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The Society's 10th Annual General Meeting

The Tenth Annual General Meeting of the Society was held on the evening of Wednesday 12 July in the very congenial and bookish surroundings of the rooms of Sydney Rare Book Auctions, Annandale (Sydney), courtesy of proprietor and member Paul Feain. Following drinks and nibbles, the meeting got into stride with the President's roundup of the year's highlights: the *Newsletter* continues as the Society's flagship activity and attracts positive comments from many readers; Jürgen Wegner, Grant Stone, Caren Florance, David Skegg (NZ) and Andrew Peake were thanked for contributing items, and Mary Keep for her superlative design and Siung Tan of Sydney Design and Print for his attention to high printing standards; a 2nd supplement was published during the year in the form of the Index to issues 21-40 and bookplate chronology (prompted by a suggestion by Jürgen Wegner).

In celebrating the Society's 10th anniversary, the Bookplate Design Award 2016 for tertiary art and design students appeared to be a great success, attracting over 140 entries from 100 students; it was felt that this number would have been greater if the Society's website had not crashed during the key period when prospective applicants were being directed to it; the Award could not have gone ahead without members' generous contributions of prize money, the work of the organising committee or the willingness of the Art Gallery of New South Wales Research Library (and Steven Miller the head librarian) to host the exhibition. The only disappointment was that the Society had not managed to gain any interest in the media release.

The Society's website requires more attention and time to put into it needs to be found; on the other hand, the Society's Facebook page was

launched during the year and seemed to have some followers. Finally, the President observed that other bookplate activities had occurred around the country, notably the bookplate competition and exhibition conducted for its members by Megalo Studio + Gallery, Canberra, in June.

Following this, the financial statement for the 2016 calendar year was tabled and it was noted that the Society ended the year with approximately \$2000 in the bank, with the major expenses being the Bookplate Design Award (covered by member donations) and the *Newsletter*; those generous members who made a donation in addition to their

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Eirene Mort: a livelihood

Exhibition at Canberra Museum and Gallery, from 29 September 2017 to 25 February 2018.

This exhibition focuses on Mort's key place in art and design in the early years of the new Australian nation and her artistic partnership with companion Nora Weston.

Bronwyn Vost reports: The exhibition includes two large display cases of bookplates, one with Eirene's characteristically superbly designed and humorous plates, and one with designs by her contemporaries in the Australian Ex Libris Society (Perrottet, Feint etc). There are also some preliminary sketches by Mort for plates, including one for Florence Sulman.



Monica Oppen demonstrating repair of the fragile paper of a bookplate

subscription were thanked. Current office bearers re-nominated and were re-elected by unanimous vote: President/Hon. Treasurer, Mark Ferson; Vice President, Ronald Cardwell; and Hon. Secretary, Bronwyn Vost. IN determining the committee for 2017, current members agreed to continue and this was confirmed unanimously by those present: Publications designer, Mary Keep; and committee member – Nick Ingleton.

An extensive and valuable discussion was had on the perennial issue of promoting the Society. Many excellent suggestions were

thrown around by those present including repeating the Design Award in 2018 (subject to donations of prize money and organising time, but it was thought that it would be easier to organise a second time); conducting the competition in regional galleries; making contact with further printmaking groups or workshops; using members living in regional areas to promote the Society in local communities; including ‘freebies’ in the *Newsletter*; Paul offered to promote the Society to his extensive client mailing list; having a presence at the conference of bookbinders to be held in Sydney in October 2019; encouraging members to exchange bookplates and to commission a bookplate which they could then exchange.

After formal Society business concluded, member, book artist, binder and printmaker Monica Oppen conducted a fascinating demonstration of archival techniques she employed for the repair of fragile paper items including precious books and bookplates. Those present asked questions and made many comments reflecting their wide experience and interest in the care and preservation of both books and bookplates.

Provenance from Rare Books & Special Collections, Barr Smith Library, The University of Adelaide.

By Marie Larsen, Adelaide

In 2016, I curated an exhibition about mapping books containing provenance found in the collection. The exhibition

‘Have Book, Will Travel: mapping provenance in Rare Books & Special Collections’ identified books containing either bookplates or inscriptions which included references to where the owner lived, these locations were then marked on a virtual map, enabling us to visually observe just how far many of the books in our collections had travelled. The exhibition was both physical and virtual. The physical portion comprised display cabinets broken down into geographical locations with examples of books which could be traced to each location, along with stories related to either the owners or interesting information about the book itself. It also featured a brief overview of provenance, along with examples of different types of provenance and examples of where provenance had been removed. The virtual portion was a custom-made Google map, featuring books with traceable location provenance found during the course of the project, along with bibliographical information and photographs. You can learn more about the exhibition and provenance mapping project on our website at goo.gl/2edTjp or on our blog at goo.gl/wAisGS

The Barr Smith Library has a long history of donations and bequests. Many of these books, along with a significant portion of the University of Adelaide’s foundation collection, now form the core of Rare Books & Special Collections. Many of these generous donations come with a rich source of provenance and book history. While much of the collection has been built on the donations of prominent South Australians such as Sir Samuel Way and Christine Margaret MacGregor, the project had the great benefit of helping us find and record many previously undiscovered former owners and their bookplates. It also prompted further research into the bookplates we had, allowing us to discover many previously unidentified gems in our collections. Many of these lesser known bookplates have fascinating stories, not only of the journeys of the books themselves, but of their former owners.

Miss **Floy Angel Nan Symon** (1896-1976) was born in Adelaide and educated privately first in North Adelaide, and then



Society members at the 10th Annual General Meeting (l-r): R Cardwell, M Oppen, N Ingleton, B Vost, M Ferson, P Feain, J Hattersley, R Hattersley, R Brown, M Keep.

in England. After returning to Australia she began working as a secretary and publicity officer for Allan Wilkie's performing company, and later had several walk-on roles in his productions between 1920 and 1923 and again from 1925 to 1926. Angel was an avid lover of the theatre and travelled extensively, visiting many European theatres, operas and concerts, as well as attending lectures on costume design. She amassed a significant personal library containing programmes, books and ephemera collected during her travels. After her death, her theatre collection, containing over 6,000 books and journals and 20,000 theatre programs, was bequeathed to the Barr Smith Library. The bookplate features a quote from the original text of Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*: 'Words, words, words' along with her initials.

Clement Semmler (1914-2000) was a University of Adelaide graduate, author and manager of the Australian Broadcasting Commission. He served as a cadet librarian at the Barr Smith Library from 1932 to 1934 while he was studying. Semmler recounted several stories from his time working at the library in his autobiography *Pictures on the Margin: memoirs* (University of Queensland Press, 1991).

Semmler had many interests, building personal libraries of both James Joyce materials, and jazz. In the early 1980s he contacted then Librarian, Ira Raymond about leaving his collection of Joyce material to the Barr Smith Library after his death, with the request that the collection remain together. All of these books are now held as part of the Rare Book Collection. In 1996 Semmler also arranged to leave his collection of jazz books to the Library, the majority of which are housed in the Elder Music Library. The linocut bookplates have two colour variations – red and black.

One of the more fruitful bookplate finds in the collection was a book by W D Pitcairn titled *Two years among the savages of New Guinea* (London: Ward & Downey, 1891), and added to the Barr Smith Library's collections in 2013. The book contains four bookplates, three of which belonged to the same person, **William Hesketh Lever, 1st Viscount Leverhulme** (1851-1925) with

the fourth belonging to Adelaide's first Lord Mayor, **Charles Richmond John Glover** (1870-1936).

Lever was a soap magnate, founding Lever Brothers (now Unilever), manufacturers of Sunlight and Lifebuoy soaps among many other products. He was knighted on 6 July 1911. In 1917 he was appointed High Sheriff of Lancashire and made Baron Leverhulme of Bolton-le-Moors, and in 1922 elevated to the title of Viscount Leverhulme of the Western Isles in 1922. Each of his bookplates reflects his latest elevation: the first dated c. 1888 after his purchase of Thornton Manor in Thornton Hough, Cheshire; the second on receiving his knighthood in 1911, and the last after he became Baron of Bolton-le-Moors in 1917.

In 1902 Lever became the first initiate of a Freemason lodge named after him in Port Sunlight, later becoming Worshipful Master in 1907.

Charles Glover was originally a pharmaceutical chemist who worked with pharmaceutical manufacturer F H Faulding & Co. He joined the Adelaide City Council in 1906, then served as an Alderman from 1909 until he was appointed Mayor in 1919. He later served again from 1923 to 25 and 1930 to 1933, after which he retired. It is likely that Glover and Lever would have met through the Freemasons as Glover was also a Freemason and visited England several times between 1891 and 1933. Glover's bookplate is undated.

Sir John Martin-Harvey (1863-1944) was an English stage-actor and theatre manager who performed for many years with Sir Henry Irving's Lyceum Theatre Company. Joining the company in 1882 he continued to perform after Sir Irving's death in 1905, using his former manager's plays and many of his props. *The Life of Edmund Kean* (London: E Moxon, 1835) contains the bookplate as well as the inscription *Martin Harvey from J Kendrick Pyne Oct. 31st 1916. My father's favourite book (Ed Kean being a great friend of his father – my grandfather). No one else than M Harvey should have had it. But after the wonderful performance of Hamlet in 1915 at Manchester – nothing could have been too good for him. JKP*



Bookplate for Floy Angel Symon
Below: Pen and ink design by K G for
Sir John Martin-Harvey, 1923



A second inscription states that Dr Kendrick Pyne was 'the celebrated organist of Manchester Cathedral'.

Another book from the collection of Sir John Martin-Harvey also contains the bookplate of **Henry Irving** (1838-1905) and is inscribed 'Henry Irving – with the affectionate regards of Thomas P Foster. London 1895.' Both books were included in Miss Angel Symon's Theatre Collection.

George Dalziel (1815-1902) and **Edward Dalziel** (1817-1905) were British brothers who founded in 1839 a firm of engravers, known as the Brothers Dalziel. They were highly prominent wood-engravers, working with some of the most important artists



Above: Pen and ink design by Henry Stacy Marks for W H Lever, c. 1888

Left: Linocut for Clement Semmler

Below: Wood engraving for Edward Dalziel

of the Victorian age, and produced engravings for magazines such as *Punch* and the *Illustrated London News* and books such as Lewis Carroll's *Alice in wonderland* and *Through the looking glass*.

Special Collections holds eight Dalziel Brothers books, all of which appear to have been given to other members of the Dalziel family by the brothers. Each book contains their bookplate (in either black or blue), along with a holograph letter addressed to the brothers from the poets and writers they commissioned to contribute to these beautiful books. The books were all donated to the Barr Smith Library by Sir Samuel Way; it is most likely he purchased them all as part of an estate sale.

More bookplates from Rare Books & Special Collections can be found in our online Provenance Archive: Bookplates from books held in Rare Books and Special Collections at goo.gl/zrc8Tk The Provenance Archive is added to regularly and we aim to make more improvements to it in 2018.



Joining the Netherlands Bookplate Collectors Society

By Christine Bell, Melbourne

As a novice in the art of bookplate collecting, and following in John Gartner's footsteps, I began to join some overseas collectors' societies in 2013. There were few research sources available in hard copy, but in a collection purchased in 2010 there were a number of yearbooks and smaller publications issued by the German, Belgian and British societies which contained information not available on the internet, and so I joined all three.

One of the benefits of joining such organisations is the welcome which is extended and then supplemented by the gift of some bookplates. Because I do not collect myself, I pass all gifts onto the State Library of Victoria for inclusion in the John Gartner collection. These international bookplates originally came to the Library in 2001 through the Cultural Gifts Program, and now number about 47,000 examples. In May this year I joined the Netherlands organisation, Exlibris Wereld, and received two gifts, one from the society's secretary, Jan van Koolwijk, and the other from his own collection. The examples from the society itself were by Dutch artists, including Pam Rueter and Wim Zwiers, two artists whose bookplates were collected in depth by Gartner over the years, but which had been sold to a private collector prior to the 2001 gift to the library. Both worked in etching, although both were probably better known for their wood engravings. A wood-engraved satirical print called the Collector, by Lou Strik, was also part of this gift, with an overlay (in Dutch) explaining the significance of each figure. When translated into English, the descriptions were not flattering –perhaps reflecting Strik's experience that relations between artist and commissioning collector are not always easy or friendly.

Jan van Koolwijk's own plates included four by Pixie O'Harris for members of the Corrigan family. The Library already had a complete collection of personal plates for members of the family, so these examples were added to the Australian artist series. Some occasional graphics and bookplates by Pam Rueter were also included in Koolwijk's gift, as were three etchings by Wim Zwiers.

The final two works from van Koolwijk were by eastern European artists, a wood engraving for W A Marks by Peter Lazarov, and a mixed etching-lithograph by Zhivko Mutafchiev with the theme 'fire' for Jan van Koolwijk. These reflect the interest in and collecting of works by artists from countries once under the umbrella of the Soviet system and who are now able to exhibit freely at international meetings like those organized by FISAE, and to join older associations whose members commission personal plates from them. The spread of interest to Eastern Europe was initiated in part by the publications of the Portuguese collector Artur da Mota Miranda. His serial *Encyclopaedia bio-bibliographical of the art of the contemporary ex-libris* was first published in 1984 and ran to 30 volumes, finishing in 2000. Each volume contained illustrations of each artist's work, a short biographical article, checklist, and contact details. Five hundred copies of each volume were printed in the first edition, and went quickly out of print. A second printing, exactly the same as the first, was published in a run of 50 copies for those who had entered the collecting field later. People like John Gartner used them as collecting guides, and to fill in gaps in their collections of preferred artists. In 2002, da Mota Miranda began another series, *Contemporary international ex-libris artists*, and the latest volume, the twenty-fourth, was published this year.

The number of Chinese artists appearing in these volumes is growing, reflecting the expanding interest in the bookplate format, and the impact of exhibitions and competitions in Shanghai. The influence of Chinese collectors on the demand for works by traditional European bookplate artists is growing, with the 'eBay maniacs', as Anthony Pincott of the Bookplate Society calls them, paying very large sums for works by Mark Severin, Albin Brunovsky and Michel Fingesten, which can fetch more than €300 each (*Bookplate Society Newsletter*, March 2017, p. 7).

If bookplate interest and production has shifted towards Eastern Europe and China, so have the mediums used by artists. Computer generated design

(CGD) graphics are now acceptable to many collectors, and I suppose may be used by older artists whose manual dexterity has declined with age. There is a revival in the use of linocut, even in Australia, as the works exhibited in this year's Geelong acquisitive print awards show. For the more conservative bookplate collector, wood engraving, linocut, etching and aquatint, requiring great manual skill in the making and printing of plates, will always be valued above the CGD examples.



Wood engraving by Pam Rueter for
Tom van Koolwijk

Below: Design in mixed media by
Zhivko Mutafchiev for Jan van Koolwijk,
2015



Letters to the Editor

Dear Mark

I spotted in the last *Newsletter* a reference to Hitler's bookplate by Willi Knabe. I assume this is the one with an eagle carrying a swastika in his claws with oak leaves either side. Collectors here long wondered whether this was genuine or a homage plate. That is answered conclusively by *Hitler's Private Library* by Timothy W Ryback (London: Bodley Head, 2009). Ryback found a cache of Hitler's books in the Library of Congress. He illustrates the bookplate placed in a volume presented to Hitler by Leni Riefenstahl and prints an extract from a report dated May 1945 by American military intelligence on Hitler's library at the Berghof which records that many of the books there bore his bookplate.

Thanks for keeping up with the interesting *Newsletter*.

Bryan Welch, London, 3 August 2017

Dear Mark

I am very disappointed that I cannot attend the Annual General Meeting, so please apologise on my behalf.

By the way, I was surprised that you did not include a photo of Mary's tiny bookplate in my tiny book in the latest *Newsletter*! I'll bring it to the next 'Show and tell'.

Best wishes for a successful meeting

Brenda Heagney, Sydney, 12 July 2017

I explained to Brenda and also to the bookplate's designer, Mary Keep, that Mary's surprise gift for Brenda came after the 'Show and tell', so could not be part of the report. Then I solemnly promised Brenda and Mary to publish a photo of the delightful miniature design in the next Newsletter, and here it is – Editor.



Bookplate, 21 x 17mm, by Mary Keep for Brenda Heagney, 2017

Notes and happenings

Publications

JOHN PERCY HOLROYD, and JEFF PRENTICE (Intro.). *The Australian book trade: a bookseller's contribution to its history.* Melbourne: Braidwood Press, 2015; pp. vi, viii, 40, 52, 60, 75

Shows bookplates of booksellers, libraries and associated personalities, for F E Winchcombe, Mullens Library, Elsie B Champion (by N Lindsay), Rev J E Tennison-Woods, P N Barnett (by P Litchfield), C H Peters

MARIE LARSEN. Mapping an exhibition: tracking provenance in Rare Books and Special Collections. *Biblionews and Australian Notes & Queries* no. 394, Jun 2017; pp. 57-63
Bookplates among other marks of provenance in books from the Barr Smith Library, University of Adelaide; images of those for W H Lever of Thornton Manor, Cheshire, and for Sir Samuel James Way (Chief Justice of South Australia) by C E Tute

TREVOR NOTTLE. *Endless pleasure: exploring and collecting among the byways of gardens and gardening.* Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 2015; pp. 154-5

Promotes use of a bookplate and depicts the author's own design by English artist Derek Toms, and the Feint bookplate for Mary Isobel Barr Smith [thanks to Andrew Peake for this entry]

NIGEL SINNOTT. Curious or interesting items on my bookshelves. *Biblionews and Australian Notes & Queries* no. 394, Jun 2017; pp. 64-76
The author describes his eclectic library; images shown of English bookplates for Francis Fortescue Urquhart of Balliol College, Philip Paneth, and the South Place Ethical Society

STEPHEN M SZABO. Heraldry in the age of Macquarie. *History Magazine* (RAHS) no. 103, Mar 2010; p. 20

Refers to the early use of bookplates brought from Britain, and first Australian armorial bookplates by John Carmichael from the late 1820s

STEPHEN M SZABO. Theodore Napier – an Australian Jacobite. *History Magazine* (RAHS) no. 132, Jun 2017; pp. 18-19

Shows armorial bookplate for Napier [thanks again to Andrew Peake]

LOUISE WILSON. *Margaret Flockton. A fragrant memory.* Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 2016; pp. 155,157

Reproduces Flockton's bookplate for Botanic Gardens director and NSW government botanist Joseph Henry Maiden (1859-1925), now 'found inside the covers of many books at the Botanic Garden'

Editorial

It is always a joy – and an uncommon one – for an editor to have a sufficiency of material, even to the extent of having to hold a contribution over to the subsequent issue, and this has been the happy situation for this number of the *Newsletter*. Not to mention the arrival of two Letters to the Editor to add both variety and immediacy to the contents. And the contributions having arrived well in advance of a notional deadline, I can blame only myself for the lateness of appearance of this September issue.

We open with a report of the Society's tenth Annual General Meeting; to my mind the highlights were a valuable discussion of ways to promote the Society and the inspiring practical demonstration by member and bookbinder (among other things), Monica Oppen, on ways to repair fragile paper objects, including bookplates. The feature article describes some fascinating examples of bookplates as marks of provenance in books held by the Rare Books and Special Collections at the University of Adelaide; I am very grateful to Marie Larsen who was more than willing to rewrite, with greater emphasis on bookplates, an article which had just appeared in *Biblionews and Australian Notes & Queries*. Christine Bell has provided yet another interesting note, this time describing her experiences on joining the Netherlands Exlibris Society; her story emphasises again the camaraderie between bookplate collectors and the willingness of established ones to encourage novices by gifts of bookplates. MF

