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**The bookplates of Anne Marie Graham**

Mark J Ferson, Sydney

A group of bookplates designed by Anne Graham in the 1940s is contained in the Corrigan Collection of Australian Artists' Bookplates held by the Research Library at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. An album of these designs was shown by Steven Miller during his address to the Annual General Meeting of the Society, held at the Library last June, and reported on in the June issue of the *Newsletter*. Steven has kindly allowed me access to some written information on Anne Graham held in the Research Library and I also have been privileged to speak briefly with the artist about her art classes with Professor Franz Cisek when she was a child in Vienna.

Anne Marie Haas arrived with her family in Australia in 1939 when she was 14 and in the same year was accepted into Melbourne Technical College (now RMIT University). After completing her studies and up to the time of her marriage in 1946 to William Graham, Anne worked part time for the Ballarat Litho and Printing Company. She undertook further art training at the National Gallery Art School and with the George Bell School, both in Melbourne.

Anne's bookplates date from the period 1944-48 and were often done for friends or relatives or commissions arranged by word of mouth. Anne relates in a letter to Steven Miller that the original designs were carried out 'generally in ink and/or gouache, styled to replicate wood or lino cuts, then printed afterwards by machine.' It is of interest to compare the Lippmann design reproduced with this article (image taken from a copy fortuitously found recently among the many bookplates for sale at Paul Feain's Cornstalk Bookshop) to the original watercolour for this bookplate reproduced on page 2 of the June 2010 issue of the *Newsletter*. Walter Lippmann's parents came to Australia on the same ship as Anne Marie and her family, and joined Walter and his wife Lorna who were already living here. Other bookplates by the artist, and which can be found in Corrigan Collection at the Art Gallery of NSW, are those for: Mr and Mrs Peter Wilkins, Peter Tikotkin, Peter H A Strasser, Norman & Evelyn Rothfield, Alan F Dunbar, Dr John L Lewin, Ernest Weiss, L L Beauchamp, Mary D Bedggood and Eric Turin.

Anne continues to paint, remembering clearly lessons learned from Franz Cisek in Vienna



Mechanically printed bookplate by Anne Marie House for Lorna & Walter Lippmann, c. 1944-6

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and George Bell in Melbourne. She has played an important role in teaching and popularising art as a creative activity for children, received awards for her drawing and painting over the years and her work has been highlighted in monographs and compendiums. More information on Anne can be found at [www.annemariegraham.com.au](http://www.annemariegraham.com.au) and at the Dictionary of Australian Artists Online <http://daao.org.au/main/read/2876>

### Cordell Firebrace's book goes to war

Bryan Welch, London

I recently acquired *Great short novels of the world* (Heinemann, 1927) with a fine armorial bookplate for Cordell William Firebrace which has some Australian interest. The bookplate is dated 1912 and signed 'WPB' for William Phillips Barrett. Barrett was an employee of Messrs J & E Bumpus, a London bookshop, and was responsible for bookplate commissions. Almost 600 bookplates are known with his initials; however, he neither designed nor engraved them but it seems that his role was to discuss the commission with the client and then suggest to the engraver the kind of thing the client required. The 'WPB' bookplates were engraved by a number of first-rate engravers, who were not allowed to sign their work. Firebrace's bookplate was engraved by Robert Osmond (1874-1959).<sup>1</sup> Brian North Lee tells us that Captain Cordell William Firebrace was the son of Robert Tarver Firebrace of Heyfield near Sale, Victoria, Australia. He lived at Elmstone Court in Kent and died in 1934. He notes that the arms are framed by 'Australian trees and shrubs'. However, an earlier catalogue devoted to the WPB series by Horace Jones describes the trees and shrubs as 'Australian and British'.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps members of the Society can identify the trees and shrubs and which continent they came from? More information about the Firebrace family and its Australian connections would also be of interest.

The book has a second mark of ownership – the impression in blue of a stamp on the half title: "Royal Naval War Libraries". The design of a ship's wheel superimposed on an open book is simple and evocative of its purpose. Although it is signed, the impression on my copy, and other examples I have seen, is not good enough to decipher the initials. Large ships and shore bases had libraries maintained at government expense: the RN War Libraries supplemented those libraries, particularly so far as small ships were concerned. It was supported by public subscription and a Treasury grant.<sup>3</sup> There were also public appeals for books such as one in the *British Journal of Nursing* for August 1941 headed 'The Navy Calling. Urgent need for books. Please send to Royal Naval War Libraries, 40, William IV Street, W.C.2 (Tem. 2011). Registered under the War Charities Act,

1940.' More inspiring was the poster by the cartoonist Fougasse, the sobriquet used by the artist Cyril Kenneth Bird (1887-1965), who was famous for his *Careless talk costs lives* posters and other propaganda messages delivered in a humorous way. The RN War Libraries' poster shows a sailor scanning the nearly empty shelves for a book with the caption 'Have you any books that would help fill this?' The ship's name is blacked out in accordance with war-time practice. The success of the RN War Libraries can be gauged from the First Lord of the Admiralty's answer to a Parliamentary question in June 1943 in which he says that for the year ending 31 March 1943 it supplied no fewer than 600,000 books of various kinds to the Fleet of which it was estimated about half were magazines.<sup>4</sup>

One might have expected *Great short novels of the world*, which is both heavy and



Engraved bookplate by Robert Osmond for Cordell William Firebrace, 1912



Ex libris stamp for Royal Naval War Libraries, c. 1940

heavyweight, to have found few readers on a small ship – the forces perhaps preferring, like Sergeant Paine in *The Third Man*, a Western to such ‘great short novels’ as the Czech *Childless* by Ignat Hermann or the Danish *The four devils* by Herman Bang. Judging by an item in the *Evening Post* (NZ) for January 1941 headed ‘From Australia’, this was not the case. It reports that publishers were experiencing a boom due to the sudden desire of the masses for books to help pass the long hours of waiting for the ‘all clear’ and continues:

*Strangely enough the demand is for more serious types of literature and fiction than possibly might have been expected. People’s thoughts are concerned with the new and better world that is bound to emerge after the war. Travel books are popular. The same thing applies to the men at sea. Travel and scientific books are constantly being asked for by seamen. The Royal Naval War Libraries, fortunately are able to satisfy this demand.*<sup>5</sup>

The work of the RNWL was recognised when Mrs Colvin, the Chairman and Honorary Organising Secretary, was appointed an MBE in the Royal Birthday Honours list for June 1943. In January 1945 Winston Churchill wrote to thank her for the work of the RNWL: ‘It is of the greatest value. The full friendship of the

book can be as much realised by those who are for years isolated at sea as anyone, and I wish the RNWL every possible success.’<sup>6</sup> After the War, the Royal Naval Loan Library was set up based on the large collection of non-fiction books as a peace-time lending library to serve the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and the Women’s Royal Naval Service. However a year later for financial reasons, in 1951 the surplus funds were handed over to a charity, the King George’s Fund for Sailors, to provide scholarships for sons and daughters of Royal Naval officers and men.

The flyleaf has been cut out of my copy of *Great short novels* so its whereabouts between Cordell Firebrace’s death in 1934

and its donation as reading matter for the Navy will remain a mystery. However, the book’s journey from the comfort of a gentleman’s library, with a finely engraved, large armorial bookplate, to the Naval War Library with its rubber stamp and a small ship is a poignant evocation of the passage from peace to war.

#### References

- [1] Brian North Lee, *Bookplates by Robert Osmond*. London: Bookplate Society, 1998
- [2] Horace Jones, *Bookplates signed “W.P.B.”* London: James Wilson & Bookplate Society, 1978
- [3] Commons Hansard, 2 June 1943
- [4] Commons Hansard, 9 June 1943
- [5] *Evening Post*, vol. CXXXI, no. 3, 4 January 1941, p.11
- [6] Heritage Auction Galleries, Dallas, Texas. Lot 35108 in sale 6031, 16-17 October 2009



Poster by 'Fougasse' (Cyril Kenneth Bird) for Royal Naval War Libraries, c. 1940

## Auckland report: 2010 in review

Ian Thwaites, Auckland

It is pleasing to review 2010 and look back at a series of stimulating meetings, with almost record attendances and much enthusiasm among members. We held six meetings, with talks by president Jennifer Lamm; Beth Serjeant & John Kenny; and Philip Heath; a visit to antiquarian bookseller Jason Books, courtesy of Maud Cahill; and in addition participated in the Going West Book Fair. Very pleasing to report is the strong membership level, now 41, with seven added through the year. Worthy of mention also are the bookplates which Mike Ferris has fashioned for fellow members – those for Bob Langholm, Ian Thwaites, Brendan Waters and Ken Wood have been followed by designs for John Stacpoole and Judith Brebner.

Member Tara McLeod has twice been Printer in Residence at the University of Otago's Otakou Press. At the June meeting, after a very helpful introduction by John Denny to the McLeod brand of typographical humour, Tara spoke of his most recent commission, to print 100 copies of *O lucky man: poems for Charles Brasch*, by Auckland poet Riemke Ensing. He described the set-up of the press and the steps carried out to produce this handmade book. A lively question time drew forth fascinating sidelights on Tara's other ventures, both his own Pear Tree Press and also as designer/printer for the Holloway Press at the University of Auckland [Tara was featured in *Newsletter* no. 5 – *Ed.*]

The October meeting was Claire Bruell's presentation 'One hundred years of European ex libris from art nouveau to modern' at Parnell Community Centre. Claire first came to our notice when she visited the Society's 2008 exhibition at Huia Lodge. At the time, she told us about her collection of European bookplates and here, finally, was the awaited opportunity to see images of these fine plates, acquired systematically by Claire over a period of several years. Our attention was drawn to a splendid array of European ex libris artists,

including Joseph Váchal, Alfred Cossman, Franz von Bayros, Italo Zetti and a group of Catalanian designers including Alexandre de Riquer, José Triadó, Joaquim Garcia and Lorenzo Torroll. Claire told us of several favourite ex libris personalities – among them Israeli artist Leonid Kuris, Prague graphic artist Georg Jilovsky and bookplate collector extraordinaire Mario De Filippis of Italy.

30 November 2010 marked the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the ex libris society in Auckland (originally as the NZ Ex Libris Society). The occasion was honoured in two ways, firstly by a Christmas luncheon attended by 35 people on 21 November. At the same time, Ian Thwaites and Rie Fletcher launched their *Five years further on: Auckland Ex Libris Society 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary 1930-2010*, issued as a supplement to their *75 years of bookplates: Auckland Ex Libris Society, 1930-2005*. Surely our pioneer members would have been thrilled to think that our little society, which often met in the 1930s with attendances of fewer than ten, is still flourishing.

We pay tribute to Mark Ferson and the New Australian Bookplate Society. Several of us subscribe to the wonderful *Newsletter* and it is so heartening to have a regular journal providing news, and attractive and informative articles about bookplates. And we are very grateful to have New Zealand items featured. Thank you Mark, and your dedicated team, Mary Keep and others [This was not a paid advert! – *Ed.*]

## Australian bookplate bibliography, 2009

Mark J Ferson, Sydney

- 1 **BIDGOOD, JEFF.** Some reminiscences of the BCSA. *Biblionews and Australian Notes & Queries*, nos. 361-2, March-June 2009, pp. 4-12

Designs by N Lindsay, A O Spare, Unk White, R Lindsay, G D Perrotter for prominent early members of the Society

- 2 **BIDGOOD, JEFF.** *Mark Ferson, bookplate artist (Studies in Australian Bibliophily,*

number 7). Book Collectors' Society of Australia, Sydney, 2009. Edition of 50 numbered copies signed by the author and artist.

Reproduces 34 designs carried out in a variety of mediums between 1979 and 2004, a note on each owner, portraits of the author and artist, and lists of the artist's bookplate articles and talks

- 3 **DOWNER, CHRISTINE.** This book belongs to ... European bookplate collections in the State Library of Victoria. *La Trobe Journal*, no. 84, December 2009, pp. 60-75

Extensive discussion of the Pulitzer and Gartner bookplate collections held by the SLV and how they came to be there; designs by T Bewick, BUKO, Sumiko Euki, M Kislinger, E Kotrba, J Lukavsky, T Marangoni, D Riley, Hitoshi Seimiya, L Wyatt, Motoi Yanagida

- 4 **IVES, ALAN.** Robert Thorburn Turnbull; his bookplate by D H Souter. *Margin*, no. 77, April 2009, pp. 39-40

Describes provenance and associations of a book found at a Lifeline book fair (Canberra), illustrated by the Souter bookplate

- 5 **KING, RICHARD.** Adrian Feint's bookplates, in, Richard Heathcote (ed.), *Adrian Feint: Cornucopia*. Wakefield Press, Adelaide, 2009, pp. 32-5

From an essay first published in *Newsletter* no. 8, reproduces 5 of Feint's designs with a portrait of the artist. The book as a whole covers varying aspects of his life and work, with extensive illustrations in colour, and was published to accompany the exhibition at Carrick Hill, Adelaide.

- 6 **MCMULLIN, BRIAN J.** Domestic—colonial—domestic. *Biblionews and Australian Notes & Queries*, nos. 361-2, March-June 2009, pp. 29-37

Prize bookplate from Heathcote Road Wesleyan Sunday School, Longton (UK)

## Innovative U3A bookplate design classes held on NSW South Coast

I was very excited to hear in late November from our artist member James Fellows that he was conducting a bookplate design course at Milton on the NSW South Coast.

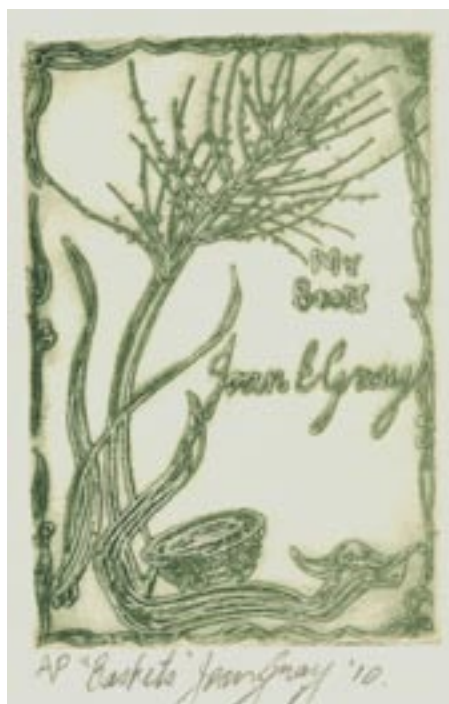


In his initial email James said, ‘ I am quite pleased with the results and feel that we have done a little to promote the art.’ As you can imagine, I replied post-haste to James, asking for more information, and he responded thus:

*I have been holding the class under the auspices of Milton University of the Third Age, at the Milton Campus headquarters, and as required in my garage/studio. We commenced the class by looking at the content of our own libraries, and what they reflected of our own interests and personalities. After appreciating each other’s interests through such disclosure, I then introduced them to the ‘World of the Book’, using an excellent book published in 2007 by the University of Melbourne’s Miegunyah Press entitled just that. That led us to various schools of book making, eg from horn books to Edo, to illustration.*

*We then used James Keenan’s work The art of the bookplate (New York: Barnes & Noble, 2003) to appreciate the scope of the history of the bookplate. Various articles out of our New Australian Bookplate Society Newsletter were shared; we also looked at Lionel Lindsay and his bookplates, we touched on Aubrey Beardsley and his very economical line work, and we also studied Jeff Bidgood’s work in your name. By the time we had done all this we were ready to learn about printmaking, and we considered using linocut work, but recently at Wollongong TAFE college, some of us discovered a very easy method of etching using copper plates, ferric chloride, and a brand of permanent marker with which to draw. The class progressed from there, and we shall shortly share our work with you.*

James has indeed provided examples of work produced during this course, some of which are reproduced here in the *Newsletter*. And it is particularly pleasing to have further heard from James that he will be conducting this course again in the first term of 2011.



Left: Etched bookplate by Joan Gray for herself, 2010  
 Above right: Etched bookplate by James Fellows for himself, 2010  
 Right: Etched universal bookplate by Karen Crawford, 2010



## Notes and happenings

Artists' gallery on New Australian Bookplate Society website

We have set up a new page on the Society website to showcase the bookplate designs of our artist members. Each artist will have a section comprising her/his artist statement, techniques used, contact details and 2-4 representative images. If you are looking for someone to design a bookplate for you, this is somewhere you can start.

If you have not already done so, artist members are encouraged to provide information and images of 2-4 designs scanned at 150dpi to the Editor at [m.ferson@unsw.edu.au](mailto:m.ferson@unsw.edu.au) as soon as possible. The web page is at [www.stoplaughing.com.au/bookplatesociety/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=16&Itemid=39](http://www.stoplaughing.com.au/bookplatesociety/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=16&Itemid=39)

Norman Hetherington

We have the sad duty to record that member Norman Hetherington died on 6 December 2010 at 89 years of age after a long illness. A Sydney cartoonist who worked freelance and, for a period, at the *Bulletin*, Norman became internationally known, with his wife Margaret, as the creator of the children's television character Mr Squiggle. Norman joined the New Australian Bookplate Society in 2007 after seeing a notice for it in *Biblioneus*, the journal of the Book Collectors' Society of Australia. An obituary can be found at [www.smh.com.au/entertainment/tv-and-radio/mr-squiggles-creator-dies-at-89-20101206-18n1b.html](http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/tv-and-radio/mr-squiggles-creator-dies-at-89-20101206-18n1b.html)

Recently published articles

**BIDGOOD, JEFF.** An Australian bookplate. *Biblioneus and Australian Notes & Queries*, nos. 365-6, March-June 2010, pp. 27-32

Describes detective work involved in identifying the bookplate of Katherine Shaw of 'Wooriwyrite'.

**CONTRIBUTORS, THE.** December 2008 Sydney show & tell meeting. *Biblioneus and Australian Notes & Queries*, nos. 365-6, March-June 2010, p. 20

Note of presentation by M Ferson on manuscript ex libris, with illustration of design for W J Rock

**TAYLOR, BRIAN.** Launch of Jeff Bidgood's *Mark Ferson: bookplate artist (Studies in Australian Bibliophily*, number 7) at the BCSA meeting in Summer Hill on 6 March 2010. *Biblioneus and Australian Notes & Queries*, nos. 365-6, March-June 2010, pp. 37-40

With photo of author, artist and launcher; also image of bookplate by M Ferson for his mother Ida Ferson

### New publication

An authoritative compendium *Australian book collectors: some noted Australian book collectors & collections of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries*,

edited and largely written by Charles Stitz, has just been published by Bread Street Press, Bendigo. Many bookplates and booklabels are reproduced. A second volume is planned.

Publication date: December 2010

ISBN 978 0 646 53340 7

Quarto, approx. 322 pp,  
cloth bound in dust wrapper

RRP A\$95

To order a copy, please contact Charles Stitz at Books on Dean,  
3/444 Dean St, Albury NSW 2640;  
phone him on 02 6021 3230 or email at [booksondean@bigpond.com](mailto:booksondean@bigpond.com)

## Editorial

May I first wish readers a Happy New Year and all the best for 2011? Small things continue to happen in the bookplate world whether in the Antipodes or across the

globe. The FISAE Congress in Istanbul in late August was a highlight for many, and I am grateful that some of the people I met there have kept in touch. So although I have focussed the contents of the *Newsletter* on developments on this side of the world, I suspect more of overseas origin, but definite interest, will appear in upcoming issues.

One of the things I have found very exciting is that artist-member James Fellows has been conducting a U3A class on the NSW south coast on the subject of bookplates, and he and his students have produced attractive etched designs, some of which are reproduced inside. Moreover, James is conducting a further course in 2011 term 1. I must also thank Ian Thwaites for providing a review of meetings of the very active Auckland Ex Libris Society for 2010; also Bryan Welch for a fascinating story linking England and Australia. I have somewhat belatedly included the 2009 bibliography of bookplate material published in Australia, whilst that for 2010 will appear shortly. But this leads me to mention another exciting development, the recent publication of *Australian book collectors*, in which the editor Charles Stitz has highlighted the subjects' bookplates as important marks of provenance. An advertisement for this worthwhile book appears at left. And thanks are due to Paul Feain who reluctantly parted with the beautiful early twentieth century label for Johnson's Bookstores, Sydney, so as to give it a good, if not better, home.

I will end by thanking all our contributors and particularly acknowledging Mary Keep who has made such a success of designing the *Newsletter* to repeated acclaim.

MF

