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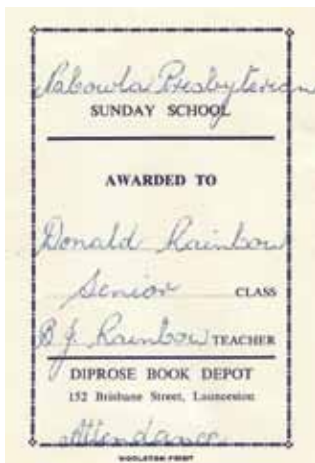
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**36th FISAE International Ex-Libris Congress, Vologda, Russia, August 2016**  
Impressions from Andrew Peake, Adelaide.

The FISAE Congress is held every two years: the last was in Tarragona, Spain, in 2014, and the next will be in 2018 in Prague, Czech Republic. This year the Congress was in Vologda, a small city, with a long history, in the north of Russia, some 460 kms north of Moscow and 640 kms south east of St Petersburg. Access is by train, of which there are many, as there is no local airport and the city is located at a key rail junction. Vologda has a population of about 310,000 and is the capital of the *oblast* or region. Many of the old buildings of the nineteenth and previous centuries managed to survive the Revolution and subsequent civil war, and most are now being restored and returned to their former use, for example as churches, a cathedral and monasteries. The city's historic centre is the Vologda Kremlin, on the banks of the river of the same name, and includes a large kremlin [ie fortress], with fortified walls, a church, bell tower and other buildings which were previously associated with the nearby St Sofia Cathedral. Close by were other orthodox churches and other old buildings, many made of timber.

There were about 200 attendees; probably less than the number who would normally attend a congress, and likely due to the cost and onerous questions that need to be supplied in obtaining

a Russian visa. I almost didn't get there, as the visa only arrived two days before my departure. There was a large contingent of over eighty attendees from China, 19 from Turkey and the balance from a total of 16 countries. I was the only Australian at the Congress, and also the only person from the southern hemisphere. Many of those I had expected to come from western Europe did not arrive.

The Congress was held in two main buildings. Registration was at Korbakov's House, an art gallery which had been given over to a bookplate exhibition, comprising the works of seven artists creating ex-libris of their interpretation of the 'Seven Deadly Sins'. However, most of the activity, as in all Congresses, was in the 'exchange hall' which was in another historic building, part of the Vologda Kremlin. Originally it was a church, but it is now an extensive two-storey exhibition hall. This held the entries to the World Exhibition Competition for the best ex-libris. Some 1500 were submitted and these were displayed by country and artist in 380 frames. It was disappointing to note that no works were submitted from Australia (compared to Argentina from where a number of artists had submitted their work) and there were only two artists from the United Kingdom. As would be expected from the attendance, many artists

**CONTENTS**

36th FISAE International Ex-Libris Congress, Vologda, Russia, August 2016 1  
A letter from Ballarat 2  
An American connection: Elizabeth Watson Diamond's personal bookplates 4  
ST Leigh & Co, bookplate printers 5  
An update on the Bookplate Design Award 2016 6  
Editorial 6



**Left: The exchange hall at the 36th FISAE Congress, Vologda**  
**Right: The author with his guide Olga at the 36th FISAE Congress, Vologda**

from Turkey and China had submitted their work. It would appear that this is where the future of ex-libris will be. Exchanging and commissioning of new ex-libris continued for the six days of the Congress.

The organising committee had arranged a full program of extra-curricular activities, for those who did not want to remain in the exchange hall. Perhaps the highlight was the all-day bus trip to the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery, some 120 kms to the north-east of Vologda, and the largest monastery in the north of Russia. The walls of the Monastery were two kilometres long and at the height of its influence it housed 750 monks and a population of 2500 people. They have been well restored and are still in the process of restoration. There were other trips on a motor-ship along the Vologda River (it was possible to travel by water to both the Baltic and the White Seas), to local museums, an ethnographical museum and other sights.

The organisers were fortunate in having not only the support of the City administration, but also that of the Oblast. Both put on official receptions, with entertainment and a buffet. The Mayor of Vologda presented to the current FISAE President, Sergey Ptukhin, a perpetual chain of office, to be handed on to successive Presidents. There are bars on the chain for the name, date and logo of successive congresses. The Vologda Art Gallery hosted all the exhibitions and becomes the recipient of the plates submitted for the various competitions and displays.

The Congress is the only time when delegates of FISAE get together as a General Assembly to discuss the promotion of ex-libris, admit new members to the Federation, award certificates and medals to pre-eminent individuals and also award the hosting of subsequent congresses. Due to the complexity of organising a congress this has to be done four years in advance. The Czech Republic had already been awarded the 2018 Congress and this was confirmed. The 2020 event was in contention with both England and Turkey seeking endorsement, and at the eleventh hour Bulgaria also threw their hat in the ring. It finally came down to a vote, and England won, largely because it had not held a congress since 1982

while Turkey had held one as recently as 2010. Bulgaria was not considered a serious candidate due to the late notice. The USA tried to get confirmation of San Francisco, California, as the site for the 2022 Congress on the grounds that it takes six years to make bookings of venues and hotels; however, the delegates were not prepared to plan that far ahead. The same applied to Shanghai, China, who wanted to host the 2024 Congress.

Another significant decision was the appointment of a new Executive Secretary. Bill Butler, an English-American, had been in the role for 30 years, but had decided that it was time to hand over to a younger individual. Once again there were two applicants and Olli Ylonen of Finland was elected to the position.

A draft document 'Guidelines for Commissioning and Exchanging Ex-Libris' was discussed at length at a delegates' meeting and at the General Assembly. The stumbling block was over the statement that an ex-libris 'is by definition not a work of art (and therefore the *droit de suite* does not apply to an ex-libris), but rather is intended to perform the utilitarian purpose of designating to whom a particular book belongs'. Russia in particular disputed this statement. However, it will have legal implications as many countries have implemented royalties to the artist when a work of art changes hand. The issue was deferred to the next General Assembly in two years' time.

A number of Awards and Certificates of Honour were awarded. These included Andrew Peake and Charles Stitz, both from Australia, who were awarded the Udo Ivask Memorial Medal for bookplate scholarship. A motion of recognition was passed regarding the long term contribution that Artur da Mota Miranda, of Portugal, had made to ex-libris scholarship over many decades, with the publication of 60 encyclopaedias — volume 23 of his third series, will be the last.

All in all it was a very successful Congress. It was marred only by the difficulty of getting a visa to enter Russia, although this was beyond the control of the organising association. As a consequence,

representation from Western Europe, and probably from other countries as well, was down compared to previous Congresses. The planning was good and the support from the Vologda City and Oblast and Art Gallery was greater than many other Congresses had enjoyed in the past and probably will in the future.

It now only remains to look forward to the Prague Congress, which will be held in the modern exhibition centre in Mánes from 28 August to 1 September 2018. Details will be found on their website [www.sspe.cz/](http://www.sspe.cz/) [and in a future issue of the *Newsletter*]. The 2020 Congress will be held in Churchill College, Cambridge (UK) over 12-16 August 2020. Intending delegates for the Cambridge Congress will get a 10% reduction in their Congress fees if they register online by 31 December 2016 and send a refundable deposit of £25. The website is [www.bookplatesociety.org/2020home.htm](http://www.bookplatesociety.org/2020home.htm)

## A letter from Ballarat

By Michael Taffe, Ballarat

I am primarily a book collector but somewhere along the way I became interested in the ephemera that relate to the books. So grew a collection of bookplates, premium plates, bookmarkers and bookstands and prospectuses. Some works have holograph inscriptions which I cannot pass by. As with other collectors the quest is never-ending as one is always looking to the creators and those who have left these legacies behind. They do mark the passing of a personality and tell us much about that person quite apart from what they tell us about the collections of which they have formed a part down the passage of years.

Armorial plates don't do a great deal for me; however, there are some wonderful woodcut armorials and some with great artistic merit. Whether or not they have artistic or purely utilitarian merit they all tell a story. I deal here with two utilitarian copperplate etched bookplates and a book of nude bookmarks with a telling inscription. First, two Armorials in my collection:

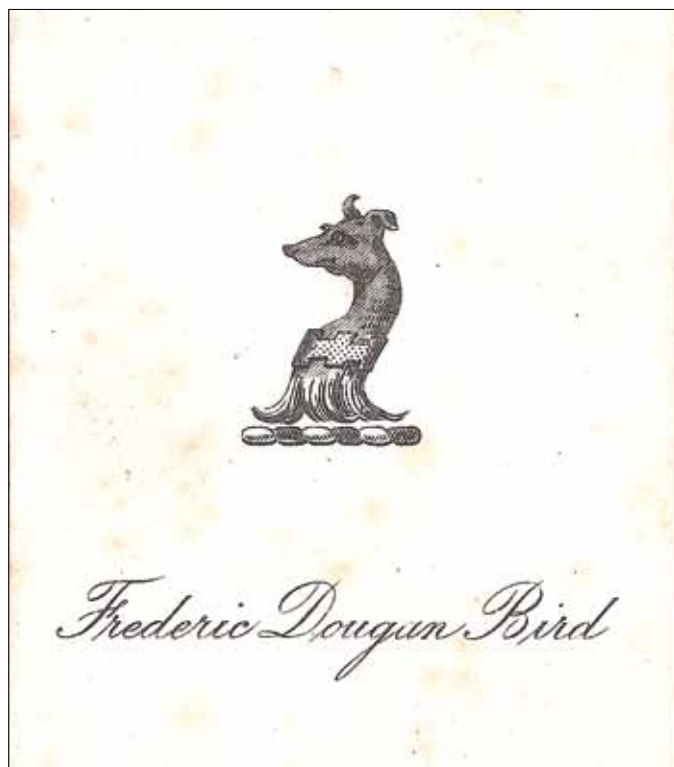
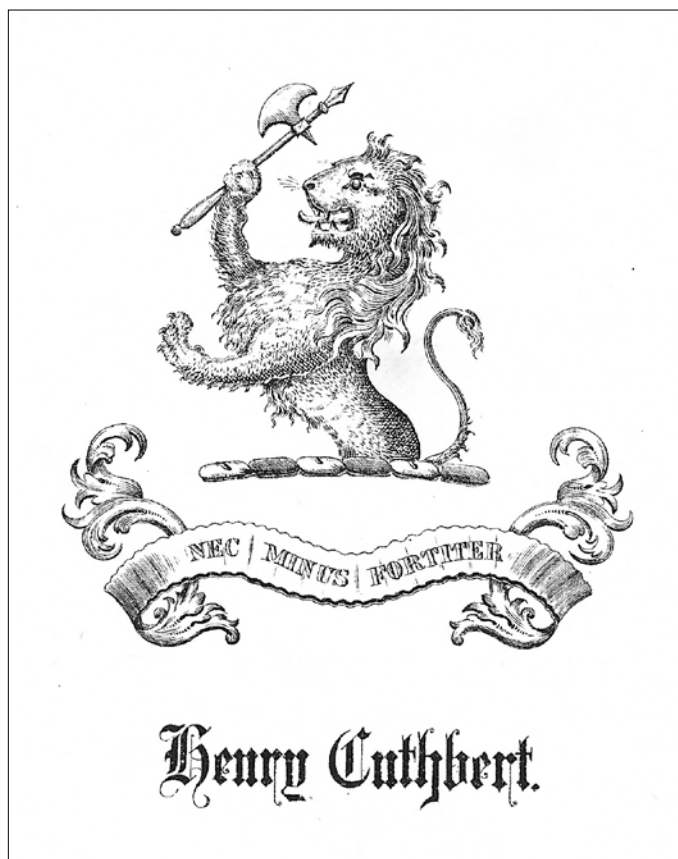
Frederick Dougan Bird

One segment of my book collection is of Shakespeare, and in April I mounted an exhibition at our local library to mark 400 years since the Bard's death. Given my interest in memorialisation and the Avenues of Honor to the Great War (the topic of my PhD thesis) one particular work exhibited was a marriage of interests. This was the 1905 Shakespeare Press edition of *Shakespeare's songs*, which came from the library of noted Melbourne doctor Frederic Dougan Bird and bears his armorial bookplate.

W D Upjohn's entry on Bird in the *Australian dictionary of biography* states in part:

*Bird volunteered for service with the Australian Imperial Force in 1914 and, bearing the cost of his own team of nurses and equipment, he accompanied the first contingent to Egypt. He soon transferred to the Royal Army Medical Corps and in February 1915 was appointed consulting surgeon to the British Forces in Egypt with the rank of lieutenant-colonel. He served at Gallipoli and in Macedonia; after appointment to the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, he was posted to Southern Command, England. He was three times mentioned in dispatches and for his part in the Gallipoli campaign was appointed C.B. [Companion of the Order of the Bath].*

All of this fails to do justice to his contribution to those brought onto the hospital ship off Gallipoli. Also one must ask, how many people would finance a medical team at their own expense? I can only hope that someone will one day open his life up to us more thoroughly as I imagine Australians could learn much from such a life.



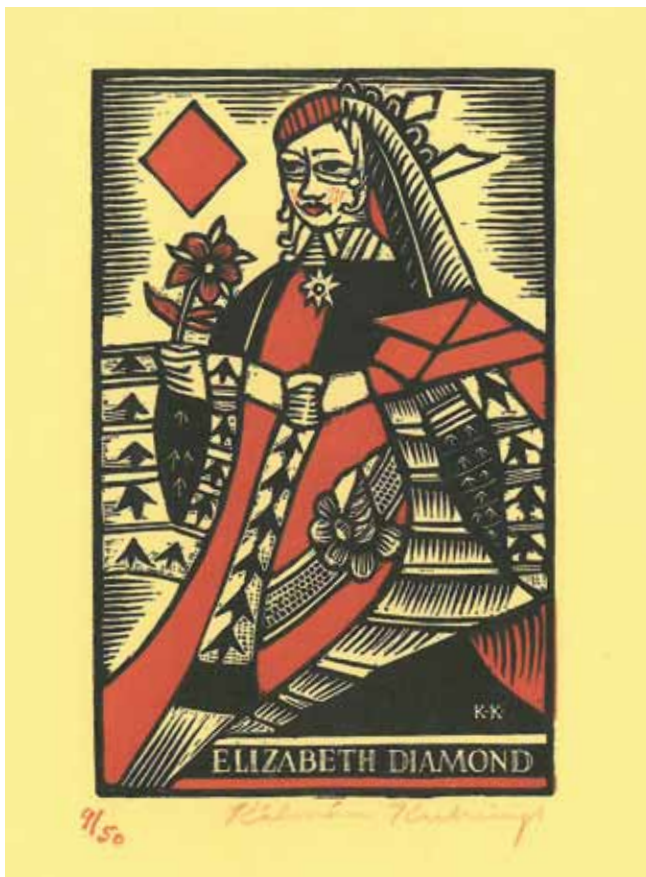
There are several encyclopaedia type references to Bird but none mentions his collection of books. Perhaps as he followed in his father's footsteps in medicine his collection would have been the norm for its day rather than being necessarily that of an avid bibliophile. As the Editor stated in the *Newsletter* of March 2016, 'Between the wars, owning a bookplate became almost a fashion accessory for the educated.' Interestingly Bird's bookplate is a simple crest which intrigues me given that his wife was interested in woodcuts.

Sir Henry Cuthbert

Another book collector represented in my collection is local MP Henry Cuthbert. Many years ago, as an undergraduate, I undertook a research project into his Ballarat home 'Beaufort House' which housed his library. Ethel 'Henry Handel' Richardson also lived for a time at 'Beaufort House' as the Richardsons were friends. Cuthbert appears as 'Enry Ocock' in Richardson's *The fortunes of Richard Mahony*.

I was attracted to the Cuthbert story as I was privileged to know Henry's great nephew and wife, Henry and Nellie Cuthbert of 'Glenholme', Ballarat. They still had many of his possessions including his books, together with the copper printing plate and unused prints of his bookplate.

With bookplate in mind I managed to purchase back his books on their behalf, books that had been dispersed over the years, and so they gathered in what they could of his library collection. Henry Cuthbert had been Postmaster General for Victoria and was involved in the Federal Conventions. He maintained a good parliamentarian's reference library although many of the works we recouped were of poetry and classical literature. Despite this, as a lawyer and politician, his library was a working tool and would probably not be able to be claimed as that of a bibliophile.



Linocut by Kalman Kubinyi (USA) for Elizabeth Diamond, c. 1930s



Wood engraving by Valentin Le Campion (USSR) for Elizabeth W Diamond, 1947

Norman Lindsay

Most ex-libris collectors are familiar with the work of the Lindsay family in this field, and like others I have a representative collection of their work. One of my many books of bookplates has no bookplate, however – it was once, be it ever so briefly, Norman Lindsay’s copy of Braungart’s *Neue deutsche Akt-Exlibris*. Norman gave his copy to his friend Harry Chaplin with the inscription, ‘I pass this to you because I don’t want it. I think most of the designs lousy. NL’

Norman certainly had a library reflecting his work and his artistic interests but it was still a practical tool.

My home town Ballarat has had many true bibliophiles such as W R Griffiths and R A Crouch whose bookplates I value in my collection. The three people I put before you here, all who had bookplates, represent Australians more broadly who made important contributions to this nation and who, whether politician, surgeon or artist/writer, are rarely categorised as bibliophiles.

### An American connection: Elizabeth Watson Diamond’s personal bookplates

By Christine Bell, Melbourne

Elizabeth Watson and her husband J Edouard (Jack) Diamond were American bookplate collectors in contact with a number of Australian fellow collectors. A small group of their personal bookplates and some correspondence recently came to light, and has been secured for eventual deposit within the international collections in the State Library of Victoria.

Elizabeth was born in Cleveland, Ohio in 1882, her husband nine years earlier in 1871. In the 1920s they began to commission personal bookplates, and around 1940 they set up a private press, the Hyacinth Press, publishing a number of bookplate related items using this imprint. From the late 1930s they were corresponding with Australian collectors including Harry Muir and John Gartner, and asking some Australian artists to make bookplates for them.

George D Perrottet’s plate for Elizabeth (1939) is quite simply drawn, and like a number of plates for these collectors, makes a visual pun on the family name. Perrottet had earlier made a plate for the Washington lawyer, Carlyle Baer (1934) the doyen of the American Society of Bookplate Collector and Designers. Perrottet’s plate for L O Cheever (1940) depicts Bligh and the Bounty, an interest he shared with George Mackaness. Cheever, Baer and Elizabeth Diamond are all listed as members of the Australian Bookplate Society in 1942. Adrian Feint made three plates for the Diamonds, the one for Elizabeth printed in two colours. Feint was already well-known in the United States through the 1930 exhibition of his work at the Library of Congress, and Elizabeth Diamond’s letter to John Gartner late in 1946 mentioned that he, V S Hewett, Adrian Feint and Allen Jordan had met for lunch some time before; this was just one of several newsy letters, most of which have now unfortunately been lost. This letter was also full of news about the activities of the Dutch post-war bookplate society, which had a membership of 700, through which she was able to effect ‘some splendid exchanges, but entirely too many poor ones ... I was also able

to pick up a few good portfolios of Holland artists', one of whom, Thijs Mauve, made a personal plate for her. Valentin Le Campion, a Russian born artist made four plates for the Diamond family. In 1946 he was living in France, and was in correspondence with Elizabeth. Like so many in post-war Europe, the Campions were in need of many things, including food and clothing, but the three large boxes which she packed up for them could not be posted: 'They need these things so very much, and now they cannot be sent because of the Hitler ... in our country' ( a reference to John L Lewis — a coalminers' union boss who had shut down the city and its postal service).

A letter to Harry Muir from July 1949 gives a lengthy and somewhat pithy view of certain artists and collectors, their eccentricities and generosity, or lack of it. She mentions the death of leading Victorian bookplate collector Robert Henderson Croll, and the correspondence she had from his widow Grace, including an *in memoriam* brochure prepared by the Bread and Cheese Club. Although Elizabeth's opinion (expressed in her letter to Muir) of the work of Dutch-Australian artist Theo Broekstra was less than kind, Gartner thought quite highly of his work, and acquired 105 examples in his second collection. Broekstra had emigrated from the Netherlands to Australia after the war and had settled in the La Trobe Valley in Victoria, where he eventually established a successful screen printing business.

Another of Elizabeth's Australian contacts was Jane Windeyer (1865-1950) whose bookplate collection is now in the Fisher Library at the University of Sydney. John Fletcher in his *The Jane Windeyer bookplate collection in the University of Sydney Library: a catalogue* (Sydney: BCSA, 1990) noted that Album 4 contained 105 pictorial 'North American and European plates bought from, exchanged or donated by Elizabeth Watson Diamond'.

Elizabeth Diamond seems to have detached herself from activities in the bookplate world by the middle of 1949: 'You will see that I still find considerable bookplate news coming to me: I find it interesting but that is all. Have not the

slightest desire to become so involved again'. Her personal plates are to be found on various internet sites, sometimes for sale and some just 'for Pinterest'. Elizabeth Watson Diamond died in 1963, ten years after her husband, and they share a grave marker in a lawn cemetery in Virginia. In 1943, she was described in *Newsletter no. 1* of the Australian Bookplate Club in the following glowing terms: '... a most delightful correspondent with an inexhaustible supply of bookplates by leading artists all over the world'. Having read what remains of her correspondence with fellow Australian collectors, and in view of this small but interesting collection of her personal plates, one can only agree with those words.

References are available from the Editor.

## S T Leigh & Co, bookplate printers

By Jürgen Wegner, Sydney

When people think of printers they usually think in terms of the corner print shop — the guy with a couple of photocopiers doing your local flyers or zines. But Australian printers of the past also used to include printeries whose size and complexity few of us can imagine today. The Government Printing Offices were more in the nature of bureaucratic empires than print shops! And in the late nineteenth century some of the more successful commercial printers were so profitable that they erected large multi-storied, purpose built premises which covered a city block and which employed an army of people — and not just printers.

The Sydney printing firm of S T Leigh & Co was one such printery. Some of the early history is unclear, however it was originally established in Melbourne in 1852 as De Gruchy and Marriott. Two years later Stephen Thomas Leigh became a partner, and by 1863 it had expanded up to Sydney where they printed the 'notes for the City Bank' — perhaps seizing a market opportunity and an early specialization into engraving?

In 1867 the De Gruchy & Leigh partnership had become so successful that

it was dissolved, with Leigh continuing the Sydney end as S T Leigh & Co. The company continued to prosper and diversify, moving into colour printing then packaging including that for tobacco products such as cigarette packets and cartons but also tins. They became a subsidiary of British Tobacco and in the mid-1950s this side of their business — tobacco packaging — moved back to Melbourne where they printed packaging for the cigarette brands Turf, Capstan Special Mild, Craven A and Ardath.

By the 1880s S T Leigh & Co would have been an important part of the Sydney trade scene with a reputation as 'engravers, lithographers, general printers & account book manufacturers', as they styled themselves. One of the few records we might have of the production of a printing house — assuming it was kept and ended up in a library collection — is the sample book. Such sample books are now some of the great treasures of Australia's long history of printing. The Mitchell Library holds the S T Leigh & Co sample book *Specimens of engraving* dating from this period. Inside the front cover is the presentation bookplate — a fine example of an individual 'one-off' letterpress label set in *art deco* type: 'Presented to the Mitchell Library by S T Leigh & Co Ltd, Raleigh Park, Kensington, 1930'. Its twenty eight leaves display over 160 specimens of engraved printing: predominantly prestige and security printing such as cheques, share certificates and bank notes, but also including illustrated billheads, business cards and pre-printed forms, receipts and labels.

But where there were printers and engravers there would also have been the facility to produce bookplates as these at the time



Typographic presentation bookplate by S T Leigh and Co to the Mitchell Library, 1930



A leaf from S T Leigh and Co *Specimens of engraving* showing standard bookplate designs, 1880s

would have been predominantly engraved work. I think this is perhaps something of a neglected area of investigation — printers records (such as sample books) as well as printers archives and what they can tell us about the history — and especially the early history — of bookplate production in Australia.

*Specimens of engraving*, for example, reproduces seven bookplates probably from the 1870s and early 1880s:

T Kingsmill Abbott. Motto:

*Vincit pericula virtus* (specimen no. 10);

Stratford. Motto:

*Segnitie inimica gloria* (no. 160);

[Blank dummy]. Motto:

*Deus solamen.* (no. 163);

Alexander Mackellar. Motto:

*Perseverando.* (no. 165);

George Eldred. Motto:

*Nunc aut nunquam.* (no. 161);

[Blank dummy]. [No motto — ribbon is blank]. (no. 164);

Alexander Busby. Motto:

*Fidus in arduis.* (no. 166).

Unfortunately, these are typical of bookplates for the period — dull — at least when it comes to graphic design. They are all armorial bookplates typical of the period. A particular feature of this sample book is that the specimens have each added in pencil and code their price (but not the quantity for that price and so the price for engraving the block). Someone with a liking for puzzles could perhaps work out how much you would have been paying for your bookplate artwork in Sydney in 1880.

References available from the Editor.

## An update on the Bookplate Design Award 2016

In July I wrote to the art, design and typography course contacts in the listing prepared by Bronwyn Vost, and received many positive replies. A pleasant surprise was that Gordon TAFE at Geelong (Vic.) indicated that one of their usual assignments in the Design Course was to make a bookplate. The Award was publicised in the July e-newsletter of the Print Council of Australia, where we hoped it would be seen by coordinators for the courses whose students we are aiming at. By the closing date of 30 September (plus or minus a few days), we received over 140 designs from exactly 100 entrants. The opening of the Bookplate Design Award 2016 exhibition and prize announcement will take place at the Art Gallery of New South Wales Research Library on Wednesday 26 October. A full report will appear in the December *Newsletter*.

## Editorial

My apologies for again falling behind in preparation of this issue of the *Newsletter*, as much time — but indeed pleasurable — has been spent in preparing, with the assistance of a dedicated organising committee, the Society's Bookplate Design Award 2016. My Editorial burden has, however, been made much lighter by four fascinating contributions — Andrew Peake reports on the 36th FISAE Congress in Russia, Michael Taffe on some bookplates of Ballarat interest, Christine Bell on a newly discovered cache reflecting further Australian-US bookplate connections and Jürgen Wegner unearths an 1880s printer's sample book with examples of engraved armorial bookplates. My thanks go to all, and I wish all members a good read! **MF**

