

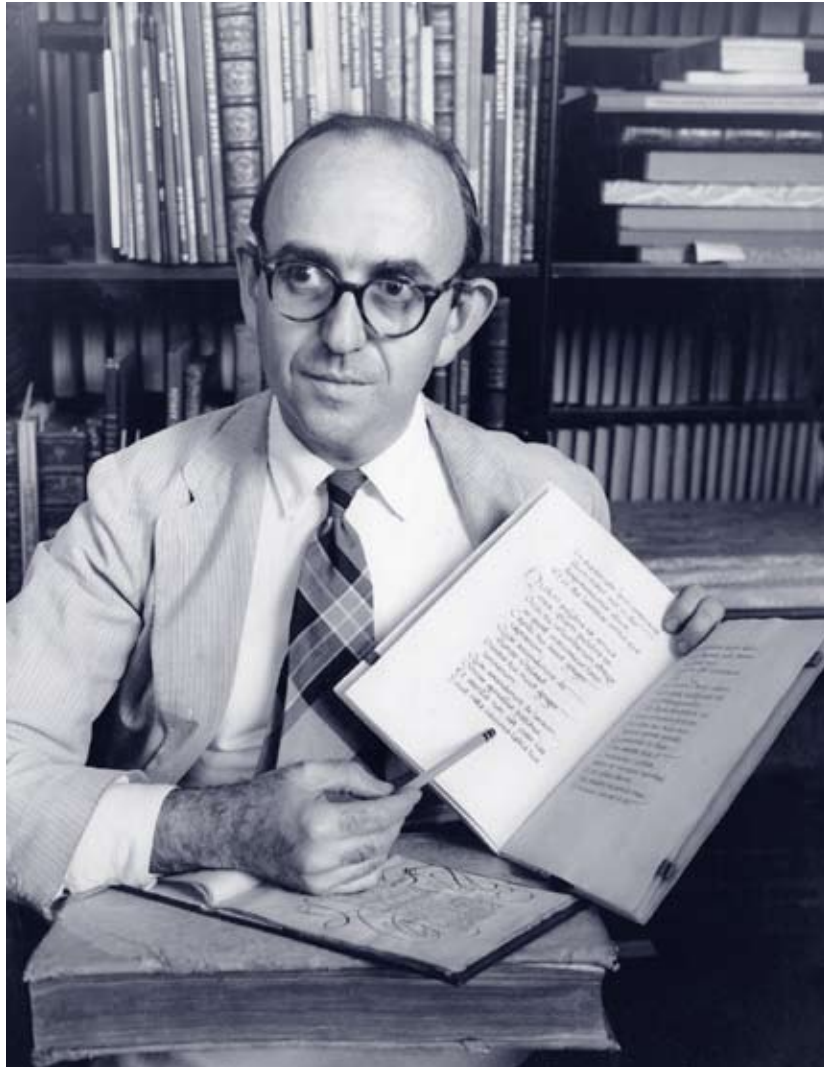
Chicago's Great 20th-Century Bookman

Remembering Jim Wells (November 4, 1917 – September 1, 2014)

Paul F. Gehl '88

This past Labor Day, Chicago and the world lost one of the great bookmen of the 20th century. James M. Wells '51, longtime curator at the Newberry Library, died that day at age 96. With his retirement from the Newberry in 1984, Jim Wells effectively retired from the book markets as well. As a result, it is not easy for those of us who knew him best in recent years to realize how significant a figure he cut in the American library world from 1951 to 1984, and especially in the postwar book markets where American libraries and private collectors played so large a role.

The Jim Wells we all knew spent his later years reading voraciously, visiting and corresponding with his contemporaries in the bibliophile and art worlds, and indulging enthusiastically in the social and cultural life of his adopted city. He rarely missed an opera at Lyric (and *never* at the Chicago Opera Theater), a concert at Orchestra Hall (he dismissed the neologism "Symphony Center"), or a significant play. He was particularly active at the Arts Club and in the friends groups of the University of Chicago Libraries and the Ryerson and Burnham Libraries of the Art Institute. He was volubly enthused when he discovered that the David and Alfred Smart Gallery had announced a mission to educate university students through museum research, for this seemed to him a great way of developing a humanities-attuned public. Well into his 80s, he continued a long-standing tradi-



tion of making a trip to Europe or beyond every other year; and later, when traveling alone became burdensome, he arranged to spend part of each winter with friends in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico. Jim Wells was always ready to give advice about books and book dealers when asked, but he was not an active rare book buyer himself these last 30 years. In his professional years he called himself a "vicarious collector," meaning one who collected for the use of others. Later he claimed he was "a reader not a collector," but

even then his shelves were loaded with new books on books, fiction by authors he admired, and new titles on history or current affairs. Each volume slowly absorbed the pungent smell of cigar smoke, especially those on the east wall of the living room above his favorite easy chair. Even today, I occasionally sniff a Wells book on the shelf at the Newberry.

Jim was active in the Caxton Club from the time he joined in 1951 through his service as President in 1968-69 and beyond. At various times he served on the Council and the Publications Committee. His books and papers at the Newberry include five volumes inscribed to him on occasions when he addressed the club. He and Newberry President and Librarian Lawrence W. "Bill" Towner (1921-1992) provided space and staff time to the Club for many years and set the scene

for the gift of its archives to the Newberry in 1995. Wells was elected honorary member in 1984 and was profiled in the *Caxtonian* in September 2007 after a lively and anecdote-filled interview with Bob McCamant '95. He remained a member until his death, so the *Caxtonian* seems the perfect place to record some of his professional and personal achievements at greater length.

Jim Wells did not set out to become a bookman or to work in a library. As he
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recounted it in a resumé of 1979, "I prepared to teach Victorian literature." Born and raised in Charleston, West Virginia, he was working toward that professional goal when he joined the U.S. Navy in 1942. He had graduated from Northwestern University in 1938 and took an MA in English at Columbia in 1939. He taught at West Virginia University and Columbia and he was well into PhD studies when the Navy called. At Columbia in 1940-41, he set to learning "Egyptian colloquial Arabic" (as he called it), hoping for service in North Africa. But as the war progressed, the Navy had a greater need for Japanese linguists, so they sent him to the Military Intelligence Service Language School (now the Defense Language Institute). Late in the war and in its immediate aftermath, he served in the Pacific.

After returning to Columbia in 1946, Jim embarked on dissertation research concerning the English fine press movement and spent most of 1949-1951 in London. He arrived in a city still struggling to recover from the destruction of the war and economic depression thereafter, and he witnessed the start of England's all-too-gradual return to prosperity. With immense energy, he studied the products and interviewed the survivors of the pre-war fine press movement, while immersing himself in the prides and privileges of the English academic world. His account of his several interviews with Sir Sydney Cockerell (1867-1962) in this period was hilarious; but I confess that I enjoyed it so much at the time, I did not take notes and cannot now remember the details.

The Anglophilia he developed in his London years stayed with Jim Wells for the rest of his life. He took pride in his bespoke Saville Row suits, loved North Sea salmon, and insisted on imported marmalades and shortbreads. He was always willing to advise younger colleagues on things to do in England, what to see and whom to meet. Some of his travel tips, however, were tricks of memory – not so useful. His hotel recommendations to me and others were for elegant, quiet inns well beyond our budgets; and the restaurants he recommended were almost always long out of business.

Jim Wells's career at the Newberry Library saw him in a number of key roles across 33 years: initially as a specialized curator; later supervising acquisitions, publications, and fund-raising with the title of Associate Director; and finally as Vice President and the first George Amos Poole III Curator of Rare Books. His initial title, however, one he retained until his retirement, was Custodian of the John M. Wing Foundation on the History of Printing. Established in 1919 under the terms of the will of a Chicago publisher, the Wing Foundation was

already one of the nation's premier collections on printing history and calligraphy when Wells came to Chicago. In the late 1940s, English printing historian Stanley Morison (1889-1967) and German typographer Konrad Bauer (1903-1970) had consulted with the Newberry on the future of the Wing collection. It was Morison who wrote to Librarian Stanley Pargellis (1898-1968) in 1950 saying he thought he had identified a sharp young American in London as a prospective curator. Wells was hired on a trial basis, arriving in September of 1951. As Jim later enjoyed telling it, his first year's salary was close to starvation wages so he needed help from his family to make ends meet; but he quickly took to the work, to the library, to the Chicago book world, and to the city's social circuits.

Wells's first task was to familiarize himself with the Wing collection, for which he had guidance from reports by Morison and Bauer. The will of donor John Mansir Wing (1843-1917) had specified "a great typographical library," and Morison envisioned a substantial and varied collection of printed and manuscript specimens to exemplify the dynamic relationship between calligraphy and type design in all historical periods. Bauer, moreover, urged that the collection "not be governed from an exclusively aesthetic point of view." It should instead "exemplify the real output of the printing press [and] the changing conditions and achievements of the trade in the course of time and in various countries." This was a broad mandate, so Jim Wells had much to contemplate. Discussing it with him in later years, I learned that he found the assignment exhilarating. He arranged for "the founding documents," as he called them, to be removed from the archives and cataloged; and he ever after considered them a touchstone for guiding the growth of the collection. When I assumed the Wing Custodian's title in 1986, he carefully avoided interfering with my self-education, but he pointed me in the direction of those "founding documents" and gave me a firm push.

Within months of arriving in Chicago, Jim Wells was purchasing splendid books; and by the middle of the decade he was making buying trips to Europe. In 1957 he reported buying 27 incunabula. Exhilarating indeed! In the depressed book markets of the 1950s and early 60s, he found plenty of opportunities to acquire wonderful books for the Newberry. He quickly built on the library's existing reputation for collecting calligraphica to acquire important manuscripts from the 16th to the 20th centuries. Following Morison's theories on the relation of script to type, Wells understood calligraphic manuscripts broadly to include a variety of textually significant books of interest to scholars for their intellectual content or social history contexts as well as for the history of handwriting. Thus, his "Wing MS" purchases included a homely but important theological

treatise by Baptista Mantuanus (1448-1516), a mid-16th-century dictionary of Dante's usage, Gregorian chant books, and examination pieces by scribes of the Bureau Académique d'Écriture (an accreditation office of sorts). Of course he also sought out elegantly illuminated alphabet books, books of hours, and calligraphic masterpieces.

In the calligraphy market, Wells immediately found himself competing with Philip Hofer (1898-1984), curator of the Printing and Graphic Arts Department that he founded at Harvard's Houghton Library. Both men went after Renaissance and baroque calligraphic books, and both sought out (and in some cases commissioned) works from important 20th-century calligraphers. For example, the Newberry already owned four printed copy-books and one manuscript by the eminent German Renaissance writing master Johann Neudörffer (1497-1563) and his son Johann the Younger (1543-1581); Jim was able to add two more manuscripts, making the Newberry the place to study this family enterprise. For the baroque period, one of Wells's early acquisitions was a splendid album attributed to the great Dutch writing master Jan van de Velde (1568-1623). More than Hofer, Wells was interested in 19th-century calligraphy, rightly judging that it was part of the tradition that led to the birth of the fine press movement. So he bought numerous examples of French and English scribes imitating medieval hands, including some unusual work by Henriette Midolle, daughter of a famous medieval revivalist. From modern calligraphers, he acquired beautiful pieces by Graily Hewitt (1864-1952), Anna Simons (1871-1951), Edward Johnston (1872-1944), Rudolf Koch (1876-1934), Jan van Krimpen (1892-1958), Raymond DaBoll (1892-1982), Alfred Fairbank (1895-1982), Fritz Kredel (1900-1973), Hermann Zapf (1918-), Donald Jackson (1938-), and Thomas Ingmire (1942-). Many of these figures, of course, were important in printing circles as well as calligraphic ones.

A Special Remembrance of Jim Wells

G. Thomas Tanselle '73

I first met Jim Wells in the spring of 1958, when I was spending every day going through the Floyd Dell papers at the Newberry in preparation for writing a dissertation. My desk was in the Rare Book Room stacks next to that of Amy Nyholm, the manuscript cataloger. The copious advice she offered me included the recommendation that I should become acquainted with Jim because, she said, he knew everyone and had many connections. I followed her suggestion (not my invariable custom) and have always been glad, for my conversations with him were indeed helpful and made me a more knowledgeable graduate student. I was already frequenting the Chicago bookshops, where I got a sense of how well known Jim was: whenever I mentioned the Newberry, the bookseller always responded with Jim's name. Later, when I visited shops all over this country and England, the same thing happened. For a long time Jim was the public face of the Newberry to much of the book world.

It was not until the summer of 1965, however, that I got to know him well, for at that time the Northwestern-Newberry Melville project started, and I found myself working nearly every day for three summers (1965-67) and one spring (1967) in the large room to the west of the Newberry lobby, where the project was installed (not to mention all the briefer times I was there in those and later years). I was therefore in a sense a Newberry colleague of Jim's and saw him most days during my periods of residence. We had many lunches together, often at Rickett's and sometimes in the company of Harry Hayford (director of the Melville project) and Rick Johnson, the Newberry staff member who was the official liaison between

the library and the project. Jim fully understood why the project needed multiple copies of all of Melville's first editions and later printings for textual collation and bibliographical study; without that support Rick would not have been able to assemble the wonderful collection that he did. One example of Jim's wide acquaintance and his kindness to me is connected with the Melville project. When in the summer of 1966 I wished to go to London to examine the archives of the Murray firm (the publisher of Melville's first two books), Jim wrote a letter introducing me to John Carter – who would, Jim said, be able to secure John Murray's permission. So he did, and everything went smoothly.

Jim was gregarious and greatly enjoyed gossipy conversations, especially those dealing with the book world or the Chicago social scene, in which he was active. But we also talked about serious matters, for as a bibliographer I respected his extensive knowledge of book history. I was not at all bothered by his habit of interrupting what the other person was saying and turning to a different, but usually related, topic; nor was I offended by the blunt questions that most people wouldn't have asked (such as "How much do you make?"). The sense of wry amusement that hovered about his conversation seemed to make it all right to say anything. I was not in touch with him during his final years: the last time I saw him was at the reception following the memorial service in Evanston for Harry Hayford in 2002, when he seemed the same as always. But the image I prefer to remember is of him sitting at the desk in his large and cluttered office, barely visible behind stacks of paper and with a plume of smoke rising from his ever-present cigar.

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The competition with Hofer was keen. In one exchange of letters now at the Houghton, Hofer jokingly complained that on his travels in the summer of 1959, the dealers in calligraphy all reported they had nothing to offer since "Mr. Wells of Chicago" had already visited. Jim's reply to Hofer was that there had been nothing really good to see; but he then goes on to report three purchases he did make, any one of which Hofer would surely have snapped up. A sense of cordial one-upmanship is palpable in these letters. Hofer was older than Wells by 20 years and had started building his personal collection

in the late 1920s. His own financial resources and those of Harvard meant that he could hope to match the holdings of the Newberry, which had a collection dating back to the late 19th century. Even today, the two collections are the best in North America for calligraphy understood historically. Of course, the number of unique items at each institution means that their collections are actually complementary not competitive, something Wells and Hofer understood would always be the case. So their rivalry was also a sort of collaboration. They both wanted to build truly great collections; See REMEMBERING JIM WELLS, page 4

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and together they built resources for North American scholars that still attract researchers from Europe, Australia, and Asia. Wells and Hofer also collaborated substantially on an important if short-lived series of facsimiles of early writing books, another way of accomplishing their shared vision of a well-documented history of calligraphy for American scholars. The degree to which this kind of research was important to both of them can be seen in another exchange of letters in 1959, in which they disagree about the order of printing of the various surviving copies of an early calligraphic manual, *La Operina* by Ludovico Arrighi (d. 1527).

Wells's acquisitions of printing and book history items were equally impressive, concentrating on books of typographic and design significance. There were important incunabula like the monumental 1460 Mainz *Catholicon*, but also business records from 15th-century stationers and printers; baroque festival books and emblem books, but also schoolbooks; printed ephemera like 141 invitations and announcements from the press of Giambattista Bodoni (1740-1813), but also humble specimens from 19th-century printers and typefounders; small archives of documents of French printing in the Enlightenment and Revolutionary periods along with sample works and the relevant type specimens; and, for the 20th century, the papers of American designer Will Ransom (1878-1955) and those of Count Harry Kessler (1868-1937), proprietor of the Weimar-based Cranach Presse. Jim's interest in 19th-century England led him to acquire broadly for printing of that period as well, everything from great and minor works of the English fine press movement to such unusual ephemera as a set of beautifully embossed and printed pass tickets to the 1821 coronation of George IV. Jim had a particular weakness for printed



Stanley Morison (left) with Jim Wells, ca. 1960.

advertising, so the collection he built has wonderful examples of Victorian handbills, lithographic business cards, cigar labels, watch papers, lottery puffs, even an album of French stencil-cutters' specimens and another of German goldbeaters' labels. He took pride as well in the Newberry's acquisitions (outside the Wing collection) of British, French, and Italian broadsides on literary, political, and religious subjects.

Jim Wells's history of the book, then, was considerably broader in scope than most collectors of his period envisioned. He was guided in this by such scholarly mentors as Stanley Morison and John Carter (1905-1975); designers and calligraphers like R. Hunter Middleton (1898-1985) and James Hayes (1907-1993); and book dealers like E. P. Goldschmidt (1888-1954), Hans P. Kraus (1907-1988), and Nico Israel (1919-2002). He embraced his rivalry with Philip Hofer as an opportunity to learn more about book illustration, Hofer's specialty. He also developed fruitful collaborative relationships with somewhat younger, highly expert contemporaries like Anthony Hobson (1921-2014), Andre Jammes (1927-), and Nicholas Barker (1932-).

Wells read widely, of course, and kept up with developments in book history well into retirement; but from the start he was interested in the research potential of everyday printing, ephemeral printing, and technical and advertising literature that was then not

much studied. I remember visiting him some years after his retirement and recounting how a young musicologist on fellowship was consulting a stereotype specimen book of theatrical cuts that Jim had bought a good 30 years before our conversation. He remembered the book immediately and said, "How great! A Philadelphia foundry selling cuts to riverboat entertainers, right? I couldn't imagine who, but I *knew* someone would want that book one day!" A similar buy for the future was an oddball copy of a 1510 printed book of hours that had been customized with an appendix containing the office of St. Francis written by hand onto vellum pages with printed borders. In this case, Wells was attracted to the unusual as well as the beautiful, and to the crossover between print and script. The book was largely a curiosity until it got monographic treatment in a 2012 issue of the Italian book history journal *La Bibliofilia*.

An oddity of the Newberry's collecting is that incunabula have always been considered the near-exclusive province of the printing curator while other Renaissance books have been looked after by a variety of curators – for music, for travel and discovery, for European and British history and literature, for Iberia and Latin America. This meant that right from his arrival at the Newberry, Wells worked with specialists in those fields and could learn from them, an

opportunity he eagerly embraced. Among the most important of these was the great historian of the Italian Renaissance, Hans Baron (1900-1988), who served as European history and literature bibliographer from 1948 to 1966. Baron bought widely in all fields of intellectual history, like Wells taking advantage of the good prices for European books in the postwar period and competing with other American librarians doing the same. The two men generally worked independently but conferred about purchases of incunabula; and the Newberry archives are full of marked up catalogs where both "HB" (in green pencil) and "JMW" (blue-black ink) ask the order librarians to urgently cable Paris or Munich or Milan to secure choice items. In later years, Wells supervised spending by other curators, who remember his wholehearted support for their enthusiasms. His approach (endorsed by Bill Towner) was to value and affirm

the expertise of others on staff while sharing his own liberally. About a year after John Tedeschi '65, an historian of the Inquisition, joined the staff, Wells reported with satisfaction that he had purchased a 15th-century volume on heresy, "in view of Mr. Tedeschi's scholarly concern with [the field]." In the 2007 *Caxtonian* interview Jim listed colleagues he most enjoyed, including Caxtonians David Stam '68 and Robert Karrow '88.

Jim earned his reputation as a bookman serving as curator of the Wing collection, but even as his specialized expertise grew, he mastered a larger and broader understanding of the collections of the Newberry Library. This, together with his willingness to collaborate and his good social skills, made it logical for him to move into supervising other acquisition activities in the 1960s and 1970s. In 1971 he chaired a Bibliographical Committee to evaluate the entire Newberry collection and to make recommendations for future acquisitions. He then authored a comprehensive collecting policy that was adopted in 1972.

The files on Newberry acquisitions of modern literary manuscripts are filled with evidence of his long friendships or timely interventions with collectors. In the former category is the remarkable collection of

A Jim Wells Reminiscence

Celia Hilliard '82

Jim Wells was a charming raconteur and relentless gossip, and from the day he arrived here in 1951, he was everybody's favorite dinner partner and prize house guest. How many Saturday mornings did he climb into a car bound for Lake Geneva, wearing khakis and a fishing hat, book under one arm, worn satchel in hand, and one of his little brown cigarettes, unlit, stuck between two fingers? He enjoyed a certain privileged window into the city, and for anyone pursuing the history of Chicago's cultural life in the 20th century, he always had a story for you.

Among Jim's earliest friends here were Colonel George T. Langhorne and his wife Mary, a handsome aristocratic couple who lived in a large apartment at 1120 Lake Shore Drive where Jim eventually bought a flat himself. The colonel had served with distinction in the Spanish-American War and subsequently assembled a large collection of books about the Philippines and Southeast Asia (now on the shelves of the Field

Museum library). The Langhorne's also had connections with major musical figures all over the globe, hosting such folk as Igor and Vera Stravinsky and the pianist Artur Rubenstein when they performed in Chicago. Mary Waller Langhorne was a cousin of Ellen Borden Carpenter, widow of the modernist composer John Alden Carpenter and mother-in-law of Illinois governor Adlai Stevenson. Notably, Ellen was a great devotee of Madame Blavatsky and her theories of karma and reincarnation. Jim told me that one of the first dinner parties he attended in Chicago was at the Langhorne's apartment, where he met Ellen who was also a guest. While the conversation around them proceeded in a genial manner, Jim said, "Ellen simply stared hard at me for a very long time. It got to be rather awkward." Finally she said to him quietly, "You have a very interesting aura." A few minutes later she added without explanation, "It is deep purple."

Jim had a very interesting aura indeed, in whatever hue. All of us who knew him reveled in it.

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Katherine Mansfield (1888-1923) materials assembled by Jane Warner Dick (1906-1997). Her husband Edison Dick (1901-1993) served on the Newberry board, but she and Jim Wells shared an early enthusiasm for the politics of Illinois governor Adlai Stevenson (1900-1965). By 1959 she was ready to donate her Mansfield manuscripts, letters, notebooks, and printed editions to the Newberry. She did not stop collecting, however, and an additional bequest of Mansfield material came to the library upon her death. Jim also enjoyed a decades-long friendship with Samuel and Marie-Louise Rosenthal. Sam's magnificent Officina Bodoni collection is now at the Newberry along with many other gifts.

Because he was interested in all sorts of literature, Jim involved himself in the acquisition of other collections of literary and artistic papers too. Stanley Pargellis had started the Newberry on collecting modern manuscripts in the 1940s, and Wells joined in with gusto. He was directly involved in the acquisition of papers of George Ade (1866-1944), Oliver Barrett (1873-1950), Malcolm Cowley (1898-1989), Carl Sandburg (1878-1967), and the Arts Club of Chicago. These efforts usually involved soliciting gifts actively. The 1967 annual report describes a shift in policy that Wells and Towner implemented. It is hard to

say which of them authored this passage, but it is clearly a sentiment they shared:

In recent years we have been blessed with a steadily increasing flow of gifts. Perhaps it is because we have become better known in the community; perhaps because we are more receptive than in the past (we no longer tell prospective donors that we have the book, thank you); or perhaps because we are following the Biblical precept, "Ask and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find..."

When I first entered the Newberry orbit in the late 1970s, great excitement centered on the arrival of the extensive papers of playwright Ben Hecht (1879-1964), the 1979 bequest of Rose Caylor Hecht. In the fall of 1980, Jim Wells presided smilingly over a major exhibition called "Ben Hecht, Child of the Century," inaugurated of course with a lively black-tie gala that included a talk by no less than Helen Hayes (1900-1993). I wasn't invited, but newbie volunteer that I was, I certainly enjoyed the buzz. (I joined the staff the following summer.)

For many years, Jim supervised the Newberry's publications, and this activity necessarily extended his interests and

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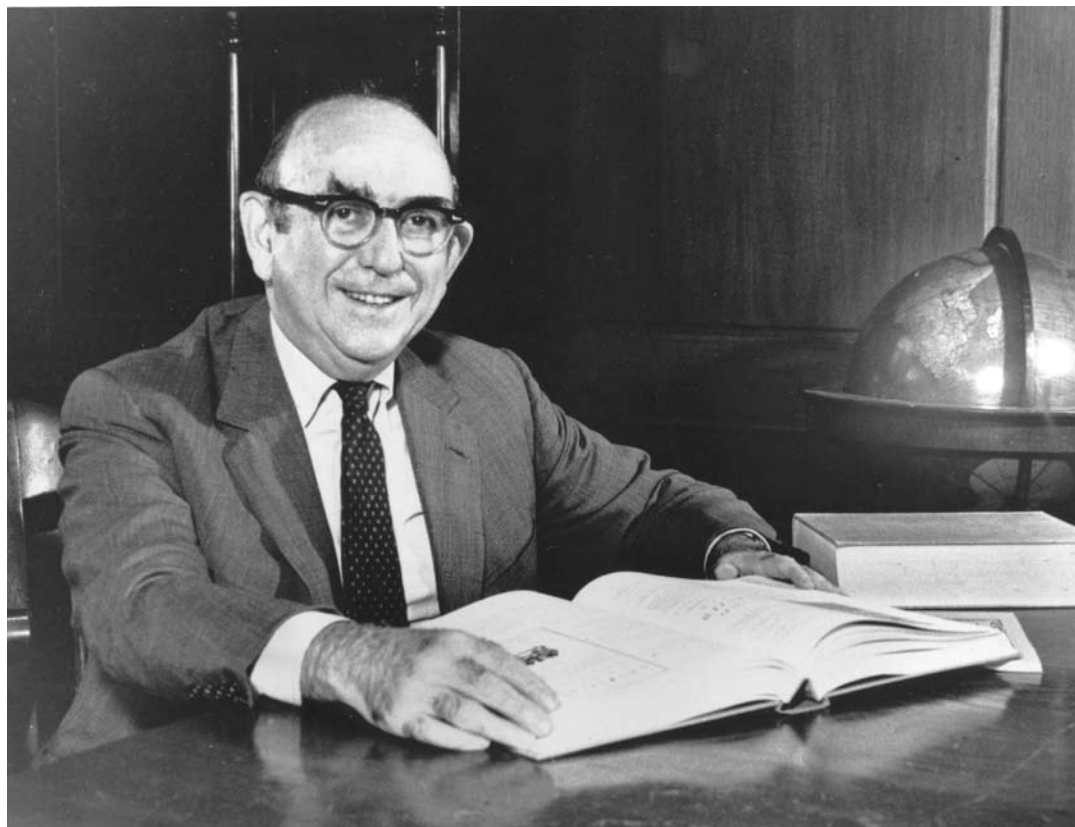
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expertise well beyond printing history. Bibliography or history in one form or another was often involved, of course, most notably in Wright Howe's *U.S.iana* (two editions, 1954 and 1962). Original sources, especially unique or very rare ones, were also an important part of the program Jim pursued, either in modern editions or in facsimile. The most ambitious of these projects – still not quite finished – is the Northwestern University/Newberry Library critical edition of the works of Herman Melville, which also involved an immense effort of collecting books on that author. Jim was also proud of the Newberry collaboration with Robert Hunter Middleton on an album of prints from woodblocks engraved by Thomas Bewick (1753-1828). Notably, these books all share understated design and carefully chosen, highly legible type – a clean, American look. The same sense of style – Jim's sense – characterized the Newberry's ephemeral printing in the 1960s and 70s: brochures, keepsakes, invitations.

I never heard Jim make the claim, but Ken Nebenzahl '55 credits him with another fine idea that has enriched the Newberry community over the years, the semi-annual "Kenneth Nebenzahl, Jr., Lectures in the History of Cartography." Inaugurated in 1966 in memory of Ken and Jossy Nebenzahl's son, the lectures made the Newberry a regular stop on the multi-year round of cartographic conferences, and have resulted in some 17 important volumes of scholarship on cartography and map collecting.

An important episode in Jim's Newberry career was the purchase of the Louis H. Silver Collection. Not only did it bring hundreds of important rare books to the Newberry, it also marked the beginning of Jim's major involvement in fund-raising. Silver was a trustee and a great collector of British and Continental literary first editions. After his death in 1963, the family agreed to sell the collection to the then rapidly expanding Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas. It was, everyone thought, a done deal. At a Chicago social event, however, Jim heard a second-hand report that in New York days before an authoritative source had remarked that the ink was not dry on the Silver contract. Jim imme-

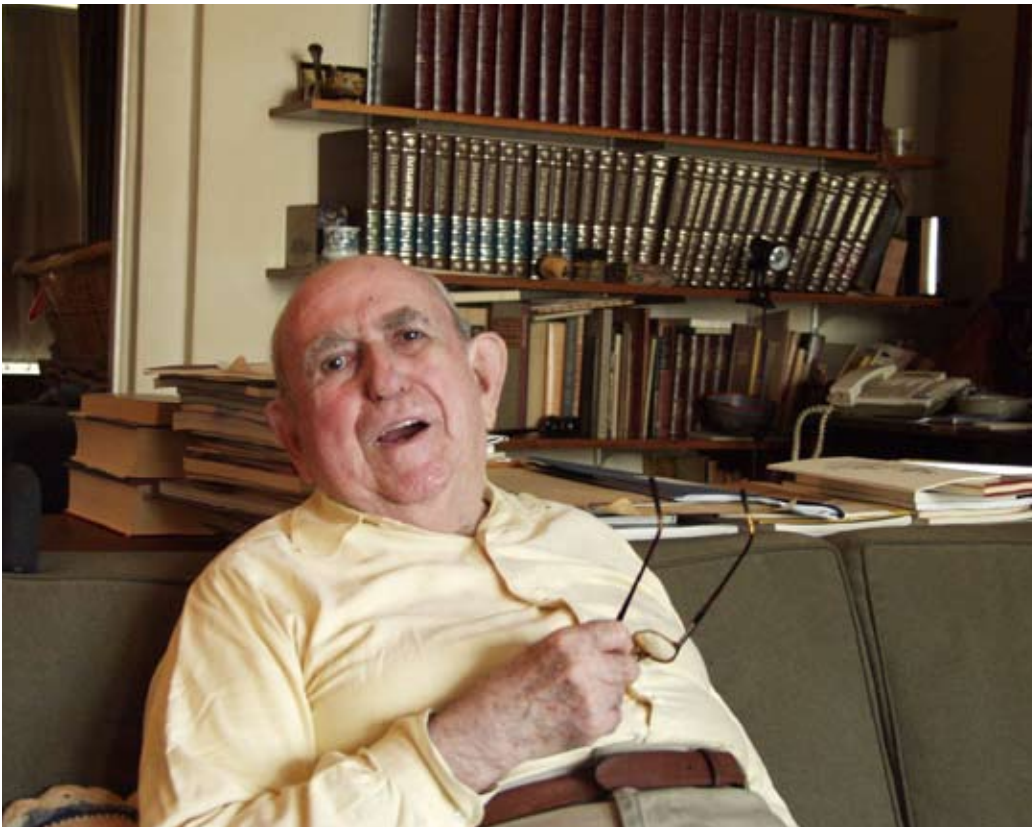


diately recounted this to Bill Towner and the two of them sprang into action to secure the collection for the Newberry instead. Towner was still new as President, but he boldly proposed that the trustees draw on endowment for the purchase; and Jim provided the enthusiasm and expertise to convince the board to do so and to mount the Newberry's first fund-raising campaign to replace the endowment.

Jim's fund-raising became increasingly important as the Newberry faced rising prices and limited endowment income in the 1970s. He absolutely loved the work. Bob Karrow remembers an occasion when Jim displayed a particularly broad, impish smile as he left the library on a social call, patting the wallet in the pocket of his jacket because he confidently expected to return with a big check. His work in this field was immensely facilitated by his native charm. Almost everyone who knew Jim at any stage in his life can attest to his sociability, which stemmed from a genuine interest in who people were and what they were about. Given his prodigious memory, moreover, you could be sure that he would recall some offhand remark you made many months or even years afterward. The subject could be as significant as a major book purchase or natural disaster or as minor as a twisted ankle, but Jim would solicitously ask after it. If your remark included an intelligent, prominent, witty, or attractive mutual acquaint-

tance, so much the better; he was sure to come back to *that* subject.

Jim Wells was a classic man-about-town. Mary Beth Beal '76 remembers him as a "collector of people as much as of books." Diana Haskell, longtime modern manuscript curator, adds that in Chicago social circles Jim was "Mr. Newberry," while among the diverse Newberry staff he seemed a perfect "Mr. North Side." As a necessary corollary, Jim was a great raconteur, someone who had stories about everyone and everything and who relished telling them. Almost every year while he was still working, we would ask Jim to lead the conversation at one of our Wednesday afternoon coffee hours, called Newberry Colloquia. We always asked for the same story, of how the Louis H. Silver Collection came to the Newberry. Jim's account of this coup was accompanied by a showing of the 1965 film of the sale at Sotheby's (narrated like a newsreel) where duplicates from the Silver collection were offered, everything from Shakespeare and Milton to Keats and Shelley, and on to Dickens and Whitman. There was even a manuscript of a play by George Bernard Shaw. Jim had been charged with determining if a given book or manuscript should be sold or retained; and his old London pal, Anthony Hobson, was at the Sotheby's podium, monocle firmly in place, while lot after lot set record prices. The Silver sale is sometimes said to have touched off the first wave of book-



Wells in the 1980s, LEFT, and in 2007.

price inflation after the postwar depression in the book markets. Whether true or not, the sale made for one of Jim's most enduring stories. Readers interested in the Silver story can get the larger picture and many more details from Bill Towner's account in his *Past Imperfect*, but the tale will never be as fun as when Jim recounted it.

The year after the Silver sale, the Newberry founded a library friends' group, originally intended to support major purchases. The Newberry Library Associates was Jim's special love child. It combined his unbounded enthusiasm for funding the collecting of the library with his zest for good fellowship and love of good parties. The Associates' annual gala was one of the hottest tickets in Chicago society circles in the late 60s and 70s, and many still remember the combination of good food, wine, and conversation with a learned (but brief) lecture, then music and dancing to follow. Most of these parties celebrated a major acquisition made with Associates' support and took their theme from that of the new materials. When the James Francis Driscoll collection of American sheet music (some 80,000 pieces) came to the Newberry in 1968, the party invitation reproduced the cover of "Captain E.G. Austin's Quick Step" (Boston, 1837). Wells and Towner put Associate Librarian Donald Krummel '62, a music

bibliographer of note, on the podium; but Jim wrote the invitation copy and made sure the party (under a tent in the backyard) included "an elegant basket supper, together with a sufficiency of pleasing beverages," and a concert by a brass band from Milwaukee.

Jim firmly believed in the value of library friends groups – at the Newberry and elsewhere – and almost always agreed to speak to them when invited. The Newberry Library Associates offered a way of solidifying relationships with existing donors and encouraging others to get involved in the Newberry community. Its early leaders were all good pals of Jim's or would soon become friends, and many were also active in the Caxton Club. Some of these Caxtonians went on to make significant donations of library materials from their own collections, most notably Roger Barrett '41, Rudy H. Ruggles '47 and Charles Hafner III '55. Another early Associates leader was Suzette Morton Davidson '74, the first woman to serve on the Newberry board and one of the first women to be elected to membership in the Caxton Club. Suzette Davidson's generosity to the Newberry was nurtured by her friendship with Jim Wells and Bill Towner, but it extended into my own tenure as Wing curator when her 1996 bequest allowed me to buy some of the most exciting artists' books I have added to the collection.

In Jim's day, she had established the Pocahontas Press Fund, which he devoted largely to French fine press books and bindings, an interest the two of them shared.

The nature of his work at the Newberry meant that Jim Wells never finished his dissertation. He simply did not have the sustained time off that project would have required; but he did a considerable amount of writing for publication over the years. His occasional pieces are always graceful and understated, full of useful information and without stylistic pretensions. He was fortunate to have been able in these assignments to write about some of his many professional collaborators and friends, which he could do affectionately, from within such relationships, though always avoiding inserting himself into the story. Thus, he ended his 1985 note on Robert Hunter Middleton with a simple warm phrase: "His work, like the man himself, is never flamboyant, and always good."

Wells' profile of Will Ransom makes for particularly good reading. It was based on the Ransom Papers, which Wells and Stanley Pargellis had secured for the Newberry and that Jim explored to fill out his understanding of a man he only met late in life. It remains a standard reference on the subject. Jim never knew Douglas C. McMurtrie (1888-1944) and his entry on him in the *Dictionary of American Biography* was compiled from secondary sources, but it reads like a personal remembrance. Indeed, a quirk of Jim's conversation that always made me start was that he would refer to people he never knew – his predecessor as Wing curator, Ernst F. Detterer (1888-1947), for example – by their first names. Other good profiles by Wells, worth rereading, are those of Bruce Rogers, James Hayes, and Stanley Morison.

For all his professional life Jim Wells was in demand for prefaces and forewords to other people's books. This sometimes onerous task is often solicited from people with posh titles like Jim's Wing curatorship; Jim invariably pulled off any such assignment he accepted with economy of expression and thematic aplomb. His thoughtful exhibit catalog essays – for the Newberry, of course, but also for the Arts Club, the Morton Arboretum, and the Library of Congress – are similarly concise. See *REMEMBERING JIM WELLS*, page 8

and readable; and they display the extraordinary range of his interests and competences. My personal favorites include: *The Circle of Knowledge: Encyclopaedias Past and Present*; *A Garden of Printers' Flowers*; and *Books Illustrated by Painters and Sculptors from 1900*.

Jim did manage several significant monographic articles during his working years. The most influential one was probably his essay on 19th- and 20th-century American typographic design. Kernels of the eventual essay are found in 1959 and 1963 essays in *The Times* of London, and in the history portion of the "Printing" entry in the 1963 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. An enlarged version focused on American singularity in design and printing. Entitled "Book Typography in the United States," it appeared first in Dutch in 1965, came out in the original English in 1966, and was then translated (from Dutch into German!) in 1969.

Jim got started on the theme of American (read: not-British) printing very early on in his Newberry career. An essay on "American Fine Book Production," surely inspired by Stanley Morison, appeared in *The Times Printing Supplement* in 1955. Although it echoes some of Morison's truculent views, the prose is pure Jim Wells:

An American writing on recent fine book production in the United States is faced with a difficult assignment. National pride tempts him to say that book design and production since the war have been steadily improving; candour forces him to admit that this is not true. A number of reasons may be assigned for the dearth of fine book-printing: ... the steadily increasing costs of materials and labor; ... the change in collecting fashion ... which has dealt harshly with the private press and the limited edition – to-day's sought-after book is apt to be the unsightly produce of an obscure and unskilled job-printer who happened to set up the first press in Wyoming or Arkansas; [and] the preference of those collectors who still seek handsome books for the illustration-dominated French *livre de luxe* over English and American work which strives to balance the claims of typography and illustration.

In a single run-on sentence, Wells bemoans the state of American commercial printing, pokes gentle fun at fanciers of rare Americana, and takes a serious dig at Francophile collectors like Philip Hofer. I can only surmise that Wells could be this candid because he

assumed most of his Chicago patrons and friends did not read *The Times*, while knowing for sure that Philip Hofer did.

A capstone piece of sorts, Wells' *American Printing: the Search for Self-Sufficiency* reprised the theme of American exceptionalism in design that he had first offered in the predecessors to "Book Typography." *American Printing* started out as three Sandars Lectures in Bibliography at Cambridge University in 1977, with the title "Two Hundred Years of American Printing, 1776-1976." A typescript copy is in the Newberry collection. Wells' Guggenheim Fellowship in 1979 was intended to allow him time to research an enlarged, definitive version. He probably envisioned a book. Instead he condensed them into the single 1984 Wiggins Lecture at the American Antiquarian Society. That version appeared in the 1984 AAS *Proceedings* and was reprinted as a handsome pamphlet in 1985.

One of the hardest things to measure in assessing a career in librarianship is how much library workers (at any level) influence the work of readers in their collections. Jim loved helping researchers and he remarked on more than one occasion that "the readers who cross one's path are not the least of one's joys." We know about many of these relationships because Jim so frequently commented upon them, not by claiming credit but by commending a younger scholar for producing something wonderful. In his case, we also have the

Caxton Club is on Facebook

The Caxton Club is now on Facebook.

The new page will be an online community dedicated to club news, as well as book- and book arts-related events, exhibits, and articles. For all Caxtonians who are on the Internet – and especially on Facebook – please "like" us, comment, and share our posts at <https://www.facebook.com/caxtonclubchicago>.

Please let us know what you are up to. We especially want to post the doings of Caxton Club members. If you are publishing a new book or article, participating in an exhibit, or giving a talk, tell us about it.

You can send information to: Lisa Pevtzow at lisa.pevtzow@sbcglobal.net or Alice Cameron at avdescam@gmail.com.

testimony of many prefaces and afterwords and many affectionate inscriptions. The most interesting of these concern subjects where Jim himself had undertaken research and then generously handed off his expert knowledge to others. James Hayes on *The Roman Letter*, Nicholas Barker on Renaissance calligraphy, and Alan G. Thomas (1911-1992) on English fine presses all expressed thanks to Jim both in print and on the flyleaves of presentation copies. Alan Fern, a Newberry fellow in the 1950s (later director of the National Portrait Gallery), wrote about many subjects of great interest to Wells as a researcher, among them the Eragny Press of Lucien Pissarro (1863-1944). In a recent e-mail to me, Alan writes: "[Jim] was a remarkable person, who was exceedingly generous to this young colleague and his new wife, and remained a close and good friend for many decades. We have many delightful memories of Jim, and rejoiced in his oddities, his love of gossip, and his wide ranging interests."

For his own part, I think Jim felt that his best publication was *The Scholar Printers*. It is one he mentioned in every self-description, resumé, and *curriculum vitae* I have seen, and it was popular enough to be reprinted by the University of Chicago Press two years after its initial appearance. It is the catalog of an exhibit Jim curated for the Chicago meeting of the Association of American University Presses in May 1964. The book's subject (the learned early printers whose work was beautiful and central to the progress of Renaissance humanism) was of cardinal importance to Jim, both in his professional life and to his personal sense of self. He wanted American publishers to see themselves as heirs to the scholarly achievements of the Renaissance, and, ever the printing historian, he wanted us all to take typography seriously.

I cannot leave off describing Jim's writings without mentioning his miniature essay on the Eric Gill alphabet stone at the Newberry, published by the Caxton Club in 1963 together with a beautiful facsimile of the carving executed by Black Box Collotype Studio here in Chicago. The Publications Committee proposed this to the membership (in prose that is recognizably Jim's): "The reproduction, done in full color and with utmost fidelity, is undoubtedly the finest display piece ever distributed to our membership. Suitably framed it will serve as a splendid adornment for the library of any Caxtonian." Jim signed the essay accompanying it. In just three paragraphs he gives a clear

Caxtonians Remember Jim Wells

Jim Wells loved to hear or pronounce a *bon mot* and to repeat a telling quotation. Below, a few friends and colleagues remember him in kind.

"[Jim Wells] was recognized throughout the United States and in Europe as a distinguished scholar and a learned, savvy bookman. He was deeply influential in shaping the history [of the Newberry Library] during the 1950s, 60s, and 70s." – David Spadafora '05

"During the [Lawrence W. "Bill"] Towner era it seemed not to matter how ambitious a scheme Bill would come up with for enriching the collections at the Newberry, Jim would enthusiastically back him up with the board while providing the necessary professional expertise." – Ken Nebenzahl '55

"My office was next to Jim's for many years.... He was always very supportive, never hesitated to approve a major purchase when I made a case for it, never interfered. He would always rush to find a pen or pencil so he could jot down his O.K." – John Tedeschi '65

"I remember Jim with great affection. When I timidly approached him and asked if the Newberry would be interested in my marbled paper collection, I will never forget his eager yes, yes, yes." – Norma Rubovits '94

"[At the Newberry] Jim so often saw to it that he was quietly behind the scenes when things just happened.... Clearly, the Newberry was his life,

and that came with a fierce mind and commitment to his ideals." – Don Krummel '62

"Mr. Wells ... would often come into the [Newberry staff] lounge to smoke a cigar and strike up conversations with the younger staff, which is how I got to know him. He was always very engaging, had entertaining stories to share, and was genuinely interested in our careers." – Cynthia H. Peters '82

"I remember Jim's sometimes caterpillar eyebrows. [Once] I offered him a copy of Joe D'Ambrosio's *Literary Figures*. Jim opined that the illustrations struck him as poster-like rather than book illustrations. He declined to buy. This is, of course, ironic in light of the subsequent interest he took in Joe's work." – Tom Joyce '82

"I got my Elizabeth type [a rare 1938 design by Elizabeth Friedlander for Bauer] because about thirty years ago Jim Wells heard that a printing business had it and they were getting rid of all their lead. So he called Bruce Beck who insisted that I take it. At the time I really didn't know why." – Caryl Seidenberg '00

"He was in so many ways the epitome of the old-fashioned bookman. He had an inexhaustible knowledge and a remarkable memory for every book that ever passed through his hands. He knew so many legendary figures [in the book world] and he had great stories about everybody." – Alice Schreyer '91

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Mary Beth Winn, and Daniel Sheerin, "Mixing Manuscript and Print: Franciscan Offices, Venetian Borders, and Kerver's 1510 Hours in Newberry Library Wing MS ZW 5351.1," *La Bibliofilia* 114 (2012), pp. 161-215.

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summary of Eric Gill's accomplishments, a history of how the stone came to Chicago and eventually to the Newberry, and a tribute to William Kittredge (1891-1945), a Caxtonian ('25) whom Wells never knew but presents as a friend to the Chicago book community.

This, frankly, is the Jim Wells most worth remembering, a friend to many people because he was really interested in them – even if he and they never met.

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Hannah Batsel, *Locust* (2013). Hand-painted tunnel book.

Caxton Club Grant Recipients 2014-15

Martha Chiplis

The Caxton Club Grant committee (Kathryn Tutkus, Eileen Madden, Jackie Vossler, Lisa Pvetzkow, Michael Thompson, and myself) met in October to choose grant recipients for the 2014-15 season. Five book-arts students and their proposals were judged to be worthy of funding. On October 15 the committee's choices were presented to the council and approved.

These grants, of up to \$2,500 each, have been awarded annually for more than ten years. They are open to graduate students in the midwest with the purpose of helping researchers, librarians, and book artists pursue projects in the fields of book arts, bibliography, the history of the book, library studies, and print culture studies.

This season's grant recipients are from Columbia College Chicago, the University of Iowa, and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Here is a description of their proposals:

HANNAH BATSEL

Columbia College, MFA Interdisciplinary Arts candidate, Book and Paper Program
University of Georgia, BFA Printmaking/Book Arts.

Ms. Batsel's proposal is a book entitled *Maneater*. It consists of four distinct but interrelated stories that fit inside each other like Russian nesting dolls. The four stories can be read individually, but when taken as a whole reveal the complex effects of greed and exploitation. The characters are: Lancaster, a wealthy retired businessman with a colonial past; Corbett, his butler; Pasha, a zoo tiger; and Ra-Kan, a mythical tiger. The layouts for the book are beautifully hand-painted in the style of adventure novel covers circa 1900. Each story is its own book, which contains another until the reader reaches the smallest of the four. "Maneater" will be screen-printed at Spudnik Press in an edition of 50, cloth-bound, and housed in a clamshell box.

MATT RUNKLE

University of Iowa, MFA (in progress) expected degree 2015
Mills College, MFA English Creative Writing, Fiction

Western Washington University, BA English Creative Writing, Fiction

Mr. Runkle's proposal is an artist's book titled *Catholics*. It will contain digitally-printed images, letterpress-printed type, and Bruce Rogers-inspired images built out of typographic ornaments. It will be casebound and produced in an edition of 25. *Catholics* will include digitally reproduced calligraphy, illustration, and collage, and will be printed and bound by the artist. The text for the book is made up of episodic memories, with tangential historic information linking back to the artist's family and friends. It begins with a story about Masons taking his father's parking spot in front of the Catholic cathedral on Sunday morning, and will combine fine press elements with zine sensibilities.



KEITH GRAHAM

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, MFA candidate in Printmaking
Carleton College, BA Studio Art

Mr. Graham's proposal is an artist's book with the working title *Vuelve, No Te Vayas* (Come Back, Don't Go). Graham's book is in the early conceptual, research stage. It will be a hand printed, illustrated memoir: a visually rich narrative in book form, mostly concerned with the artist's 2006 trip to Oaxaca, Mexico, during an election and a teachers' strike. Mr. Graham's family connection to Mexico may also become part of the book. The artist states, "I am a strong believer in artist's books... that bridge genres and create a connection..."

ABOVE LEFT *Candida Pagan, Make This Happen or Pass Away* (2012); RIGHT *Keith Graham, "Miner's Song"* (2012); BELOW *Radha Pandey, "Taxonomy"* (2014).

CANDIDA PAGAN

University of Iowa, MFA candidate in Book Arts

University of Iowa, BFA Studio Art, Graphic Design

Ms. Pagan is creating a body of work for her thesis, part of which will be a suite of broadsides with the current title "The Eccentricity is Zero." The broadsides will be printed in an edition of 25 and produced in collaboration with the poet Lauren Haldeman. Ms. Pagan has been providing the poet with prompts – terms, phrases, and images – from early scientific texts by Kepler, Copernicus, and others. Each poem and image in the suite of prints will be based on these early scientific texts. Part of the research for Ms. Pagan's project involves examining primary sources (*Astronomia Nova* is one example) housed at the University of Chicago Library. From the artist, "This is a contemporary book arts project... strongly informed by book history and biblio-



graphic study."

RADHA PANDEY

University of Iowa, MFA candidate in Book Arts

Srishti School of Art, Design and Technology, Bangalore, India, Professional Diploma

Ms. Pandey's proposal is a handmade book with the working title, *Botanica Amatoria: A Book of Botanical Anatomies of the Lotus, Hibiscus and Magnolia*. The artist states that it is a hybrid inspired by 16th-18th century European and American herbals – botanicals – and 16th century anatomical flap books, and will take the reader through three species of flowering plants. The artist's

personal history will be interspersed with factual information, composed in a Renaissance layout. The book will be hand-set and letterpress printed in an edition of 25: the deluxe edition will be printed on handmade paper, the standard edition on Hahnemuhle Biblio. The illustrations will be multiple-color reduction linoleum cuts. The deluxe edition will come with a set of movable prints, and will be bound in a paper case and housed in a clamshell box.

The 2014-15 Caxton Club grant recipients are invited to the November dinner to be recognized, and to meet and discuss their work informally with Caxton Club members.

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THIS PAGE **1** John McCarter, Chair of the Smithsonian's Board of Regents, speaks with George Leonard and Michael Thompson. **2** Norman Jung and Jackie Vossler speak with new member Robin Rider, who co-chaired the Club's recent symposium in Madison, Wisconsin. **3** New council member Josie Tomes shares a chuckle with Caxtonian editor Robert McCamant. **4** Wendy Posner and Peggy Barber. **5** The Smithsonian's Nancy Gwinn talks of the 20-library system she superintends. **6** McCarter with Gwinn. **7** Caxton President Susan Hanes with Gwinn under a fresco in the Union League's main lounge.

Caxton's Big Night

The Smithsonian's Nancy Gwinn draws a huge crowd to the September dinner



THIS PAGE **1** Bob Boyle and Tom Joyce share a confidence. **2** Paul Gehl, curator of rare books at the Newberry Library, introduced the night's featured speaker. **3** Peggy Sullivan and Nancy Gwinn. Photographs by David V. Kamba.

Book- and manuscript-related exhibitions: a selective list

Compiled by Lisa Pevtzow

(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: **"De ou par Rene Magritte: Art in Belgium, 1920-1975"** (exploring Magritte's culture milieu and the literary and cultural aspects of surrealism in Belgium), through November 10. **"What Did Renaissance Printmakers Make of Antiquity?"** (prints featuring Renaissance artists' attempts to understand ancient sculpture and re-create lost paintings), through November 13.

Chicago Botanic Garden, Lenhardt Library, 1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe, 847-835-8202: **"Ex Libris: Bookplates Through the Ages,"** through November 9. **"Succulents: Featuring Redoute's Masterpieces,"** November 14 to February 8, 2015.

Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clark Street, Chicago, 312-266-2077: **"Railroaders: Jack Delano's Homefront Photography"** (the federal Office of War Information assigned photographer Jack Delano to take pictures of the nation's railways during World War II), through June 10, 2015.

City of Chicago Expo 72, 72 E. Randolph Street, Chicago: **"Rolled, Stoned & Inked: 25 years of the Chicago Printmakers Collaborative"** (exhibit by Chicago's oldest printers collaborative), November 15 to February 28, 2015.

Columbia College Center for Book and Paper Arts, 1104 S. Wabash Avenue, Chicago, 312-269-6630: **"Papercuts: The Contemporary Art of Papercutting"** (more than 30 works in paper that range from narrative commentaries to structural abstractions and complex installations), through November 8.

DePaul University Museum, 935 W. Fullerton, Chicago, 773-325-7506: **"Ink, Paper, Politics: WPA-Era Printmaking from the Needles Collection"** (Depression-era prints of city life, labor and social injustice created with support from the Works Progress Administration--Federal Arts Project), through December 21.

Harold Washington Library Center, 400 S. State Street, Chicago, 312-747-4300: **"Love Me Forever! Oh! Oh! Oh!"** (cartoonist Jeremy Sorese explores ideas of getting married, both gay and straight), through March 8, 2015.

Newberry Library, 60 W. Walton Street, Chicago, 312-943-9090: **"Chicago, Europe, and the Great War"** (materials that tell the story of Chicago's many and varied connections to the conflict), through January 3, 2015. **"American Women Rebuilding France, 1917-1924"** (documents the work of hundreds of American women who volunteered in France during and after the war), through January 3, 2015.



Columbia College, Glass Curtain Gallery / Papercuts

MICHELLE FORSYTH, FOR MARCH 24, 1989, 2011, PAPER, WATERCOLOR, SCREEN PRINT AND COLORAID PAPER

Northwestern University Library, 1970 Campus Drive, Evanston, 847-491-7658: **"William Hogarth's Modern Moral Subjects: A Harlot's Progress and A Rake's Progress"** (prints from an 1822 edition), ongoing.

Pritzker Military Museum and Library, 104 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, 312-374-9333: **"SEAL The Unspoken Sacrifice"** (features photographs from Stephanie Freid-Perenchio's and Jennifer Walton's 2009 book and artifacts on loan from the Navy SEAL Museum), ongoing.

University of Chicago, Joseph Regenstein Library Special Collections Research Center Exhibition Gallery, 1100 E. 57th Street, Chicago, 773-702-8705: **"En Guerre: French Illustrators and World War I"** (an examination of World War I through the lens of French illustrated books, journals, and prints, many of which are drawn from the collection of exhibition curators Professor Neil Harris and Teri J. Edelstein and materials donated by them – both are longtime Club members), through January 2, 2015.

University of Illinois at Chicago, Richard J. Daley Library Special Collections, 801 S. Morgan, Chicago, 312-996-2742: **"Visualizing Uncle Tom's Cabin: Pictorial Interpretations of Harriet Beecher Stowe's Novel"** (examining how the characters and events have been represented through the years in various editions of the book, film stills and posters, and other popular culture artifacts), through April 30, 2015.

Send your listings to lisa.pevtzow@sbcglobal.net



Art Institute: Renaissance Printmakers
CORNELIS CORT. THE CALUMNY OF APPELES, 1572. PRINT AND DRAWING FUND AND STANLEY FIELD ENDOWMENT



University of Chicago: WWI Illustrators
CHARLOTTE SCHALLER. EN GUERRE! PARIS: BERGER-LEVRULT, [1914]. ON LOAN FROM A PRIVATE COLLECTION.

Caxtonians Collect: Doug Fitzgerald

Interviewed by Robert McCamant

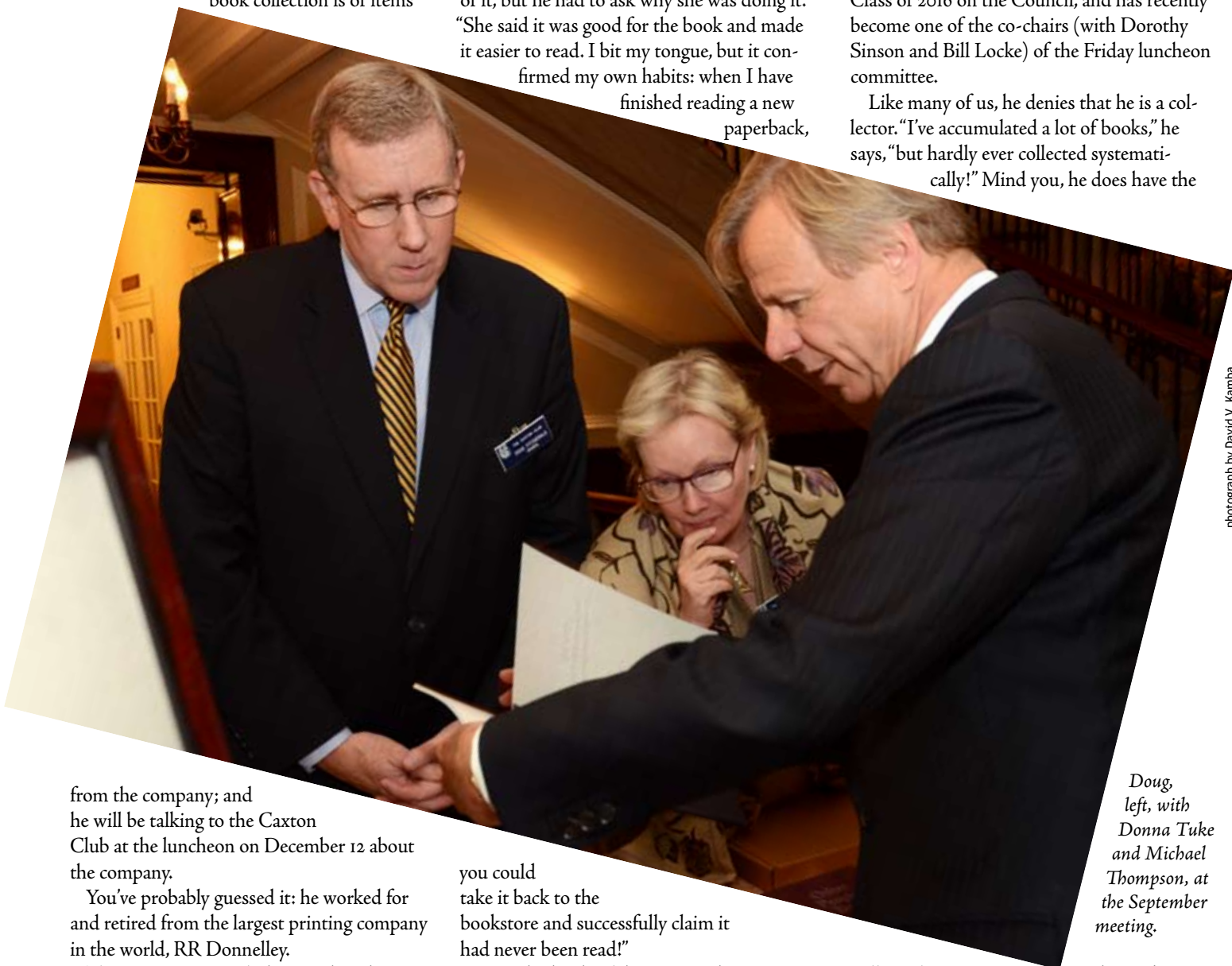
It would probably be safe to call Doug Fitzgerald a “company man.” He accumulated 37 years of service with one company (though there were three names involved over the years); the most carefully gathered part of his book collection is of items

school. He had his homeroom class in the library, where volunteers would sometimes help out. One of them was unpacking a fresh box of paperback books. “Every new book she took out, she’d unwrap it and then fold it back to break its spine! I was horrified.” He recognized the unlikelihood of talking her out of it, but he had to ask why she was doing it. “She said it was good for the book and made it easier to read. I bit my tongue, but it confirmed my own habits: when I have

finished reading a new paperback,

RR Donnelley. Doug made the transition and eventually became executive VP of communications. It was through RR Donnelley that he encountered the Caxton Club, in the persons of Susan Levy and Kim Coventry. Susan invited him to visit the Club, which he did with pleasure, joining it in 2010. He is in the Class of 2016 on the Council, and has recently become one of the co-chairs (with Dorothy Sinson and Bill Locke) of the Friday luncheon committee.

Like many of us, he denies that he is a collector. “I’ve accumulated a lot of books,” he says, “but hardly ever collected systematically!” Mind you, he does have the



photograph by David V. Kamba

Doug, left, with Donna Tuke and Michael Thompson, at the September meeting.

from the company; and he will be talking to the Caxton Club at the luncheon on December 12 about the company.

You’ve probably guessed it: he worked for and retired from the largest printing company in the world, RR Donnelley.

The story starts in Elmhurst, where his family lived when he was born. Shortly, they moved to Sterling, then a thriving town of 16,000, two and half hours west of Chicago on the banks of the Rock River. It had a steel mill and a couple of hardware manufacturers when he was growing up, so the schools were well-supported, and the town was a perfect place to be a kid. “You could get on your bike and be out in the country in 15 minutes,” he says.

He cited one specific memory from high

you could take it back to the bookstore and successfully claim it had never been read!”

From high school, he went to the University of Illinois, where he majored in business. In 1976, he got a job for Wallace Business Forms, in “vertical marketing.” “Actually,” he admits, “it was a sales job. The only vertical thing about it was that I was cold-calling in high-rise office buildings.” He soon moved into marketing, eventually becoming the marketing VP. In 2003, Wallace was acquired by Moore, with the resulting firm called Moore-Wallace. Just months later, Moore-Wallace was acquired by

collector’s gene He has more than 225 from colleges around the country – and a few from overseas – which for many years he kept meticulously inventoried with a spreadsheet. He also has a pen collection that seems to grow whenever his wife isn’t looking.

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Bookmarks...

**Luncheon: Fri., Nov. 14, 2014, Union League Club
Cathy Jean Maloney on
“World’s Fair Gardens, Shaping Our Landscapes”**

Join Cathy Jean Maloney – an award-winning author of horticultural history books, magazine editor, and frequent writer for national and regional newspapers and magazines – as she transports us through time and season to the stunning and influential gardens that were laid out for nine World’s Fairs. These remarkable landscapes forever changed America’s major urban green spaces and private backyards. November’s gray skies and chill temperatures grow bright and warm as Cathy Maloney tells – and illustrates – stories that include Frederick Law Olmsted’s lauded work at Chicago’s 1893 Columbian Exposition and the dream team of landscape artists who came together to create the outdoor spaces for the 1939 New York World’s Fair. Her fascinating and lavishly illustrated book that provides the underlying text, *World’s Fair Gardens*, was recognized with an American Horticultural Society National Book Award.

November luncheon: Union League Club, 65 W. Jackson Boulevard. Luncheon buffet (room 710) opens at 11:30 am; program (room 700) 12:30-1:30. Lunch is \$32. **Please reserve or cancel by Wednesday for Friday lunch. Reserved non-attendees will be billed.**

Beyond November...

DECEMBER LUNCHEON

On December 12, Caxtonian and RR Donnelley alumnus Doug Fitzgerald will celebrate the company’s 150th birthday with a talk about a Canadian/American success story and Donnelley’s relationship with the Caxton Club. Birthday cake, too!

DECEMBER DINNER

December 17 at the Newberry Library, our Annual Revels with silent auction will test your furtive bidding skills. There’s also a live auction conducted by Tom Joyce. Join your Caxton friends for spirits, dinner, and the fellowship of the season. Social hour begins at 5, and festivities end at 9:30. Reservations will be required.

JANUARY LUNCHEON

Take a person with a private press, a papermaking enterprise, a body of great book design, and a devilish wit. Add a speaker named Dempsey to tell his story, and you’ve got a knockout January luncheon. You’ll want to be ringside January 9 for this lavishly illustrated talk about the versatile Walter Hamady!

JANUARY DINNER

We’ll meet January 21 at the Union League Club for Paul Gehl of the Newberry Library on “Collecting Type on the Page: Americans Collect Printing History 1900-1950.” Changed order: drinks at 5, talk at 6, with dinner to follow.

**Dinner: Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2014, Union League Club
Michael F. Suarez on “The Print That Changed the World:
The Description of the Slave-Ship Brookes”**

Suarez investigates one of the first non-religious images to “go viral” in the Anglo-American world, of the slave-ship Brookes (London, 1789). In a richly illustrated talk, Suarez will trace the ship’s subsequent appearances in a remarkable array of printed forms. Seeking to understand the proliferation of this abolitionist image and the modification of its text over time, he will examine publications from England, the U.S., France, and Switzerland. Michael F. Suarez, S.J. is University Professor and Director of Rare Book School at the University of Virginia, where he also leads the Mellon Fellowship of Scholars in Critical Bibliography. He holds fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard. Additionally, he is the 2014-2015 J.R. Lyell Reader in Bibliography at Oxford University. His recent books include *The Oxford Companion to the Book* (2010, coedited with H.R. Woudhuysen), a million-word reference work. He is also an expert and author on Gerard Manley Hopkins. His new *The Book: A Global History* will be available for signing. Cost per book is \$30 at this special event.

In addition, 2015 Caxton Club grant recipients will be announced.

Union League Club, 65 West Jackson Boulevard, room 710. **This will be a reverse program.** Timing: spirits at 5, program at 6, dinner to follow. Reservations are essential to attend either the program only or the program and dinner. The program is free, dinner is \$48, drinks are \$5 to \$9. For reservations, call 312-255-3710 or email caxtonclub@newberry.org. **Please reserve no later than Friday, November 14.**