

Bill McKittrick – In Memoriam

Lawyer, Club president, philanthropist, and connoisseur

Jim Tomes

Bill was a good friend, an exceptionally competent lawyer, an astute connoisseur and collector of the arts and fine wine, a serious philanthropist, and one of the quiet heroes of World War II. My wife Josie and I enjoyed the hospitality and frequent company of Bill and his wife Carolyn for over forty years.

I met Bill first as a client in 1962. I was general counsel of a Chicago manufacturing company that was the target of a local union organizing attempt and I called upon Bill, a partner in the law firm of Vedder, Price, Kaufman & Kammholz, which then specialized in representing management on labor matters. Bill not only gave us excellent legal advice, but was masterful in keeping us calm and rational during the election, which we won. Bill kept reiterating during the election campaign that the best way to win was to continue treating our employees fairly. Intelligence and fairness were two of his signature traits.

It was during one of our meetings in his law office that I noticed a small plaque among the pile of papers on his desk, marked "The Perfect Season, DePauw University Football, 1936." I asked him about the undefeated season and he replied with a modest smile that he was just a second string guard, but the season was both undefeated and unscored upon. So far as I can tell, the only college team ever to be so perfect.

During the ensuing years Bill and Carolyn and Josie and I became friends with shared interests in the Goodman Theatre, the Chicago Symphony, the Lyric Opera, the Newberry Library, The Caxton Club, and the Art Institute. It was Bill who sponsored me for membership at Caxton. We were also both members of Michigan Shores Club in Wilmette where we met frequently for dinner, which we did for all the years since.

As our friendship grew we learned that Bill and Carolyn had met and married in



Bill with wife Carolyn in the mid-1990s. (photo courtesy Bruce McKittrick)

1942 while Carolyn was an officer in the Navy WAVES and Bill was an enlisted Navy seaman.

Bill had graduated from Northwestern University Law School in 1939 and was on leave from a Chicago law firm, Pope & Ballard, performing government service as an attorney in the office of the General Counsel, the Panama Canal Zone. After Pearl Harbor in December 1941 Bill decided he didn't want to be in the war as a lawyer so he came back to Chicago, enlisted in the Navy as a seaman and applied for Officer Candidate School as a sea duty line officer. While in Chicago, Bill shared a basement apartment with Bruce Beck who was a lifelong friend. When Bill and Carolyn were married in December of 1942 the Navy rules were that Carolyn had to resign her commission, but Bill always said that the "Carolyn as an officer and Bill as an enlisted man" relationship obtained throughout their marriage. Bill was commissioned in 1943 and assigned as the armaments officer of the escort

carrier USS *Kalinin Bay* which departed San Diego for the Pacific in January 1944. It was in 1994 during one of our Michigan Shore dinners that I learned from Carolyn that Bill was going to attend the 50th anniversary of his Navy ship's last battle in World War II. I pressed Bill about the story and he told me rather reluctantly that his ship, the *Kalinin Bay*, was in the battle of Leyte Gulf in 1944.

I researched the history of the USS *Kalinin Bay* and learned that it had earned five battle stars during the war; including Tarawa, Peleliu, Eniwetok, Saipan, and, finally, the battle of Leyte Gulf, off Samar. This last battle was truly remarkable.

The *Kalinin Bay* was one of six escort carriers, three destroyers and three destroyer escorts, in a task force with the radio call "Taffy 3," cruising off Samar in the Philippines, in support of General MacArthur's landings at Leyte in October 1944.

This relatively small task force was surprised
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on the morning of October 25th to discover that a very large Japanese force commanded by Admiral Kurita, comprised of four battleships, six heavy cruisers, two light cruisers and eleven destroyers, was bearing down on them from the north, attempting to attack the American landing force at Leyte. Admiral Halsey was farther north and had mistakenly assumed that Kurita's force had left the area. Unknown to Halsey, Kurita had turned around and come back south through the San Bernardino Strait.

When the Taffy 3 commander, Admiral Clifton Sprague, saw that he was now confronting Admiral Kurita's battleships he ordered all his carrier planes in the air and steamed full speed ahead, attacking the Japanese force. The task force ships were outgunned by the Japanese, with only anti-aircraft and 5-inch guns, and its planes were only armed for attacking ground forces opposing the invasion. Each escort carrier had only 28 planes, but they loaded up with torpedoes and aggressively attacked the Japanese fleet.

The battle off Samar has been cited by historians as "one of the greatest military mismatches in naval history". Samuel Eliot Morrison in his *History of United States Naval Operations in World War II* (Volume XII, Leyte) wrote as follows:

"In no engagement of its entire history has the United States Navy shown more gallantry, guts and gumption than in those two morning hours between 0730 and 0930 off Samar."

The battle, fought at point-blank range, was very intense and resulted in Taffy 3's loss of two escort carriers, two destroyers, one destroyer sunk, plus serious damage to two escort carriers, one destroyer and two destroyer escorts, with 1,583 Navy officers and men killed and missing and 913 wounded. The *Kalinin Bay* received 15 direct hits from 14- and 16-inch Japanese battleship guns and three direct hits from 8-inch armor-piercing projectiles, plus two "Kamikaze" plane direct hits and two more near hits which caused severe damage below the water line.

The Japanese losses were even greater: three heavy cruisers sunk, three heavy cruisers damaged, one destroyer damaged, and unknown casualties, probably in the thousands.

After two hours of intense battle, to the amazement of the Navy ship's crews, the Japanese fleet turned tail and steamed back north. Their retreat was later determined to be because Kurita concluded that the ferocity of the American Navy attack indicated they must be backed up by a stronger force which was probably on the way.

For their action in the battle Taffy 3 was awarded a Presidential Unit Citation:

"For extraordinary heroism in action against powerful units of the Japanese Fleet during the battle off



USS Kalinin Bay

Samar, Philippines, October 25, 1944... the gallant ships of the Task Unit waged battle fiercely against the superior speed and fire power of the advancing enemy... two of the unit's valiant destroyers and one destroyer escort charged the battleships point-blank and, expending their last torpedoes in desperate defense of the entire group, went down under the enemy's shells.... The courageous determination and the superb teamwork of the officers and men who fought in the embarked planes and who manned the ships of Task Unit 77.4.3 (Taffy 3) were instrumental in effecting the retirement of a hostile force threatening our Leyte invasion operations and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

After the war, in December of 1945, Bill was discharged from active duty in the Navy and rejoined Pope & Ballard. In the spring of 1952 he was one of the founding partners of the law firm Vedder, Price, Kaufman & Kamholz, where he remained as a partner until his retirement.

Bill and Carolyn had two children; a daughter, Lynn McKittrick Pond, a retail store manager in Chicago, and a son, Bruce Wood McKittrick, a well-known rare book dealer in Philadelphia and a non-resident member of the Caxton Club. Lynn's husband is Robert A. Pond and Bruce's wife is Wendy Wilson.

Carolyn and Bill moved from their long-time home in Kenilworth in 2009 to The Clare, an assisted living facility on the near north side of Chicago. Carolyn and Bill shared an apartment there until Bill was moved in November, 2010 to its medical care floor. Even then Bill still had his puckish sense of humor. When we visited them just two days before Bill died I asked him if he ever saluted the WAVE officer's cap they had put on a bronze bust of Carolyn in their apartment. His answer was, with a smile, "I still do."

We will miss him. He lived a full and honorable life of 95 years. A quiet hero.

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William Wood McKittrick was born July 11, 1915 in Mt. Carmel, Illinois. He died, at age 95, on December 25, 2010. During his active life he was a significant patron of the arts in Chicago, including the Art Institute of Chicago, the Lyric Opera

of Chicago, the Chicago Symphony, the Newberry Library, Northwestern University and the Caxton Club. In 1980 he was made a Trustee of the Chicago Symphony, and later a

Life Trustee. In 1984 he was made a member of the Board of Trustees of the Newberry Library, and later a Life Trustee. He was president of the Caxton Club in 1983-84. He

was also a member of the Lawyers Club of Chicago.

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Memories of Bill McKittrick

Always there with practical skills, wearing his trademark bow tie

Celia Hilliard

Bill McKittrick was something of an intellectual man about town, and his curiosity and appreciation of books, music, art, and delectable food and drink drew him into many cultural galaxies. He was a doer, yet at the same time his reserve and wry perspective worked to puncture any gaudy pretensions or wild notions.

My first connection with Bill was through his daughter, Lynn, when she and I served together on the Chicago Symphony's Junior Governing Board in the late 1970s. One winter Sunday, her parents invited a group of us "Juniors" to an afternoon concert at their house in Kenilworth. We sat perched on chairs, sofas, and window sills in their spacious living room, listening to a small ensemble of musicians, about our own age, play an hour of chamber music.

This exquisite performance was followed by a buffet supper and, retrieved from Bill's famous cellar, several bottles of a very fine wine. I settled with a plate into a comfortable spot near portraits of Schumann and Wagner by Felix Valotton. Warm and intimate, it was an altogether transcendent occasion. I've never forgotten it.

Some years later Bill asked me to join the board of The Friends of Ryerson and Burnham Libraries, a support group founded to build enthusiasm and financial ballast for the Art Institute's vast collection of resource materials on the visual arts. Bill had been a member of the museum's Committee on Libraries since 1982, and served as Chairman of The Friends from 1988 to 1990. The membership of The Friends included many

Caxtonians, and over the years its board was composed of a mix of collectors, designers, architects, dealers, and professional bibliophiles. Numbered among this crew were Bruce Beck, George Danforth, Richard Gray, Walker Johnson, Reva Logan, Janis Notz, Anne Rorimer, Harry Stern, and Jim Wells.

At home, Bill and his wife Carolyn's print-and-drawing cabinet was "jam-packed," accord-

much attracted to books on modern art and architecture. "I could show him the oddest things," says Jack, "and he would be supportive and interested in seeing that they came into the collection."

The Friends' board would meet every month or two over a good lunch in the trustees' room, then situated in a third-floor aerie facing the treetops of McKinlock Court. Bill's



McKittrick, left, with Carolyn and Joan Clark, on the occasion of the publication of the Club's Leaf Book volume, in 2005.

strong practical skills, coupled with his legal expertise, made a fortuitous match with the expansive ideas of his friend and fellow board member, Alex Kleine. An investment banker who had come to this country from Poland (via Cuba), Alex had

ing to Lynn, "with works by artists ranging from Toulouse-Lautrec and Chagall to Henry Moore and Robert Motherwell." Their son, Bruce, a fellow Caxtonian and distinguished Philadelphia book dealer, notes that his parents collected exhibition catalogues and books often related to the artists hanging on their walls. "They bought quite broadly," he says, "and were interested in turn in music history, photography, and modern art." Bill even had "a Shakespeare phase," inspired by a course he took, though his purchases centered on alternate texts.

As Chair of The Friends, Bill was involved in many special purchases for the Art Institute library. Jack Perry Brown, Director of the Ryerson and Burnham Libraries, recalls that Bill was always very catholic in his tastes and

assembled a fine collection of French *livres d'artiste*, with several hundred titles in his personal library.

I remember particularly two big projects for The Friends which Bill and Alex promoted together. The first concerned a large and handsome volume titled *Great Ideas*, published in 1976 by the Container Corporation of America to celebrate its 50th anniversary (and coincidentally, the 200th anniversary of the United States). This book grew out of an ambitious advertising campaign orchestrated by CCA founder, Walter Paepcke, to create, in the midst of the Depression, a distinctive and socially admirable corporate identity. He commissioned vivid poster-style images from artists on the level of Covarrubias, de

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Kooning, and Leger to illustrate the great ideas of western civilization. These ads ran in national magazines and earned a sly declaration from *Fortune* magazine that the CCA had earned the rank of “glamour unit of the paperboard industry.” The advertisements were shown in a celebrated 1945 exhibition at the Art Institute called “Modern Art in Advertising,” and the campaign continued for years, even after Paepcke’s death in 1960. It eventually included many more famous artists like Joseph Cornell, Philip Guston, Jean Helion, Jacob Lawrence, Rene Magritte, Man Ray, and James Rosenquist, illustrating philosophical quotations from such diverse thinkers as St. Thomas Aquinas, Jane Addams, Marcus Aurelius, John Dewey, Feodor Dostoevsky, Albert Einstein, Alexander Hamilton, Carl Jung, and Abraham Lincoln. Thus, the 1976 book made a dazzling compendium, containing 195 full-page color illustrations, printed and bound by R. R. Donnelley & Sons.

At the time of its publication, the Container Corporation gave away this landmark volume to numerous customers and colleagues in the industry. Through Bill’s and Alex’s efforts, The Friends were able to secure the remaining copies (which numbered in the hundreds) and to sell every single one of these books – for what Jack Brown calls “an extremely tidy profit.” These monies were parked in a handsome endowment fund which Jack continues to use for notable acquisitions to the Libraries’ holdings.

The second McKittrick/Kleine collaboration was more daunting and included energetic efforts by other board members. The Chicago artist Ed Paschke was persuaded to participate in the creation of The Friends’ own *livre d’artiste*, the first time he had ever engaged in such a project. The book was titled *Genghis Chan: Private Eye*, with verses

by the poet John Yau and 17 color etchings by Paschke. It was printed in a limited edition of 200 under the direction of Jack Lemon at Landfall Press on hand-made paper, with an

original watermark designed by the artist. Twenty-five deluxe copies included an extra suite of signed plates. The resulting production was striking, with Paschke providing bold and inventive interpretations of Yau’s edgy, provocative text. The marketing of this book, however, proved far more challenging than the first endeavor, and copies of this exceptional volume are still available.

Even in his later years, when his health was in serious decline, Bill remained a presence – attentive, loyal, and generous. He still made the effort to come downtown, attend commit-

tee meetings, and make a positive contribution, an attitude that extended to his other cultural commitments around the city. Lasting in memory are the many times my husband David and I walked into Cathedral Hall at the University Club on Thursday concert nights. There was Bill, in his jacket and trademark bow tie, seated with Carolyn at the southeast corner window, holding court at the best table in the house, with – always somewhere near his elbow – a sparkling glass of a very fine wine.

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Bill McKittrick, my nominator

Our new president grew up with one of his predecessors

Bruce Boyer

Bill McKittrick was in my life ten years before I was born.

He and Carolyn were my parents’ oldest friends in Chicago. They met when Bill came up to Chicago to begin law school in 1936. He had just graduated from DePauw, where my father had also gone to school. They never knew each other in Greencastle because my father was five years older, so by the time Bill got here, my father was already practicing law. Bill had heard his name and looked him up. That’s how it started.

When Bill married Carolyn, my parents were the first people he introduced her to. She told me recently how pleased she was when they in turn introduced her around, she still being a shy girl from Nebraska. One of my earliest memories is visiting

however. My family lived in Evanston, where my father’s main social activities revolved around civic affairs. The McKittricks lived further up the North Shore and their activities gravitated toward the arts.

But what united the four of them was a love of music. For Bill, it began with playing the clarinet in the college marching band, not to mention a dance band. It further developed when he and my father ushered at Orchestra Hall in bachelor days (it was a way to hear concerts for free), and since my parents didn’t have children until 1941, the three of them saw lots of concerts together. Years later, when Bill became actively involved in what was his most beloved organization, the Chicago Symphony, he got my father on one of the governing boards. And every time I saw the McKittricks, it seemed that the conversation sooner or later turned to music. One event stood out more than any other, and I don’t know how many times Bill mentioned it. He would get a wistful smile on his face and say, “Hey, do you remember the time we all got tickets to see Maria Callas?” The four of them were there the night Lyric Opera of Chicago was inaugurated with a production of *Norma*, and I think it was for each of them the greatest musical evening they ever spent.

So when I walked into one of my first Caxton Club meetings and ran smack into Carolyn, how could I have been surprised? And I was delighted, proud and just plain pleased when Bill nominated me for membership. After all the years of intertwined lives, I was destined to join them here.

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McKittrick at his 93rd birthday party in 2008. (photo courtesy Jim Tomes)

the McKittricks in their townhouse on Cedar Street, long before the move to the North Shore.

The two couples weren’t peas in a pod,

What they're saying about Other People's Books

Comments from around the Web (and one in print)

I'm savoring it slowly, and it does not disappoint. I'm about 1/3 of the way through, trying not to devour all at once. Nearly all stories are new to me, and I actively seek this kind of stuff out. It also reminds me of what a pleasure it is to read from well considered typography on high quality paper.

—benjclark on [librarything.com](#)

In these fifty-two essays, there will be something of interest for any true bibliophile. Alice Schreyer writes about a copy of *Moby-Dick* that Melville signed to his Acushnet shipmate, Henry F. Hubbard, Mark Samuels Lasner muses on his "improved" copy of Max Beerbohm's *A Christmas Garland*, and Edward C. Hirschland offers us a look at the 1934 Lakeside Press booklet of Gertrude Stein's book inscriptions, inscribed by Stein (how utterly appropriate for the midwife of postmodernism).

The insightful and immensely readable narratives offer no dearth of delights. Paul T. Ruxin's essay on his extra special first edition of Samuel Johnson's *A Dictionary of the English Language* reads like a literary mystery in which he is the character sleuthing around and comparing eighteenth-century handwriting samples. Ruxin, who has been a collector for thirty-five years and a member of the Caxton Club for fifteen, said association copies offered him a "way to expand" the boundaries of his collection without changing course. He also said in an interview that he hopes *Other People's Books* will help others learn more about what association copies offer. "If you view books in a narrow sense – something to convey what's printed on its pages – then of course you don't need books at all. If you regard the book as something more than a vessel that contains printed text, then it takes you into a different realm."

In his essay, Stephen Enniss tells us the bittersweet tale of poet Ted Hughes' shabby Shakespeare in the Emory University collection. Hughes read and re-read his Complete Works, wooing Sylvia Plath with passages by heart. The volume, a 1923 reprint, is a "seemingly unremarkable book," according to Enniss, but, "It seemed an ideal book to demonstrate how a past association, and the lingering marks of ownership it contains, can elevate the ordinary into something quite special." The fact that this tattered volume could be considered a "prop in their later

domestic tragedy," as Enniss put it, presents superb evidence not only for its singular importance in studying Hughes, Plath, or British literary history, but for the importance of studying provenance and book ownership.

Mark Dimunation's revelatory essay, "Whitman and Thoreau Meet in Brooklyn," is something of a double essay, recounting how the two greats exchanged copies of their books and how they annotated them (Thoreau sparingly, Whitman lavishly). Whitman took the opportunity to document his meeting with Thoreau on the front flyleaf, writing, "We had two hours talk and walk – I liked him well... He was full of animation." The story of how the books met again on the shelves of the Library of Congress is bibliographically breathtaking.

The introduction by preeminent bibliography scholar G. Thomas Tanselle provides the kind of essay on these books that has been lacking, demolishing the idea that an interest in association copies is "ludicrous sentimentality" and expounding upon the notion that books are cultural artifacts that offer us a window to history. *Other People's Books* seems destined to be one of those books that astute bibliophiles will acquire for their collections, and those who do not will regret it years hence. With an edition of just one thousand copies, that's entirely plausible.

—Rebecca Rego Barry on the [Fine Books & Collections web site](#)

On March 19th, the Caxton Club of Chicago – a bibliophilic society of authors, binders, collectors, conservators, dealers, designers, editors, librarians, publishers, and scholars – will host a symposium at the Newberry Library devoted to the question of "other people's books." Under discussion will be what are known as "association copies" – those books that have been written in or marked upon by interesting or famous people...

In literary terms, this question of "association" is compelling: the jottings with which generations of notable readers have defaced the pages of their books – perhaps thereby incurring the wrath of generations of librarians – draw us into a reader's private conversation with their books. They also do much to illuminate the way books function in our lives. From a presentation copy inscribed by T.S. Eliot to his sister on the day of its

publication to an anthology of Hemingway's inscribed to his boxing coach (later a pallbearer at the author's funeral), association books have yet another layer of cultural value: that of social objects.

The Caxton Club symposium coincides with the release of an essay collection, "Other People's Books: Association Copies and the Stories They Tell." The essays trace the stories of fifty-two different books from one owner to the next, creating a narrative around each – as DeLillo did with the baseball in "Underworld" – bringing to life the community of characters that surrounds it. My favorite example: in a copy of Ben Hecht's "A Child of the Century," his wife, Rose Caylor, had drawn an arrow pointing to a place where the page had been burnt. "Strikes matches on books," she wrote below. Hecht, it seemed, liked to smoke while reading.

—Jenny Hendrix writing in "The Book Bench" blog on the [New Yorker web site](#)

Like many readers, Twain was engaged in marginalia, writing comments alongside passages and sometimes giving an author a piece of his mind. It is a rich literary pastime, sometimes regarded as a tool of literary archaeology, but it has an uncertain fate in a digitalized world.

"People will always find a way to annotate electronically," said G. Thomas Tanselle, a former vice president of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation and an adjunct professor of English at Columbia University. "But there is the question of how it is going to be preserved. And that is a problem now facing collections libraries."

These are the sorts of matters pondered by the Caxton Club, a literary group founded in 1895 by 15 Chicago bibliophiles. With the Newberry, it is sponsoring a symposium in March titled "Other People's Books: Association Copies and the Stories They Tell."

The symposium will feature a new volume of 52 essays about association copies – books once owned or annotated by the authors – and ruminations about how they enhance the reading experience. The essays touch on works that connect President Lincoln and Alexander Pope; Jane Austen and William Cowper; Walt Whitman and Henry David Thoreau.

—Dirk Johnson in the [New York Times](#), February 20, 2011

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Book and manuscript-related exhibitions: a selective list

Compiled by Robert McCamant

(Note: on occasion an exhibit may be delayed or extended; it is always wise to call in advance of a visit.)

Art Institute of Chicago, 111 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, 312-443-3600: "Avant-Garde Art in Everyday Life" (this moment in east-central European modernism is explored with nearly 300 works of photography, photomontage, and photographically illustrated posters and books), Galleries 182-184, opening June 11. "Caricatures from the World's Columbian Exposition" (over fifty caricatures by a number of artists who worked for the Exposition) Ryerson & Burnham Libraries (weekdays only), through July 4.

Chicago Botanic Garden, Lenhardt Library, 1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe, 847-835-8202: "Treasures of the Lenhardt Library", through August 7.

Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington Street, Chicago, 312-744-6630: "Sears at the Center: New Work by Donald Fels" (collages from historic Sears catalogs), through June 26. "Movie Mojo: Hand-Painted Posters from Ghana" (inspired by movies, created by a wide variety of artists), through September 4.

Harold Washington Library Center, 400 S. State Street, Chicago, 312-747-4300: "In Service to the Union: Civil War Artifacts" (items from swords to posters will be exhibited in cases at the Library and online), Special Collections Exhibit Hall, Ninth Floor, through July 17. "Alfred Appel on Classic Jazz" (the late Northwestern jazz expert on Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington and Fats Waller), Upright Case, Eighth Floor, through June 30.

DuSable Museum of African American History, 740 East 56th Place, Chicago, 773-947-0600: "Red, White, Blue & Black: A History of Blacks in the Armed Forces" (artifacts, objects, images, and documents from the Museum's permanent collection), continuing.

Lake Forest-Lake Bluff Historical Society, 361 E. Westminster Avenue, Lake Forest, 847-234-5253: "Uncanny, Unabridged, Unforgettable: 150 Years of Lake Forest" (honors Lake Forest's Sesquicentennial), through December 29.

Loyola University Museum of Art, 820 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, 312-915-7600: "After the Flood: Eklavya Prasad's Photographs of Life in North Bihar, India" through July 31.

Museum of Contemporary Art, 220 East Chicago Avenue, Chicago, 312-280-2660: "MCA DNA: Thomas Ruff" (early large-scale portraits of German citizens, studies of modernist architecture, digitally modified pornographic images), through June 19; "Pandora's Box: Joseph Cornell Unlocks the MCA Collection" (Cornell's work in dialogue with objects from the MCA's collection), opens June 18.

Newberry Library, 60 W. Walton Street, Chicago, 312-943-9090: "Exploration: The 25th Annual Juried Exhibition of the Chicago Calligraphy Collective" and "Calligraphic Purchase Prize Winners at the Newberry Library," both through June 25.

Northwestern University, Charles Deering Library, 1970 Campus Drive, Evanston, 847-491-7658: "Who is the journalist?" (using books and rare materials from the Library's collections to explore an array of journalistic identities and incarnations), main library, through September 2. "René Binet and Ernst Haeckel's Collaboration: Magical Naturalism and Architectural Ornament" (Binet had received the prestigious commission to design the principal gateway to the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1900 – which he did from coral structures as they had been elucidated by the German biologist Ernest Haeckel. Binet's work parallels the Art Nouveau style but is unique in its geometric developments taking off from Haeckel's studies of biological morphology), Special Collections through October 28.

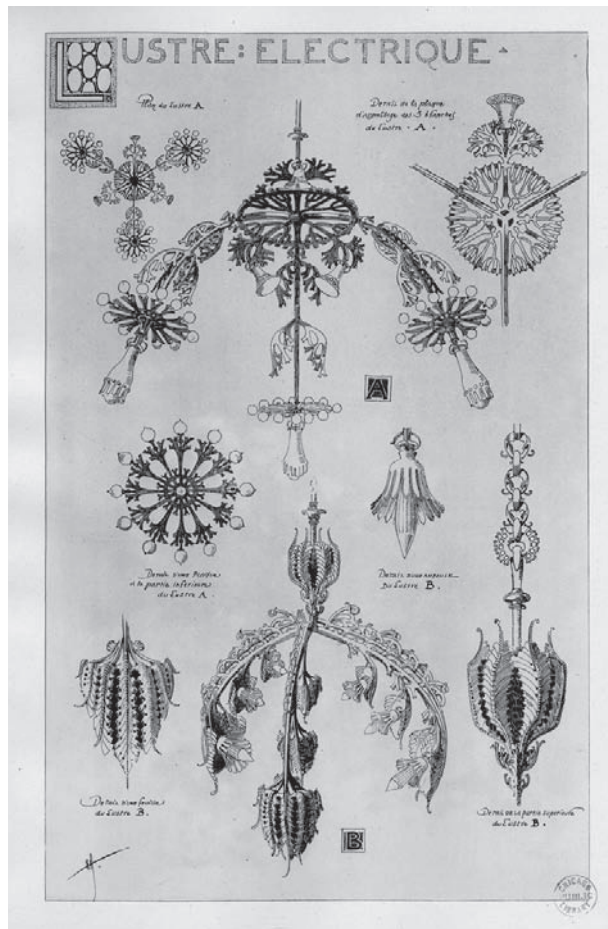
University of Chicago, Joseph Regenstein Library, 1100 East 57th Street, Chicago, 773-702-8705: "Firmness, Commodity, and Delight: Architecture in Special Collections" (drawing on a wide range of rare books, manuscripts, archives, and graphic materials elucidating the history of architectural practice, the exhibit celebrates the opening of the new Special Collections Research Center Exhibition Gallery and the completion of construction

of the Joe and Rika Mansueto Library), Special Collections Research Center Exhibition Gallery, May 9-July 29.

University of Illinois at Chicago, Richard Daley Library Special Collections, 801 S. Morgan St., Chicago, 312-996-2742: "Illustrated Architecture Books: Highlights from 500 Years of Theory and Practice" (rare illustrated books from the UIC Burnham and Hammond Collection, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and loans from the private library of Jeffrey Jahns.), Room 3-330, through June 30.

For complete information on events and exhibits of the Festival of the Architecture Book, see www.1511-2011.org.

Until a replacement exhibit editor is found, please send your listings to bmccamant@quarterfold.com, or call 312-329-1414 x 11.



Northwestern U Special Collections: Binet and Haeckel
RENÉ BINET'S ESQUISSES DECORATIVES (1902-3)

Caxtonians Collect: Jack Weiner

Interviewed by Robert McCamant

Googling “jack weiner spanish literature” brings a whole page of results, all of which have a connection to our member. There’s his CV, on line at Northern Illinois University. There’s a book written by one of his students. And there are several entries for his most famous book, *Mantillas in Muscovy*, which grew out of his doctoral thesis.

It all begins in Baltimore, where he grew up. He lauds the public schools he attended, including what was then called Baltimore City College Prep (they’ve changed the “Prep” to “High School,” but it’s still there as a magnet school). He had his first classes in Spanish and French there. He remembers getting to know many Latin Americans in his classes, some of whom were the offspring of diplomats and attachés who happened to live in Baltimore.

He’s sure that was what gave him the idea to request that he be assigned a Spanish-speaking roommate when he moved on to the University of Maryland in College Park in 1952. He had already decided that languages were an ability he could exploit.

He had no trouble making friends among the Spanish speakers at Maryland. “In 1952, a gringo who wanted to speak Spanish was like a man from another planet to them,” he explained. “They’d almost never met anyone who cared about their language and culture. My roommate and his friends just nurtured me.” Many were offspring of diplomatic visitors here, too. They had plenty of knowledge of their home culture.

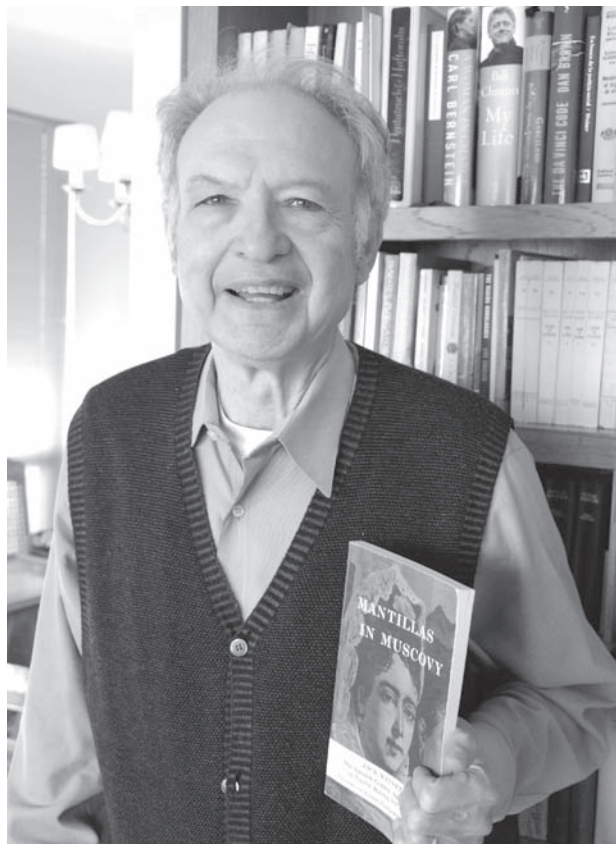
He majored in Spanish. Between his classes and his friends, “It was as if somebody took a funnel and poured Spanish into my brain.” Summers only increased his concentration. After freshman year, he took a Spanish immersion course at Middlebury College in Vermont. “They make you sign a pledge you won’t speak a word of English,” he laughed. “If you cheat, they throw you out!” The summers after sophomore and junior years he travelled the country as a translator for the State Department with visiting groups of specialists in various fields.

During senior year he was ready for another language, this time Russian. For senior year,

he lived as a boarder with a Russian family in Washington, DC. After senior year he took an immersion course at Middlebury in Russian.

He graduated from Maryland in June of 1956, and in August he received his draft notice.

The last thing that Weiner told me as I was leaving our interview was that “how your life turns out has a lot to do with luck.” What



happened in the Army was a very good example of that. He had fully expected to be shipped off to Korea. The war was over, but Americans were still serving there. He took 8 weeks of basic training, but halfway through the second 8 weeks of infantry training he was called into the personnel office, where a clerk “read me my assignment as if I were a block of wood: because of my height, weight, bearing, and general appearance, I was to be assigned to the Presidential Honor Guard at Fort Myer in Virginia.”

After a month or two of marching, his company officer suggested he should write for the base newspaper. But that only lasted a few months. He still had 14 months of service left, and somebody had noticed that he spoke Russian! He was quickly shipped off to Berlin. At first he was an MP, guarding borders between sectors, including some long ones

that had to be patrolled on horseback. Soon after, he was assigned to duty on passenger and freight trains which passed through East Germany on their way between Berlin and West Germany. A good Russian speaker was required because the border crossings were managed by Russian soldiers, and they frequently challenged the bills of lading, so there was negotiating to do.

“It was an intense job for a recent college graduate. I learned human skills I could never have learned in academia. And to top it off, between trips I got to wander all the sectors of Berlin, which had not yet been walled off.”

He mustered out into a new world: post-Sputnik and post-Castro. Suddenly the United States was pouring money into academia to catch up with the Russians and figure out our various neighbors to the South. An academic career, which had never seemed plausible before, might make sense. First Weiner took a Master’s in Spanish at Middlebury’s program in Madrid. When he studied the possibility of somehow combining Spanish and Russian for his PhD, one school turned up: the University of Indiana at Bloomington. As part of his thesis research he did a doctoral-student exchange in the Soviet Union. He explored the tremendous interest of the Russian elite in Spanish theater over the surprisingly long range of 1672 to 1917.

Dissertation completed, he landed a teaching job at the University of Kansas which lasted four years. From there, he moved to Northern Illinois University at DeKalb, where he taught from 1970 through 2000. His CV lists six books; all but the aforementioned *Mantillas in Muscovy* have been in Spanish.

In 2000, he and his wife Maria Amalia moved to Chicago. (She is a native Brazilian; they’ve been married 43 years and have one son, a financial analyst for Deutsche Bank.) His friend Peggy Sullivan, whom he had known at DeKalb – where she headed the library science program and was director of libraries – nominated him for the Caxton Club. Ed Quattrocchi seconded.

These days, he spends much of his time as a Scholar-in-Residence at the Newberry Library. One of the fruits of his study there was a presentation he made to the Caxton Club in

See JACK WEINER, page 8

Photograph by Robert McCamant



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Luncheon: Friday, June 10, 2011, Union League Club

John Metoyer

Blood Migration: A Most Amazing Book

Come and enjoy an illustrated presentation by one of America's most gifted photographic artists and poets. "John Metoyer is an extremely rare person, one who is a master of two different arts." – John Wood. Sought out by 21st Editions, a most prestigious publishing house that is said to be "walking in the footsteps of Stieglitz" (*Wall Street Journal*), John submitted photographic images and poetry, resulting in 60 hand-made copies of his first book, *Blood Migration 2008*, since purchased by the Getty, MOMA, the British Museum and 50 other institutions and collectors.

John exclusively uses the rich photographic techniques of a century ago, resulting in images that are haunting, magical, disturbing but fun, terrifying yet beautiful. His poetry has been described as grisly yet encompassing compassion and grandeur.

Currently John is Vice President of Harold Washington College while also Professor of Art and Professor of English.

The June luncheon will take place at the Union League Club, 65 W. Jackson Boulevard. Luncheon buffet (in the main dining room on six) opens at 11:30 am; program (in a different room, to be announced) 12:30-1:30. Luncheon is \$30. Details of the June dinner: it will take place at Cliff Dwellers, 200 S. Michigan, 22nd floor. Timing: spirits at 5:00, dinner at 6:00, program at 7:30. Dinner is \$48, drinks are \$5 to \$9. \$10 parking,

Dinner: Wednesday, June 15, 2011, Cliff Dwellers

Alan Fern

Typographic Characters: My Youthful Odyssey into the Typographic Arts

From his childhood and youth in Detroit to college and graduate school in Chicago to research in London and then to a distinguished career spanning forty years in Washington, Alan Fern has been surrounded by, and in love with, books, prints, photographs, paintings and the people who made them. During his Chicago years he got to know many members of the Caxton Club and the Society of Typographic Arts, and they became his guides, friends, and mentors. And through these Chicago friends, Mr. Fern became acquainted with some of the influential figures of 20th-century typography, including Stanley Morison, Beatrice Warde, Berthold Wolpe, Hans Schmoller, John Dreyfus, and Jan van Krimpen. In his presentation he will share his recollections of these people and a few others, show us examples of their work, and tell us what he learned from them.

Alan Fern taught at the University of Chicago from 1952 to 1961. He was associated with the Library of Congress for 21 years before leaving in 1982 to become director of the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, a job he held for 18 years until his retirement in 2000.

*after 4 pm, at the garage on the SE corner of Jackson & Wabash – enter just south of Potbelly on Wabash. For reservations call 312-255-3710 or use the Caxton web site; **reservations are needed by noon Tuesday for the Friday luncheon, and by noon Friday for the Wednesday dinner.***

JACK WEINER, from page 7

May of 2008, about the extraordinary Cuban bibliophile and philanthropist Oscar Benjamin Cintas.

Most Caxtonians should receive this issue around the first of June. But Weiner will not,

because he'll be in Spain. He expects to be there for two months. He'll do research on a topic that interests him, the Dukes of Villahermosa – who have their ancestral home in Pedrola in Aragon. They are of particular interest because Cervantes devotes more than

20 chapters to them in *Don Quixote*. A second pleasant duty in Spain will be giving a lecture at the Real Academia de Bellas Artes y Ciencias Historicas in Toledo, a group in which he has been a corresponding member since 1985.

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