecting Prize is how each and every copy of a given book has its own unique history. For example, I own a number of illustrated books where the pictures have been coloured in by previous owners. For any one of those instances there could be as many surviving copies as you like, but I know that only the ones that I am holding have been coloured in that way by whoever those previous owners were. Effectively the physical item is a collaboration between an author/illustrator/publisher and its owner. This has

allowed me to not worry about things like the condition or completeness of a book/series of books, because there is value to be found in more than just pristine first editions. I'm actually more interested if I find someone's notes or signature. It shows that the book was read and connects me to someone on the other side of the world decades, if not hundreds, of years ago. And I think about how I am a part of this history as well now, which only makes me respect them even more.

The Book Collecting Prize came with £500 to help expand your collection. Have you already put this money to use, and if so, what have you acquired?

First let me say I am extremely grateful for the prize, which has allowed me to buy some

more expensive and rarer items than I usually would be able to afford. Recently I've found myself more and more interested in old Japanese maps and sentimental cartography in particular. These are obviously a lot harder to get hold of nowadays as they were almost always single-sheet prints, which do not survive the test of time anywhere near as well as books do. I did manage to track one down to a bookseller in Osaka (by accident while flipping through an auction catalogue), and the prize money from the National Book Collecting Prize allowed me to purchase it. The item was produced in 1756 and there are not many of them left anymore, so I am very much thankful to ABA for their support.

What are your plans for your collection going forward, or do you have plans

to explore a different avenue of book collecting?

I am now living in Tokyo so have gone right back in to the collecting mindset. I'm basically just planning to keep seeing more and more, and hoping to come across some gems in the process. I've always been more interested in what catches my eye than searching for specific items anyway (c.f. hoarder tendencies). But as I continue in my research I will undoubtedly start to be on the lookout for anything that I recognise as well. I am intrigued by moving out of the early-modern period into the pre-war printing landscape, which is almost unrecognisable compared to the 1800s, and one day I might even delve into the world of manuscripts, so we'll see where it goes from here.

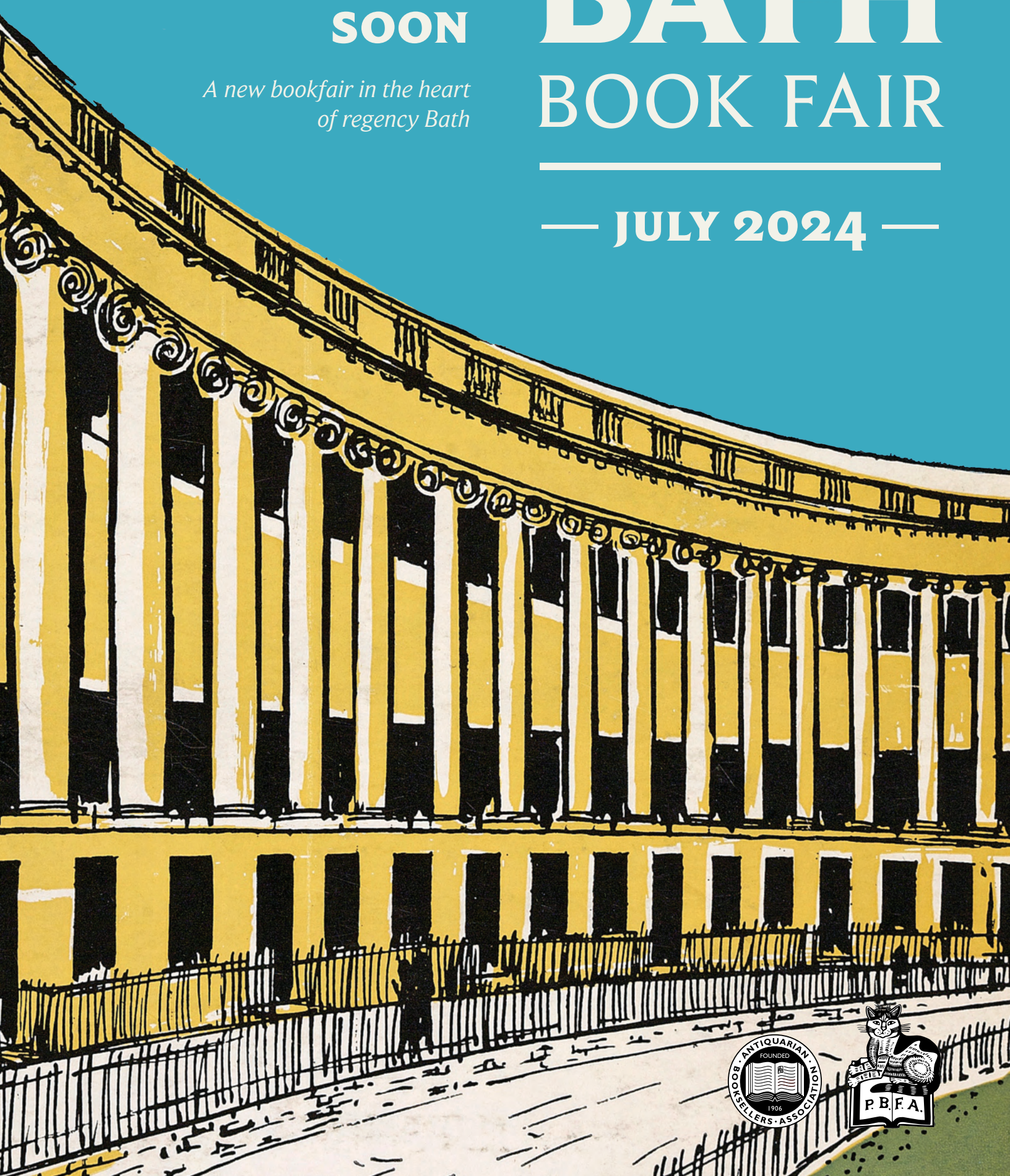


COMING
SOON

*A new bookfair in the heart
of regency Bath*

BATH BOOK FAIR

— JULY 2024 —



Fair Report

Firsts Online February 2023

Returning for a 2023 edition earlier this year, Firsts Online continues to provide dealers with a convenient and prestigious online platform to showcase highlight items throughout the year.

WEBSITE ANALYTICS: OVERVIEW

23-26 February 2023

SESSIONS
8,263

USERS
5,624

PAGEVIEWS
71,532

AVERAGE SESSION
DURATION

7 min. 65 sec.

PAGES PER SESSION
[AVERAGE]

8.66

AVERAGE % OF
NEW SESSIONS

60.87%

EXHIBITOR SURVEY RESULTS

SALES

RESPONSES (44)	SALES IN GB
13	0
8	£1 - £999
9	£1,000 - £2,499
6	£2,500 - £4,999
1	£5,000 - £9,999
5	£10,000 - £19,999
2	£20,000 - £35,000
TOTAL FROM SURVEY: £169,907	

AVERAGE SALE: **£3,467**MEDIAN SALE: **£650**

EXHIBITOR HIGHLIGHTS OVERVIEW

98 Exhibitors from **12** Countries**67** ABA Members**+100** Highlights added throughout fair**25** Exhibitors refreshed their highlights throughout fair

Exhibitor Survey sent to all exhibitors, with **49** responses received. Results represent **40%** of exhibitors. *Numbers and totals may vary, as some chose not to respond to certain survey questions.

Countries

UK	62
United States	9
France	7
Germany	4
Italy	4
Netherlands	3
Australia	3
Hungary	1
South Africa	1
Ireland	1
Canada	1
Japan	1

A full report is available on request. Please email secretary@aba.org.uk

Fair Report

Firsts London 2023

Firsts London 2023 followed just eight months after the 2022 iteration, in its now-accustomed home of the Saatchi Gallery. Following the success of last year's theme, 'Banned Books', a theme was once again selected that would help align the fair with events in the wider literary world, and spur press surrounding anniversary celebrations of the publication of Shakespeare's First Folio.

The objective this year was to solidify the brand and reputation of the fair, building on 2022's positive impact. We also sought to align ourselves with prestigious brands and institutions through our partnerships, leveraging their reach to cement Firsts' authority. Our big success this year was our partnership with the FT Weekend, affording us, amongst other things, two full page print adverts with them.

A bold advertising campaign - including cross-tracks and tube adverts, as well as traditional print and digital ads - coupled with a lively and active social media strategy ahead of the fair saw attendance increase by 31.2%. Preview night guest numbers increased by 40% and overall ticket sales were up by 36.7% on 2022.



A full report is available on request. Please email secretary@aba.org.uk

Footfall and Ticket Sales

2023	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	TOTAL
FOOTFALL	731	827	2,624	1,933	6,115
INCREASE on 2022	40% ▲	22% ▲	30% ▲	33% ▲	31% ▲
TICKET SALES	29	187			TOTAL
TICKET TAKE	£1,450	£1,870	CORPORATE TICKET SALES	£1,350	£4,670

2022	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
	520	678	2,009	1,448
Tickets	15	143		

2021	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
	500	900	1,700	1,550
Tickets	3	83		

Exhibitor Sales

2023	£	Top sales by floor
Total exhibitor sales	4,517,190	Ground floor £480,000
Advance website sales	254,436	First floor £250,000
Private customers sales	1,371,653	Second floor £52,000
Sales to exhibitors	1,480,368	
Sales to booksellers	421,958	Online pre-sales
Median	18,000	£254,436

2022	£
Total exhibitor sales	7,219,166
Advance website sales	408,498
Private customers sales	3,217,327
Sales to exhibitors	1,205,657
Sales to booksellers	1,380,075
Median	18,300

2021	£
Total exhibitor sales	3,073,259
Advance website sales	196,302
Private customers sales	974,701
Sales to exhibitors	673,235
Sales to booksellers	156,585
Median	18,000



Firsts London 2023 party at
Shapero Rare Books

On 17th May, just ahead of the kick-off of Firsts London 2023, Bernard Shapero hosted an informal gathering to celebrate the start of the fair.



Firsts London Library Partner *Lambeth Palace Library at Firsts*

**By Giles Mandelbrote, former Librarian of
Lambeth Palace Library**

This year Firsts celebrated the 400th anniversary of the publication of the First Folio, so it was particularly appropriate that the charity partners were the Friends of Lambeth Palace Library, one of the few surviving libraries from Shakespeare's London. The Library was founded in 1610, through the bequest of Richard Bancroft (1544-1610), Archbishop of Canterbury, who left some 6,000 books and manuscripts for the use of his successors in office, the senior bishops in the English church. It has remained ever since on the medieval Lambeth Palace site, on the south bank of the Thames facing the Palace of Westminster, thereby escaping the Great Fire of London.

Over the centuries, the Library has grown, as libraries tend to do, and its work has evolved. One of the most important acquisitions of modern times were the pre-1850 collections of Sion College library, founded in 1629 as a resource for the clergy of the city of London and transferred to Lambeth in 1996. At a single stroke this added some 60,000 manuscripts and early printed books, together with detailed records of benefactors, documenting the close relationship of Sion College library to the early



The new Lambeth Palace Library building, which opened in 2021. Photo: ©Hufton+Crow

modern citizens of London whom it served. Lambeth Palace Library has developed into a specialist research library, primarily for the history of the Church of the England, as well as a very large archive, documenting the Church's national and international role. In 2021, the entire library moved into a purpose-built eight-storey building in the Palace garden, providing much better accommodation for the collections – fully to modern conservation standards and with over 20km of shelving – as well as improved facilities for events and exhibitions, now freely open to the public.

Long before Lambeth Palace Library was formally established, there were books, manuscripts and archives on this site. The long series of archbishops' registers (or



Left to right: The Lambeth Bible (Tree of Jesse); The Lambeth Apocalypse (John on Patmos); Archbishop Morton's copy of Quintilian, with his painted arms and *rebus*. Photo: ©Lambeth Palace Library

act-books) begins in 1279; from the mid-nineteenth century, these are supplemented by the increasingly voluminous official correspondence and papers of the archbishops. Possibly the most remarkable individual library ever to have been housed at Lambeth was the magnificent collection of manuscripts assembled by Archbishop Matthew Parker (1504-1575). After his death, his books followed what was then the traditional pattern for archbishops' personal libraries and were bequeathed to his old college - in this case, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, where they remain today. A few of Parker's manuscripts took a different path and one of these, the MacDurnan Gospels, a beautiful pocket gospel-book decorated in the intricate 'insular' style of the ninth century and probably made in Ireland, is among the earliest of the medieval manuscripts now at Lambeth.

Archbishop Bancroft, like Parker, was able to take advantage of the unprecedented book-collecting opportunities offered by

the dissolution of monastic libraries a few decades earlier. The Lambeth Bible, one of the finest giant Romanesque bibles to survive from twelfth-century England, may have been a royal commission, part of the patronage lavished on the abbey of Faversham which was intended by King Stephen as his mausoleum. It was originally one of two volumes: the other volume, which eluded the archbishops, arrived much later at Maidstone Museum, and makes a very sad contrast, stripped of the huge full-page illuminations of Biblical scenes which make the Lambeth volume so compelling.

Some of Lambeth Palace Library's greatest treasures arrived very early on, but their precise origins continue to defy investigation. The Lambeth Apocalypse, illuminated in the French style in colours which remain strikingly brilliant to this day, was made in the 1260s for a noble female patron, Eleanor de Quincy, Countess of Winchester. It has been at Lambeth for some 400 years, but exactly how and when it arrived is still unclear. The same

is true, tantalisingly, of the Lambeth copy of the Gutenberg Bible, the first European book to be printed with moveable type (in Mainz, c.1455). Self-evidently an extremely expensive deluxe copy, one of a small number printed on vellum rather than paper, its fifteenth-century English decoration provides clear evidence that it reached this country within a few years of its production. This copy could well be the first (surviving) printed book ever to reach England, but nothing more is known of its early ownership.

A volume containing six printed pamphlets, all dating from 1600, probably bears witness to Bancroft's participation in the control of the English book trade, while he was Bishop of London (1597-1604). In this period, the bishops of London and their chaplains were responsible for reading any texts thought likely to prove controversial and deciding whether these could be printed. Their role came particularly under the spotlight at the end of Elizabeth's reign, when uncertainties over the succession created a political crisis. The pamphlets seem to have been Bancroft's file copies, kept as evidence of the licensing process; no fewer than three of them are signed by the respective booksellers who undertook their publication. Most notably, *The Second part of Henrie the fourth* ('printed by V.S., for Andrew Wise, and William Aspley') has been signed by the bookseller Andrew Wise: this is the only copy of a Shakespeare quarto to be so directly associated with its publisher.

Other important early printed books arrived later and by more circuitous routes. A book linking two of the architects of the English

reformation, Thomas Cranmer's copy of *Assertio Septem Sacramentorum* (1521), which won for Henry VIII the title 'Defender of the Faith' from a grateful Pope, went first to the royal library and then to the British Museum, where it was unceremoniously sold off as a duplicate. After several auction sales, it came into the hands of the American millionaire collector J.P. Morgan, who thought it a suitable Christmas present for Archbishop Cosmo Gordon Lang in 1938.

More recently, the Friends of Lambeth Palace Library have been invaluable supporters of the Library, both by directly funding purchases of rare books and manuscripts and by enabling the Library to attract matching grants from elsewhere. One such purchase, from the catalogue of an ABA member in 2018, was a work on rhetoric by the Roman author Quintilian, elegantly printed by Nicolas Jenson in Venice in 1471, which had belonged to Cardinal John Morton (d.1500), the first Archbishop of Canterbury who is known to have owned printed books.

First provided the Friends of Lambeth Palace Library with an ideal opportunity to recruit some more members (including at least one of the exhibitors) and to make Lambeth Palace Library, its collections, events and exhibitions, better known to the general public. It also proved to be an eye-opening and stimulating experience for the members of Library staff who took their turn on the stand.

For more information, see:

lambethpalacelibrary.info/about-lambeth-palace-library/friends-of-lambeth-palace-library

Upcoming Fairs & Trade Events

ABA FAIRS & EVENTS

CHELSEA RARE BOOK FAIR

03 – 04 November 2023

Location: Chelsea Old Town Hall, London,
SW3 5EE

chelseabookfair.com

YORK ANTIQUARIAN BOOK SEMINAR (YABS)

20 - 23 November 2023

Location: Priory Street Centre,
York, YO1 6ET

yabseminar.com

FIRSTS ONLINE

December 2023 (dates TBC)

firsts-online.com

FIRSTS LONDON 2024

16 - 19 May 2024

Location: Saatchi Gallery, London, SW3 4RY

firstslondon.com

TRADE FAIRS & EVENTS

LIVRES RARES & ARTS GRAPHIQUES

22 - 24 September 2023

Location: Grand Palais, 75008 Paris, France
salondulivrerare.paris

TORONTO ANTIQUARIAN BOOK FAIR

20 - 22 October 2023

Location: Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto,
Canada

tabf.abac.org

MILAN ANTIQUARIAN BOOK FAIR

27 - 29 October 2023

Location: Milano, 20122 Milano MI, Italy

www.ioba.org/event-details/milan-antiquarian-bookfair-october-27-29-2023-2

BOSTON INTERNATIONAL ANTIQUARIAN BOOK FAIR

27 - 29 October 2023

Hynes Convention Centre, Boston, MA 02115,
United States

www.abaa.org/bostonbookfair

56th CALIFORNIA INTERNATIONAL ANTIQUARIAN BOOK FAIR

9 - 11 February 2024

Location: Pier 27, Embarcadero, San Francisco

www.abaa.org/cabookfair

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

FIRSTS

LONDON'S RARE BOOK FAIR

Saatchi Gallery **2024**
16–19 May

THURSDAY 16 MAY

(PREVIEW) 5–9pm

£60 Thursday

FRIDAY 17 MAY

11am–8pm

£10 Friday

SATURDAY 18 MAY

11am–6pm

£5 Saturday

SUNDAY 19 MAY

11am–5pm

FREE ADMISSION

SAATCHI GALLERY

Duke of York Square

King's Road

London SW3 4RY



firstslondon.com

[f](#) [i](#) [t](#) | [@firstslondon](#) | [#FirstsLondon](#)



ABA

*Council Minutes***Minutes of meeting of the members of Council***14:30 on 26 January 2023 via Zoom.*

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

Apologies: Angus O'Neill

Also in attendance: Rachel Chanter, Riley Grant, John Morten

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

PH welcomed John Morten and Rachel Chanter to the meeting.

In Memoriam

John Critchley
Michael Harris
Colleen Vaughan

The committee held a minute of silence for those who had passed.

Minutes of the ABA Council Meeting held on 8 December 2022:

With DCr as proposer and JH as seconder, the minutes were adopted.

Matters arising from the Minutes

Cheques

PH reported that BL had emailed stating that it was wrong for cheques to no longer be accepted by the association. DCr noted that he had spoken to BL about the decision, which had been made in 2022.

Report of the President

PH reported that he'd had a long meeting with Brendan Sherar of Biblio about the ongoing sponsorship agreement of Firsts London, which had another year to run. There would be further discussions on continuing sponsorship, and PH noted that ABE would be interested in sponsoring. Biblio had been unhappy with their location and the Firsts Committee had discussed moving their stand down to the ground floor from Friday-Sunday, which Biblio were happy with.

PH reported that Les Ashton had introduced PH and RG to an executive at the Financial Times, who would be offering contras on marketing, and working on co-branding for the Fair. They would provide ad space in the weeks leading up to the bookfair, and could be offered space on the ground floor, with a profile on the fair in the FT in the leadup. Frieze Masters had a similar arrangement with them but at a much higher price point.

Financial Report

DCr had delivered the financial report with no questions from council.

John Morten (JM) reported that there had been some issues with members paying their subscriptions to the new bank via Bank

Transfer. Some banks were flagging the account as unverified, but the details were correct. DCr had brought this up with the bank and RG noted that it was an issue with the bank abbreviating the name of the Association.

RG was pleased with the retention rate, especially compared to other associations, and there were a healthy number of applications coming through.

Book Fairs

Edinburgh: 24-25 March 2023

RG reported that there were only 2 stands left, and the ATG would be writing a profile on the fair. Tickets for exhibitors had been sent out the day before.

Firsts 2023: 18-21 May 2023

PH reported that there were 88 exhibitors confirmed and expected to reach 110. Unfortunately, there would be an overlap with the Abu Dhabi book fair.

Venue negotiations for 2025 and 2026 were continuing and DCr was looking into bringing the map fair on board at some point in the future.

Progress was being made with marketing, and PR was lined up with Flint. TH suggested running highlight awards, or a best stand award at the fair. PH supported this and noted it was very good for media coverage.

Chelsea 2023: 3-4 November 2023

There was nothing to report on the Chelsea Fair other than that it followed the Dublin, Boston and Toronto fairs in October.

Report of the Secretary

RG reported that preparations for Edinburgh were well underway. She was working on the AGM and annual report, with several key reports outstanding. Firsts applications were going well, discussions had been held with potential charity partners, and Firsts Online was imminent. She would also be working on the ILAB online fair follow-up with Brendan, and finalising the FT document changes with PH and RC.

Marketing and Newsletter Report

Rachel Chanter (RC) reported that the newsletter was ready to be approved and could be sent out as soon as possible after this. She would be adding some of the reports and articles to the website and social media. Work was progressing on the theme for Firsts, and she was making improvement suggestions to Biblio for the ABA website. Firsts promotion would start within the coming weeks, including setting the socials schedule for the fair. PH asked RC to send him any change requests for the website well before the fair.

Book Security

PH reported that some stolen books had been located at auction houses and the police were involved and investigating. RG and TLM had put together a list of regional auction houses to be added to the book security list. DCr reported one other case of a buyer placing strange orders. PH reported another case of counterfeit books being presented to them for authentication.

Export and Legislation

DCr reported that there were still issues with

Arts Council England and further documents being required for imports and exports. Registration for CMS had been completed.

Membership Benefits

TH would organise a dinner on 22 June. RG and TH would discuss plans further.

BS offered to host a party on Wednesday 17 May ahead of Firsts.

Committees and other ABA activities Branches

There were no reports from the branches.

Digital Committee

TLM would organize a meeting to discuss various topics including Firsts Online advertising.

Friends of the ABA

RG reported that they had 25 registered and 17 fully paid Friends and were working on organizing a tour of Lambeth Palace Library.

Trade Liaisons

ABE

PH reported that ABE's website was out of date and felt there was a lack of investment into it, but the ABE were keen to get involved in Firsts London again.

PBFA

TLM reported that a proposal had been received for a PBFA-ABA Bath book fair at the Bath Pavilion in July 2024. TLM felt this would likely be profitable, especially as the break-even point was quite low and hall hire only £5,000. He felt it would be a good replacement

for the Bristol fair and a positive benefit for membership.

JM asked if there were plans to reinstate the cricket match, DCr would look into this. DCo suggested a different sport which required less specific sports skills, which would make it more inclusive. PH supported this idea, and JM was open to any suggestions.

John Morten added that he had instructed the PBFA to return to offering two YABS scholarships.

Charities

Benevolent Fund

DCr reported a slight increase in use of the Benevolent Fund, and there would be an update meeting in the next weeks, ready to report on at the AGM.

YABS

SS reported that there would be a meeting the following Monday to discuss dates, faculty, and sponsorship.

Dates for 2023 Meetings

22 March - 14:30 - In person at the ABA Office, followed by the AGM

31 May - Trial Morning Meeting - 9:30 - Zoom

27 July - Time TBC - Zoom

28 Sept - Time TBC - Zoom

7 Dec - 14:30 - In Person at the ABA Office, followed by Christmas Party

Any Other Business

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

Minutes of the meeting of the members of the Council

*14:30 Wednesday 22 March 2023
at the ABA Office, First Floor, 21 John Street,
London WC1N 2BF*

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

Apologies: Ed Maggs

Also in attendance: Rachel Chanter, Riley Grant, Adrian Harrington, Angus O'Neill

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

In Memoriam

A minute's silence was held for Robin de Beaumont.

Minutes of the ABA Council Meeting held on 26 January 2023

The approval of the minutes was proposed by DCr and seconded by DCo. The minutes were approved and signed.

Matters Arising from the Minutes

TLM raised a suggestion about having awards for stands or objects at Firsts, for example outstanding item, favourite book, favourite manuscript, best overall stand. This could be

judged by the Fair Committee.

Report of the President

PH thanked Council and RG for their support during his time as President. He felt there should be an option for a third year, should the president be willing to continue.

The council thanked PH for his hard work as President.

Action: Adding the option of serving for a third year to the Agenda for the Council meeting at the end of May.

Financial Report

DCr reported that cashflow had been positive throughout the year. The budget for 2023 showed a slightly lower balance to account for Firsts participation being lower due to the ongoing difficulty of attracting European dealers due to Brexit, as well as clashes with the New York and Abu Dhabi fairs, however he was not overly concerned about this.

There would be an additional income of £1,800 from ILAB, but the accounts were cautious with regards to income from Firsts online. There was nowhere to make cuts in expenditure.

Looking at the income from Firsts, the fair was still very heavily dependent on the ground floor exhibitors and continued to be the main source of income for the ABA. He asked if anyone present could take a bigger stand or encourage others to do so to support here.

The current surplus was at £200,000 which

was positive, though this was reserved for emergencies rather than covering any loss of income from the fair.

PH noted that the income from the Friends of the ABA should bring in some continuing revenue, as would the new membership proposals.

DCr would like to look at supporting better shipping conditions for European dealers, which should help bring more exhibitors back to the fair.

Book Fairs

Edinburgh: 24-25 March 2023

RG reported that there were 22 exhibitors signed up. There were some concerns as to its popularity and financial viability, but as this was a joint effort this needed to be handled sensitively. The Edinburgh stand fee could be slightly increased as the Fair was currently a loss-making exercise, despite being almost full.

TLM supported a higher stand price, as it was currently a very cheap fair. DCr felt that if the prices went up too much, some exhibitors might move to the PBFA section.

RG felt that given the level of support ABA was giving, they should be more involved in the promotion of the event, and perhaps also in the communication with exhibitors.

PH suggested DCo have a conversation with Derek and offer marketing support.

Firsts 2023: 18-21 May 2023

PH had been looking into having a separate

space within the fair for other dealers (print/ photographs etc). DCr had looked into allowing the Map fair to take space on the top floor but they were not able to commit. PH pointed out there was not actually a lot of extra space, as rooms were also needed for storage.

PH reported that the FT had been confirmed as the media partner, and would run ads in the FT, as well as allow the use of their logo on tickets, banners, etc.

Chelsea 2023: 3-4 November 2023

RG noted applications would be launched earlier than usual this year.

Report of the Secretary

RG reported that the AGM was prepared, the Annual Report was published, and overall a lot had been accomplished with First online, subscriptions, YABS and Firsts being the main focus of the year so far.

Marketing and Newsletter Report

RC reported on Firsts Online which had been held in February, with increased social media, and highlighted items. The post fair report showed that social media had worked well. They had tried a Guardian online advertising banner but this would most likely not be repeated. The Firsts London marketing campaign and theme had been decided, and E-tickets would be sent out to all on the mailing list. Social media would also be set up to feature exhibitor profiles and there would be more of a focus on video content. There would also be a strategy to promote international exhibitors. Advertising for the fair was in hand, including adverts on the tube and around

Sloane square station, which were quite reasonable. Print advertising was also all set. RG also mentioned the newsletter which had been received very positively. The next would go out in the summer.

The Friends of Lambeth Palace had been confirmed as the charity partner for the fair.

RC noted there had been a request sent out to members in the newsletter, but no content had been sent through yet – she would keep chasing here.

PH was very pleased to hear about the activity and it was looking much better than the year before.

Book Security

EM was not present. RG asked members to remember not to mention people's names or addresses when reporting to the trade list, as this was a potential GDPR risk.

PH noted that all books stolen from the Russian collector in London had been returned with the exception of 2, but he was confident these too would be found.

Export and Legislation

DCr noted things were quiet in this area.

Membership Benefits

TH asked if the names of the Friends of ABA could be shared. RG noted this wasn't possible due to data protection, but it might be possible to ask them if they minded their name being shared with members. They would also be invited to the dinner which would be a

good opportunity to make contact with them directly.

RG could provide the list of Friends on request, but this was not to be published.

TH suggested allowing members to book tables to allow them to invite their guests.

RG had booked an exhibitor party on the first night of the fair.

Committees and other ABA activities

Book Collecting Prizes

The recipients would be awarded on the Saturday at the book fair, and there would be a display of winners at the ABA stand.

Digital Committee

A meeting had taken place, everything was under control and TLM and RC had agreed some KPIs for engagement.

ABA Library

Some money had been allocated to house the library in Fulham in the long term, with members welcome to view any items.

Library Liaison

TLM had been looking into a joint event with the CILIP in 2024

Trade Liaisons

German regulation regarding packaging would also be expanded to other countries.

Benevolent Fund

DCr noted that he would be looking into the fund that the Benevolent Fund is currently invested in in terms of ethical and financial

suitability. In their previous meeting with Waverton they had also not been very forthcoming on financial underperformance, and the fund was heavily invested in petrochemicals so DCr would be evaluating some alternative options for next year. The Educational Trust was flourishing, having grown considerably in the past 3 years.

Educational Trust

YABS

SS reported that meetings had been held, and the committee were working on the programme. The funding proposal was in the works, dates were set, speakers confirmed, and it was all looking healthy. There were 16 scholarships available, which was more than last year. There would also be a YABS tour of Firsts and SS was looking into hosting an event as well.

Dates for 2023 Meetings

31 May - Trial Morning Meeting - 9:30 - Zoom

27 July - Time TBC - Zoom

28 Sept - Time TBC - Zoom

7 Dec - 14:30 - In Person at the ABA Office, followed by Christmas Party

Any Other Business

The Christmas party could be held at either PH Dover Street or Shapero, to be confirmed.

There being no further business, the Council meeting was concluded at 16:50.

Minutes of the ABA Annual General Meeting

***Wednesday 22 March 2023 at 17:00
21 John Street, London WC1N 2BF***

Present: The President, Pom Harrington (Peter Harrington), in the Chair

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

Members of Council: Stephen Foster (Foster Books), James Hallgate (Lucius Books), Thomas Heneage (Thomas Heneage Art Books), Tom Lintern-Mole (Antiquates Ltd.), Edward Maggs (Maggs Bros Ltd.), Laura Massey (Alembic Books), Ed Nassau Lake (Jarndyce), Sophie Schneideman (Sophie Schneideman Rare Books and Prints), Bernard Shapero (Shapero Rare Books).

Past Presidents: Robert Frew (Robert Frew Ltd.), Oscar Graves-Johnston (Michael Graves-Johnston), Adrian Harrington (Adrian Harrington Rare Books), Angus O'Neill (Omega Bookshop).

Full Members, Associate Members and

Friends: Ali Bird & Giles Bird (BAS Books Ltd.), Adam Douglas (Peter Harrington), Christopher Edwards (Christopher Edwards), Jonathan Fishburn (Fishburn Books), Amanda Hall (Amanda Hall Rare Books), Jolyon Hudson (Marlborough Rare Books), Suzanne Schulz-Falster (Suzanne Schulz-Falster Rare Books),

Sara Trevisan (Sokol Books).

ABA Office: Riley Grant (Company Secretary), Rachel Chanter (Marketing Manager).

Apologies: Alex Alec-Smith, Simon Beattie, Edmund Bennett, John Bonham, Barbara Grigor Taylor, Keith Fletcher, Andrew McGeachin, Peter Miller, Paul Mills, Janette Ray, Laurence Worms.

Welcome from the President

The President, PH, welcomed the 28 attendees (of whom 25 were voting members) and thanked them for attending to make the meeting quorate.

In Memoriam

The meeting held a moment of silence for those who had passed away in the previous year: John Critchley, David Edmunds, Michael Harris (non-member but known to many in the Association), Michèle Kohler, Patrick Marrin, Rob Shepherd, Colleen Vaughan, Andrew Edmunds, Robin de Beaumont.

Minutes of the AGM held on 16 March 2022 to be approved

The president called for a proposer and seconder for the 2022 AGM minutes. With Tom Lintern-Mole as proposer and James Hallgate as seconder, the minutes were unanimously accepted.

PH spoke and reported that two years seemed to have gone rather quickly, being very busy coming out of covid and getting the association back to normal. There were also changes to book fairs and congress, but once that was

done, they were able to get on with some new initiatives. One of these is the Friends of the ABA, which has already had a soft launch and would hopefully become a strong support, building up a membership of non-booksellers who want to be part of the trade. Bringing YABS under ABA control would also allow it to grow and develop and could compete with CABS.

One of the issues that would be brought to the table was the question of becoming a member, especially as so much of trading is online, and convincing new sellers to join had been a challenge. The new proposal would find a way to allow people to be Associate Members of the ABA earlier, while still trading within the Association's standards. PH was very pleased that this was coming together. Coming to the end of two years PH felt he was very happy with what had been done and thanked Council for their support. He was especially proud of their activity given their size. He especially thanked RG, who made all this possible.

Receipt and Adoption of the Annual Report for the year 2022-2023.

President's and Committees' reports:

President's Report, Treasurer's Report, Officers, Council, Sub-Committees, Patrons, Benevolent Fund Trustees, Educational Trust Trustees, Honorary Members, Administration, Membership, ABA Charities, ABA Book Fairs (Chelsea, Firsts, Firsts Online, Edinburgh), Book Collecting Prizes, ILAB Congress 2022, Digital, Export of Books and Manuscripts, Management, Marketing & Newsletter, Reference Library, Security, Standards, Trade Liaisons (ABE, BAMF, Library, PBFA).

Branch and Regional Reports:

Northern, Scottish, South-eastern and South-western

There were no questions or other matters arising.

The President called for a proposer and seconder for the 2022-23 Annual Report, the President and Committee, and the Branch and Regional Reports. With Thomas Heneage as proposer and Oscar Graves-Johnston as seconder, the reports were unanimously accepted.

Financial Report for the year 2022

The Treasurer's Report (printed in the Annual Report) and Association Accounts were presented by the Honorary Treasurer, Daniel Crouch.

DCr reported that the ABA finances were "flourishing" after a very good year, with income from Firsts 2022 and substantial income from the ILAB Congress Sponsors. There had also been significant belt-tightening and fiscal prudence by RG and Sarah Keefe. The next year would not bring in quite as much, and he would continue to build up reserves, working towards a target of £250,000. Firsts income might again be reduced due to overlapping with New York and Abu Dhabi, so the results for the next report might not be as strong.

PH thanked DCr for bringing in the extra income from the ILAB Congress.

The President called for a proposer and seconder for the Financial Report. With Jolyon

Hudson as proposer and Adrian Harrington as seconder, the report was unanimously adopted.

Benevolent Fund

The meeting received and noted the Benevolent Fund Accounts for the year 2022.

The meeting noted the appointment in 2021 for five years by Council of Peter Miller (Chairman) and Daniel Crouch, Adrian Harrington.

DCr reported that Peter Miller asked DCr to speak on his behalf. Peter's report was based on 2022 figures, but the fund had subsequently taken an 8% hit. Waverton was heavily invested in Shell and petrochemicals and the trustees would decide what to do during the course of the year, reviewing ethical and financial considerations.

The President called for a proposer and seconder for the Benevolent Fund Accounts. With Robert Frew as proposer and Ed Maggs as seconder, the report was accepted.

Charities**Educational Trust**

The meeting received and noted the Educational Trust Accounts for the year 2022.

The meeting noted the appointment of the following as Trustees of the Educational Trust during 2023: Adam Douglas (Chairman), Simon Beattie, Giles Bird, Justin Croft, Daniel Crouch, Anthony Smithson.

(After an initial period in office of two years, Trustees are subject to annual re-election or re-appointment by the AGM).

DCr noted the increase in funds due to YABS and donations and thanked Anthony, Adam and Sophie.

The President called for a proposer and seconder for the Benevolent Fund Accounts. With Peter Harrington as proposer and Roger Treglown as seconder, the report was accepted.

Resolutions

To ratify the change to article 63 of the ABA Articles of Association, agreed by Council on 26 January 2023, indicated in red as follows:

63. Postal ballots ("Postal Ballots") are required under these Articles and Rules for the election of the President, Vice-President and Treasurer and for the election of the Members of Council. Both Postal Ballots and Referenda shall be conducted under such provisions as the Electoral Reform Society shall from time to time advise (**provided that the Association may, at the sole discretion of the President or the Secretary, accept ballot papers received by other means which may include email or other electronic means**). All votes shall be inspected and counted by not less than two Scrutineers to be appointed by the Members of Council who shall include at least one past President. All voting and ballot papers shall be retained for a period of seventy clear days and shall be available for inspection by any Member or that Member's legal representative.

The President called for a proposer and seconder for the Resolution. With Jonathan Fishburn as proposer and James Hallgate as seconder, the change was ratified and approved by all.

Membership Proposal

To approve the proposal for restructuring Associate Membership.

Dco reported on the proposed membership structural changes. Associate Membership would be charged at 50% of the full membership costs, having traded for 2 years. They would be able to exhibit at fairs and would qualify for OCLC. They would expected/required to apply for full membership within 5 years but would not be able to propose or second other members during this time. They would be encouraged to attend YABS.

There was also a second category, that of Employee Associate Membership, which would be charged at 30% (to be paid by the firm in most cases). They would qualify for OCLC and would be eligible to join as an Associate Member if they left the firm, once they had traded for 2 years, but while they were at the firm there was no expectation for them to upgrade to full membership within 5 years.

Retired membership was a separate topic which would be discussed further.

The President called for a proposer and seconder for the Resolution. With Daniel Crouch as proposer and Robert Frew as seconder, the proposal was approved by all.

Election of Officers

The following have been nominated by Council in accordance with Article 24 to serve as the Officers of the Association for 2023-2024:

President: Deborah Coltham (Deborah Coltham

Rare Books)

Vice-President: Bernard Shapero (Shapero

Rare Books)

Treasurer: Daniel Crouch (Daniel Crouch Rare Books)

No other nominations have been received and the Officers were elected unopposed.

DCo now in the chair. She noted that she was honoured to be ABA President, with PH being a hard act to follow. The ABA was in much calmer waters than before and she was relieved to be meeting back in person. She thanked Roger Treglown for his time on council as he was not given an official thank you before PH took over.

Council was comprised of wise heads and excellent business minds, and everyone cared about the Association, which had benefited Council and the Association in a difficult time.

Firsts London 2022 was a great success despite the national period of mourning, and Firsts London 2023 would benefit from strong promotion and marketing, and was set to be a great success.

The Edinburgh fair was coming up the following weekend, and holding fairs in person again was fantastic. Online Fairs would continue for a bit longer as they prove a useful tool for small dealers and motivating participation. There might also be a Trans-Atlantic fair.

DCo thanked the Congress Team, as it had cemented the ABA's place in ILAB as a leading voice. She wanted to pay tribute to Angus

O'Neill and Christopher Bailey as VP and Treasurer.

Rachel Chanter was welcomed as the Marketing Manager. Marketing efforts had already much improved, and Rachel had solid plans to engage with members across the country.

As YABS was now under the umbrella of the educational trust, this would prove to become a great track for membership and the links with IES and BTHC would help further with outreach.

DCo also thanked RG and Sarah for keeping the association going.

PH presented RT with a bottle of wine to thank him for his services to the ABA.

Election of Members of Council

One third of the elected Members of Council are required to retire in rotation each year under Article 34 of the Association. The three retiring Members of Council are offering themselves for re-election in accordance with Article 34. There are now four positions vacant.

The candidates were:

James Hallgate - Standing Re-election in accordance with Article 34 (Lucius Books), Sophie Schneideman - Standing Re-election in accordance with Article 34 (Sophie Schneideman Rare Books), Sara Trevisan - Proposed by Tom Lintern-Mole, Seconded by Daniel Crouch (Sokol Books).

No other nominations were received, and the Candidates were elected unopposed.

Appointment of Accountants

Cloke & Co. were re-appointed as Accountants for the coming year.

The President called for a proposer and seconder for the appointment of Accountants. With Christopher Edwards as proposer and Adrian Harrington as seconder, the appointment was made.

Appointment of Solicitors

Lee, Bolton Monier-Williams were re-appointed for the coming year.

The President called for a proposer and seconder for the appointment of Solicitors. With Jolyon Hudson as proposer and Tom Lintern-Mole as seconder, the appointment was made.

Appointment of Honorary Solicitor

James Freemantle was re-appointed (non-practicing) Honorary Solicitor.

The President called for a proposer and seconder for the appointment of Honorary Solicitors. With Peter Harrington as proposer and Stephen Foster as seconder, the appointment was made.

Any other business

ST gave an update on Library Liaison efforts. They were in discussion with CILIP to organise a small fair which would provide bursaries for rare book librarians to attend the CILIP AGM/conference. This was a new project for all involved but it would most likely take place in September 2024.

DCo presented PH with a Past President pin to thank him for his services to the ABA.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 17:45.

Minutes of the meeting of the members of Council

14:30 Wednesday 7 June 2023 via Zoom

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

Apologies: Laura Massey

Also in attendance: Rachel Chanter, Adam Douglas, Riley Grant, Nicky Dunne

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

DCo Welcomed Adam Douglas, Nicky Dunne and Rachel Chanter to the open part of the meeting.

In Memoriam

Barry Humphries
Bernard Lauser
Robin Myers

A minute of silence was held.

Minutes of the ABA Council Meeting held on 22 March 2023

With SF proposing and PH seconding, the minutes were accepted.

Report of the President

DCo reported that it had been smooth sailing since the start of her presidency. The first large event had been Firsts London at Saatchi

Gallery. She was looking forward to joining the ILAB President's Meeting at Stockholm in September.

Firsts 2023: 18-21 May

Post Fair Report

PH reported on Firsts. Despite the tight turnaround of 8 months between the events, it had been successful. The ABA's goal as organiser is to create an event, and provide logistics, marketing, promotion, and an efficient service for exhibitors. There was still some work to be done with conditions on the second floor.

Overall, over 6,000 visitors had attended over the four days, which was a great improvement on 2022 and record footfall for a rare bookfair in the UK. Attendance had been up 40% on the opening night. An optimum number would probably be closer to 800, but the event had gone well overall. Friday had only seen 840 visitors, which felt a little sparse at times, but business had been happening. Saturday had been busy, overly busy at times, and Sunday was busy until the end with real collectors.

PH added that RC's contribution was noticeable despite the short lead time, and the marketing was much improved, PR had been a struggle as the focus had been on New York.

Changes in logistics meant the loading bay process was much more efficient this year, reducing the loading by 2 hours. There were some complaints about RF Shipping's lead times, and some issues with shipping for European exhibitors.

PH would discuss further with the committee, but felt spending on marketing was already optimised, but some of the spend could go to the continental book fairs to promote Firsts.

The total takings were £4.5 million, a decrease on last year, but the median held at £18,000 and there was only one recorded zero take. The numbers overall had been impacted by New York and Abu Dhabi, and the fair was down on exhibitors, 104 vs 118. There would be a change in dates for New York to March 2024. Abu Dhabi dates were still to be confirmed.

Friends of the Bodleian had agreed to be the Firsts charity partner for 2024.

PH thanked RG for her hard work and congratulated her on getting the fair logistics down to a fine art.

BS reported he had received his first call as Vice President of the ABA but it was from a dealer claiming to be unhappy about the fair being at Saatchi. They did not know where they wanted to be instead. There seemed to be some discontent from dealers selling mid- to lower-range books.

DCr noted that complaints about shipping from Europe seemed to be more based on perception than fact and suggested addressing this with one well-designed form. He also reported that Art Logistics were being bought out by Cadogan Tate, so they might be able to be brought in to complement Caladex. SS felt some central guidance to help members with European logistics would go a long way.

TLM reported that he was greeted more warmly than in previous years when collecting take sheets from the top floor; more positivity than negativity. He noted that WH Ireland were delighted with the corporate ticket offer and were keen on getting more involved in the fair. BS wondered if something could be done to think about attracting a more international crowd to the fair. SF reported that hiring an exhibitor van had worked well for him.

DCo and PH would think about introducing a small charge on the weekend to stop the flow of traffic to the facilities. TH also raised the issue with the facilities.

PH reiterated that the Saatchi was the only location suitable at the moment and wanted to focus on making the best of it.

Firsts 2025-26 Contract

PH reported that the ABA had been given the option to extend the contract for 2025 and 2026, with guaranteed dates and a fixed price of £350,000 over two years. EL liked the fair on both the ground and first floor but felt there were measures to be taken to retain visitors on the top floor.

A vote was taken: Unanimously in favour of extending the contract with the venue for an additional two years.

Sponsors

PH reported that the three-year sponsorship agreement with Biblio had come to an end. Biblio did not seem keen on re-sponsoring. ABE were slowly making their way back, but there had been a boycott of the ABE from ABA

members in 2019 following them stopping Hungarian and Czech sellers from trading due to payment processing issues. There were no objections to PH re-starting conversations with ABE, especially as the issue was now resolved.

Financial Report

DCr reported that the drop in Firsts income had had a serious effect on the end of year figures. This would likely be regained next year, especially with the New York and Abu Dhabi fairs moving, but the association could not afford to lose nearly £4,000 ever year.

The running costs were already quite lean, and there was not a lot of scope to make further cost savings.

JH suggested producing ABA tote bags for members to customise with their own logo.

DCr congratulated RG on keeping costs for the fair down despite 10% inflation overall. PH noted that sponsorship for the fair could be improved on, supporting the bottom line. DCr suggested approaching Hampden & Co.

Book Fair Dates

Chelsea 2023: 3-4 November 2023

Edinburgh: 22-23 March 2024

Bath 2024

Report of the Secretary

RG reported that with Firsts 2023 done, work had started on 2024. RC would share the post-fair report shortly. Bookings for YABS were open, as well as for the Book Trade History Conference. RG was working on the Chelsea

Budget and Stand Prices with Graham York and would share this with DCr. RG and TLM were starting the planning process for the Bath fair next summer as well as trying to develop Edinburgh a bit further and make it slightly more financially efficient. Towards the end of the summer, the team would start work on implementing the changes to the membership structure as agreed at the AGM, and RG would be working with RC on website development.

Marketing and Newsletter Report

RC reported that Firsts had been the focus of her first few months of work at the ABA and she had some ideas for future events. With social media, the content had to be good quality, but volume was also important - more content helps engagement and followers which was evidenced by some of the work done at Firsts and RC would bring some of these ideas into the ABA social media strategy. She would work on a more regular digital newsletter (monthly) and try to increase subscriber numbers there too. There were a lot of opportunities for promoting the Edinburgh fair.

Charities

Educational Trust

YABS was all underway, with RG opening bookings. There were already 11 bookings, and with the scholarships it was already half full.

The Educational Trust Dinner had been cancelled; dates would be picked for 2024.

Export and Legislation

DCr had received four separate complaints about a member of staff at the Arts Council

England office.

Committees and other ABA activities

Book Collecting Prizes

Dco noted there was a lot of enthusiasm for this, and there had been a display at Firsts.

Digital Committee

TLM reported the committee would be looking at engagement figures, and RC would be putting together a regular analysis of performance, and an activity schedule. It was difficult to generate content without a fair, but she would work on reaching out to members more. SF suggested selecting items from catalogues submitted to the office to feature in the public-facing newsletter and on social media.

Friends of the ABA

RG would give corporate partners and sponsors the option to sign people up but there had been no uptake since Firsts. Dco suggested nominating a member of council to work on it.

Library Liaison

ST reported that she was still trying to organise a small fair with the CILIP rare book group in 2024 in Edinburgh, depending on the venue chosen. She had been contacted by Lincoln College and Lucy Evans from CILIP about documentation that involves theft and situations in which library books ended up in the trade and would see if this was something the ABA could work with them on. The Rylands was looking for somebody from the ABA to discuss the trade in a new course for librarians and archivists.

Social Events

TH offered his temporary premises on Jermyn Street for the Christmas party.

Trade Liaisons - PBFA

TLM reported that the PBFA were happy with their promotion at Firsts and would be adding a leaflet into the exhibitor pack next year.

Dates for 2023 Meetings

26 July - Morning Meeting at 9:30 via Zoom

28 Sept – Time TBC, via Zoom

7 Dec - 14:30 - In Person at the ABA Office, followed by the Christmas Party

Any Other Business

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 16:45.

Minutes of the meeting of the members of council

14:30 Tuesday 25 July 2023 via Zoom

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

Apologies: Pom Harrington

Also in attendance: Riley Grant, Rachel Chanter

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

Dco welcomed RC to the meeting.

Minutes of the ABA Council Meeting held on 7 June 2023

Approval of the Minutes was Proposed by JH and SS. The minutes were adopted with no matters arising.

Report of the President

Dco reported that plans were underway for Chelsea, following a few difficult financial decisions. She would be attending the ILAB President's Meeting in Stockholm in September and suspected there would be discussion about the future of book fairs there. RG, PH and Dco had submitted their responses to the recent ILAB Book Fair Survey.

Financial Report

Dcr reported that the association was running on a fine line between profit and loss this year. Dcr, Dco and RG spoke with the Chelsea committee and informed them that there would need to be a 10% increase in stand costs due to inflation. Following discussion with the committee, a 5% increase was countered, but this would not help solve future problems so 10% was eventually accepted, which would hopefully result in break even for the association. There would likely also be some increase on stand prices for Firsts, but this would be announced in the Autumn.

TLM asked if membership fees would also be increasing, RG and Dco replied that this was likely, little and often being more acceptable to members, but this would be discussed further at the September and December meeting.

Book Fairs

Chelsea 2023: 3-4 November 2023

RG noted that savings for Chelsea had already been made wherever possible, and this cost would only result in approximately £50 increases in stand costs for most exhibitors, which was not prohibitive. Applications would open the following week.

Edinburgh: 22-23 March 2024

TLM felt it would be feasible to increase prices for Edinburgh based on costs, as ABA costs were considerably more than PBFA costs, and they made a profit at current rates. However, the ABA increasing costs might end up being a political rather than economic decision, as the PBFA had a much less favourable location and their part was run by volunteers.

RG would schedule a more in-depth conversation about the Edinburgh budget in December, and there were some ideas about streamlining the organisation of the fair.

Bath 2024

TLM confirmed that the fair would be going ahead in July 2024, jointly with the PBFA. This would replace the Bristol fair. RG and RC had a productive meeting with Dan Ahern, the manager, discussing the venue, parking, and aiming for a reasonable stand rent, which should lead to a few hundred pounds of profit for the association. It would be held at the Bath Pavilion, which had the capacity for 75-85 stands, and was a 9-minute walk from the station.

Firsts 2024: 16-19 May 2024

RG reported that she and RC were working on finalising the theme and artwork for 2024. There were some stand price increases, but DCr was working with Art Logistics/ Cadogan Tate to put together an offering to try and increase the number of European dealers exhibiting. Initial suggestions included coordinating shipping through hubs in Paris, Milan and Amsterdam with prices in the range of €2,800 for logistics and customs. PH was in conversation with Biblio and the Financial Times to continue with sponsorship and partnerships.

Report of the Secretary

RG reported that things were generally quite active on the membership side. The team had also been working on Chelsea and Firsts online. YABS was busy with only one space remaining, and there had been 38 applicants

for scholarships which was double the number compared to last year. RC was also working on a member's newsletter.

Marketing and Newsletter Report

RC and RG were working on the theme for Firsts, including some international promotion in various fair locations. RC was working on producing a newsletter and would be posting more social media content from members catalogues; she would be reaching out to members to ask for some content submissions.

Charities

Educational Trust

DCr reported that registrations and applications for scholarships for YABS were very positive. SS reported on some of the confirmed speakers including Simon Patterson and Amanda Hall, and noted that there would be a focus on critical thinking throughout the programme. RG would start thinking about looking for a larger venue to allow for more attendees, perhaps working with the University assuming it was held outside of term time. SF noted that if YABS was just before the York book fair again it would allow some of the participants to go straight on to get practical experience of helping out at the fair.

Book Security

EM reported another occurrence of shoplifting from Blackwell's in Oxford, as well as a wallet stolen within the Maggs premises, which was a sad reminder that this behaviour was returning after the pandemic.

Membership Benefits

TH returned to the logistics of organising a

retirement dinner at Brooks's. The 15 May was not an option for them, so he suggested a dinner in October or November instead.

Committees and other ABA activities

Digital Committee

TLM noted that there would be a meeting in a week.

Friends of the ABA

RG reported that there had been one more Friend joining, and they were working on organising some further Friends events. SF asked how many Friends the ABA currently had, RG replied that there had been 30 expressions of interest but only 20 had fully paid up to date. RC noted that they needed to have more events to promote if they wanted to advertise to increase that.

Library Liaison

ST reported that EM was working with Sarah Cusk from Lincoln College to look at the CILIP policy documents relating to book theft. TLM also noted that there would be a meeting about potential future dealer showcase at the CILIP conference later in the week.

Trade Liaisons

ABE, BAMF, BADA, PBFA

RG reported that the ABE had offered two YABS scholarships. Also for YABS, RG and RC had put together a proposal for tiered sponsorship and would send this to Council and Membership once it was more developed. TLM noted that the ABE membership lists had possibly not been updated for some time, RG had sent them an updated list but would follow up with them again.

Agenda Items proposed by Members of Council and/or Membership

Member Survey

DCo reported that she and RG would be working on a general survey to be sent out to membership in September, hoping that this would result in some suggestions and feedback. SS was supportive and felt this would be a useful exercise, and that some members might be placated if they felt they had an opportunity to raise any concerns they might have.

Dates for 2023 Meetings

28 Sept - Morning Meeting - Zoom

7 Dec - 14:30 - In Person at the ABA Office, followed by the Christmas Party. TH was working on a location for this but his new premises were taking some time to take shape. BS offered, as had PH.

Any Other Business

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 16:30.

Upcoming ABA Meetings 2023

Council meeting	28 September 2023, 9:00am (Zoom)
Council meeting	7 December 2023 (ABA office)
ABA Christmas Party	7 December 2023 (immediately following the council meeting. Location TBC)

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