

ABAA NEWSLETTER

No. 1

Editor: Barbara Rootenberg

Your editor is pleased to inaugurate the first issue of the new ABAA newsletter -- a no-frills publication devoted to the benefit of our membership.

Members may find this newsletter lacking in such articles as appear in the AB, and other book trade journals and periodicals. The decision was made to concentrate on a wider, more far-reaching aspect of the ABAA and ILAB. There are fundamental, timely, and controversial subjects of interest, vital to each of us. Hopefully, the newsletter will be a vehicle for the dissemination of useful and current information about association activities.

There are many frustrating and perplexing problems that we all face in our day-to-day business. Security and fraudulent practices, insurance, up-to-date appraisal information, interstate sales tax, shipping and customs regulations are just a few of the items on the agenda. In addition, we plan to keep you informed as to chapter happenings, up-coming events, public relations, new membership requirements, and financial matters relating to our treasury and Benevolent Fund. Of course, we need your input to develop a successful newsletter. Your experiences, opinions and knowledge are most welcome.

For our first issue we had planned to sum up this year's ABAA activities with a number of articles on what has been achieved during the year and what remains to be done. I hope we can explore some of these issues in the next newsletter.

Our first issue, however, is devoted to the disturbing rash of questioned imprints which have recently been uncovered in Texas and elsewhere. Perhaps many of you have already heard about the significant number of questioned imprints and fabrications that exist. One of our members, Thomas Taylor, has devoted a tremendous amount of time to uncovering the Texas fabrications and questioned imprints. In addition to those imprints identified by Tom, the antiquarian book trade is plagued with other forged imprints in the field of Americana. The extent of these forgeries, some of which have been attributed to confessed murderer and forger Mark Hofmann of Salt Lake City, is presently unknown.

We have included a précis of the talk Tom Taylor gave to the

Friends of the University of Texas in which this startling information is described. In addition to the list of questioned imprints on Texas, we have included other identified printed items which have been questioned.

It is important to emphasize that this list is not considered complete. Every member handling broadsides and similar material is urged to review their holdings with great care, and to take measures to authenticate anything at all doubtful. Numerous dealers, collectors, and librarians have been deceived by these questioned imprints.

It has been suggested that the ABAA take the initiative and set up an "ALERT" to be sent to all librarians, institutions, societies, booksellers, private collectors, etc. In addition, we would send press releases to all trade publications, purchasing ads if necessary. Only through communication and cooperation can we maintain the good faith, confidence, and the high professional standards of our association.

I am pleased to report that the ABAA has taken significant action in response to this situation. At the November 12th meeting of the Board of Governors of the Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America, the Ethics Committee recommended, and the full Board unanimously approved, the following actions be taken in response to the recently documented rash of questioned imprints in Texas and elsewhere. The association will:

1. Alert the entire membership to the existence of all questioned imprints by circulating a short list of the suspected materials and request that information regarding the source of this material be forwarded to the Chairman of the ABAA Ethics Committee: John Curtis, The Bookpress Ltd., Box KP, Williamsburg, VA 23187.
2. Circulate the list of questioned imprints to other relevant professional associations (i.e. ABA, ILAB, RBMS, etc.) and appropriate librarians. In addition, this list will be circulated to professional publications such as AB, American Book Collector, Papers BSA, APHA, WHA Quarterly, Society of American Archivists, BIN Newsletter, MAD, Texas Monthly, Southwestern Historical Quarterly, etc.
3. Place the following advertisement in AB and other relevant publications, "The ABAA views with concern the existence of questioned imprints which have come to light in Texas and elsewhere. A list of these known questioned imprints is available from the Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America, 50 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10020."

4. Establish an ABAA Committee on questioned imprints to compile the pertinent details about such imprints and, where possible, obtain copies of them. The following ABAA members were appointed to this committee: Jennifer Larson, Chairman; John Curtis, Elisabeth Woodburn, Thomas Taylor, Dorothy Sloan.

All information regarding fabrication and questioned imprints should be sent to the Chairman: Jennifer Larson, Yerba Buena Books, 882 Bush St., San Francisco, CA 94108.

5. The ABAA attorney has been asked to contact the FBI regarding this situation of questioned imprints and request their involvement.

6. President Michael Ginsberg appointed Barbara Rootenberg as the ABAA's National Security Officer. Barbara will be in charge of the establishment of a new security system for rare books and manuscript thefts. If you were a victim of a theft, please notify Barbara Rootenberg, P.O. Box 5049, Sherman Oaks, CA 91403. Copies of reported losses will be mailed monthly to all members of our association and the ILAB. Prompt notification will protect our members from unwittingly receiving stolen property and hopefully will lead to the recover of the material to their rightful owners.

It was recommended that the Bylaws Committee and the President establish terms of office as well as rules governing the composition of the committee.

These actions represent our initial efforts to address the difficult problem of fabrications and questioned imprints which have plagued collectors, libraries, and members of the antiquarian book trade. Your continued assistance is solicited in attacking this serious problem.



The A B A A N E W S L E T T E R

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MEMBER
ILAB

PRESIDENT GINSBERG REPORTS FROM ILAB

In mid-September, ABAA president Michael Ginsberg attended the 1989 President's Meeting in Yverdon-des-Bains, Switzerland, held in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the Swiss association (Syndicat de Libraire Ancienne et Du Commerce de L'Estampe en Suisse). His report follows:

ILAB President Anthony Rota [ABA] welcomed all and thanked the Swiss association for the wonderful start of our four-day conference. As usual, he indicated the voting rights of each association, our association having two votes. He also appointed two scrutineers: Dr. Kocher-Benzing and Bob De Graaf. Also, President Rota conveyed the apologies of President Kay Craddock of Australia, who, regrettably, at the last moment had to cancel because of problems with her shop's building. The minutes of 1988 General Assembly at Paris were approved and seconded.

ILAB Treasurer Louis Weinstein (Heritage Bookshop, Los Angeles) gave a report on our financial situation, saying in order to carry out the valuable work of the league, new revenues would have to be produced. To that end, the league indicated it would be taxing each booth in each nationally sponsored book fair \$10.00. This tax will start with the ILAB fair in Tokyo in 1990. Much discussion took place. I felt this tax was a penalty on countries such as the USA who have three to four fairs a year, while other associations have one or none. The vote was 16 yes, 3 no, 2 abstentions.

The ILAB newsletter is our main means of international communication. Vice President and editor Anton Geretts has specifically asked me to inform our association that they are actively seeking advertisers and news items. Either should be sent directly to Herr Geretts.

The ILAB *Directory* proofs will be available in about two weeks. These proofs will be sent to each president for a prompt reading and corrected return. President Reiss of the Deutsch Verbund expects that copies will be available February 1, 1990. He also has made a plea for advertisers. Anyone interested should be in touch with him before December 1. Ten thousand copies will be printed. The Deutsch Verbund is purchasing 500+ copies to give to their best customers and major libraries as a publicity and public relations gesture. The ILAB receives 15% of each sale and 5% of each ad fee.

The *Dictionary of International Terminology* is still in its early stages. The concept is a good one, but the implementation could take another five to ten years. Further inquiries [continued on p. 5]

THIEF APPREHENDED

Richard Matthew Lunnin, convicted of stealing more than \$200,000 worth of books at last year's Boston Book Fair, was sentenced October 12, 1989 in United States District Court, Boston, Mass., to four months in federal prison, two months in a halfway house, two years supervised released, and fined \$10,050.00.

Lunnin, the floor manager for Exhibit Aids Inc. of Boston, was hired by the promoter of the 1988 Boston fair to equip and erect booths. He admitted to taking the books at The Castle from his own safe-keeping after the fair was over, and after the time contracted for safe-keeping had lapsed. Lunnin was successful in selling many of the books to John Richardson, a dealer from Hingham, Mass. (who received \$7,200 in restitution from Lunnin), who in turn offered them to a second dealer, Matthew Needle, of Newburyport. Needle became suspicious when questions regarding the provenance could not be satisfactorily answered. One properly placed phone call confirmed Needle's

suspicious, and he then notified ABAA through Doug Harding (Harding Books, Wells, ME).

The Police and the FBI were notified in turn, a sting operation was put into effect, and an arrest was made this past July. According to ABAA's point man in the case, Kenneth Gloss (Brattle Book Shop, Boston), somewhere between "90 and 95 per cent of the total value of the books have been recovered" (about \$195,000 of \$210,000). Gloss was emphatic in pointing out the major reason behind the largely successful recovery. "The dealers involved were able to provide the authorities with detailed inventory lists of the books taken. That was the key," said Gloss. "The apprehension and conviction of Mr. Lunnin was largely due to the diligent record-keeping of those affected, and the timely communication between ABAA and the authorities." The books were subsequently released by the FBI into the care of Gloss who sorted the books and made arrangements for their return to their rightful owners.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

BOARD ADMINISTRATION AND PROCEDURES

Questions about the way ABAA and its Board of Governors operate have increased over the past few years, as the complexity of the Association has increased. To answer some of these questions and to propose solutions to new and unresolved administrative problems, the Board of Governors appointed an *ad hoc* committee on board administration and procedures. Over the past year this committee has made recommendations to the Board on a wide range of issues: several important policy revisions and initiatives have resulted.

In response to complaints about the difficulties of intra-Board communication between meetings, Committee members rejected a suggestion that the size of the Board be reduced, but proposed that its efficiency be improved by the formation of an Executive Committee empowered to act in emergency situations only. The Executive Committee will be composed of the President, Vice President, Treasurer and two third-year Board members. The Board voted to adopt this new committee at the Chicago meeting in May. In August, the Committee further recommended that this Executive Committee and appropriate Committee Chairs act as a liaison between the Board and legal counsel in most matters. It is costly to have counsel present at all meetings, and perhaps wasteful to have him or her sitting through entire sessions. There is concern on the Board that counsel not be assigned strictly administrative tasks while involved in sorting out some of the complicated legal issues which sometimes face the Association. This problem should be addressed further in November by additional Committee recommendations and more discussion among Board members.

An introductory letter was composed

for the benefit of newly elected Board members, outlining their responsibilities and roles of the various committees. In order to make the process of nominating officers and board members more open to the membership, the Committee put forward two motions which were approved by the Board. In the first, it was agreed that the Board will distribute on November 1st of each year a list of all members of the Nominating Committee (Board and Chapter delegates) to the entire membership, along with a notice that the Nominating Committee will receive suggestions for possible candidates for board vacancies from the membership. The second approved motion allows candidates other than those put forth by the Nominating Committee to be listed on the election ballot provided that a minimum of fifteen members of the Association, individually or collectively, propose that candidate's name in writing to the Secretary six weeks prior to the annual meeting. The alphabetically-arranged ballot will distinguish Nominating Committee candidates from the other candidates, and will still provide for write-ins.

Job descriptions have been another concern of the Committee. Recommendations have been proposed for the Security Committee, and most recently, for the new administrative aide needed to run our Headquarters. We are presently at work outlining long range goals for the Association which should help to define the functions of any future employee, as well as the services ABAA should provide its members. Peter Stern, Taylor Bowie, Beth Garon, Peter Howard and I welcome your suggestions and questions. [Ann Marie Wall, chairperson]

BOOK FAIR

As of this writing, the New York Book Fair Committee is making plans for a 1990 New York fair to take place at

the Sheraton Center Hotel on the week-end of March 23rd.

The membership of the New York committee is entirely new, and they have already put a great deal of effort into planning this fair. The committee has searched extensively for alternative locations -- all of which proved unacceptable for a variety of reasons. While New York City appears to have scores of hotels and exhibition spaces that could host a fair, in the end there are in fact very few to choose from. Some are too small, many are too expensive, and some simply do not want a show which encourages the attendance of the general public. Most of the best-known hotels are in the latter category.

The Committee is, however, aware of the problems we've had at the Sheraton, such as the floor plan, the coat checking and the lack of bar facilities, and they are attempting to remedy these shortcomings.

In particular, they are paying close attention to, and projecting increased expenditure on P.R. and advertising. Given the highly-publicized auctions in the next several months, they hope to find the media receptive to the fair.

The unfortunate truth is that the era of the reasonably priced New York fair is past. While it is very difficult to hold down the cost in other cities, in New York it is impossible. As an example of the costs involved in mounting a N.Y. fair, last year we had to post a bond which cost in the neighborhood of \$2,200 to guarantee payment to the Sheraton should we have cancelled the fair. Everything from coffee to carpeting costs much more in New York. Much of the Committee's time is

spent considering ways to trim costs without affecting the quality of the fair. Future New York fairs may well have to be much smaller in size and greatly increased in price.

The 1990 Los Angeles fair is sold out, and planning is underway for the 1991 San Francisco fair, where a new facility is under construction.

The 13th International Antiquarian Book Fair will be held in Tokyo, October 12th-14th, 1990. The fair will be preceded by the ILAB Congress from October 7th-11th. The Japanese association will be mailing information directly to ABAA members before the end of this year. [Peter Stern, chairperson].

ABAA DIRECTORY

To the average member of ABAA the compilation of the annual membership is merely a scissors-and-paste job, one with some additions and subtractions, to be sent off to the printer, and upon completion, promptly circulated. Quite the contrary! The annual listing requires inordinate patience, scrutiny, and above all else, hope.

PATIENCE: An interminable wait for the member to fill out the requested form, often rendered inaccurate by a last-minute call informing Headquarters about a change of address, an additional phone number, the elimination of an old P.O. Box, or the addition of a FAX number.

SCRUTINY: Hours of exacting proofreading of names, addresses, cities, states, phone numbers and specialties, plus a gentle attempt to reduce the number of specialties (usually fifteen) to the required five.

HOPE: Confidence in the printer to observe all the requested alignments, headings, and indentations. From a recent letter written to the printer: "I am enclosing the *second* set of galleys of the ABAA membership Directory. There are still major problems, and I again emphasize that the directory should be set in the same size and

style as the 1988 edition. Please consult with Theresa who typeset the 1988 Directory if necessary..." Thanks to all on the committee for their tireless and careful work. Let us also pray. [Leona Rostenberg, chairperson]

PUBLIC RELATIONS

A newly-formed Public Relations Committee composed of Ronald Randall, Edwin Glaser, Peter Howard, Ellen Schreiber, Rob Rulon-Miller, Michael Ginsberg and Ann Marie Wall presented initial proposals to the Board of Governors in May, 1989, at the Chicago meeting. In response to a request from the Board, Committee members focused on ways of improving relations among ABAA members, and between the membership and the Board of Governors. Out of a proposed allotment of \$10,000 for this fiscal year, the Committee received approval for expenditures up to \$4,500 on two important projects.

The Board approved the Committee's plans for the publication and circulation of The ABAA *Newsletter* which will be edited by Rob Rulon-Miller. The initial allocation for this publication is \$3,000 for Fall and Spring issues. Members of the Committee hope that this publication, with articles updating our colleagues on Board policies and goals, and noteworthy activities of individual members of the Association, will become a forum for constructive discussion within ABAA. This past May, the *Newsletter* editor sent a letter to the membership alerting everyone to our plans and encouraging submission of appropriate letters, reviews and articles. Materials should be addressed to Rob Rulon-Miller, 400 Summit Ave., St. Paul, MN 55102.

Because the forgery issue has plagued and disrupted the ABAA for over a year now, the Committee paid close attention to the plans for an upcoming conference on forged documents to be held in Texas, November 2-4, 1989, by the University of Houston Libraries and Rockwell Fund, Inc. While an outright donation was given to the

conference by ABAA as a participating sponsor, the Public Relations Committee took two additional steps to communicate the ABAA position to the library and collecting world and to inform our membership of developments concerning the forgery issue. First, we received Board approval to send ABAA directories to the conference for distribution to the participants; each directory will contain a Board approved statement of the Association's views on the forgery problem [The text of this statement will be found on page 7.] Second, we are negotiating with the Conference sponsors to acquire and distribute to ABAA members the paper to be presented to the conference by ABAA member, Jennifer Larson of Yerba Buena Books. Ms. Larson will speak on the obligations of the dealer in forgery detection and handling, providing the U.S. perspective. An amount of \$1,500 has been set aside for this project.

Other public relations projects currently under discussion include: the establishment of an in-house press release bureau designed to publicize ABAA activities and the significant activities of individual members; distribution of Fortieth Anniversary logos to all members for optional placement in their catalogues this year; achievement awards; a revision of an older ABAA set of guidelines for the evaluation of rare books, and general advertising of ABAA in select journals. Although we have received and examined a proposal for a national media campaign, current budget limitations preclude such an undertaking at this time. We urge any member with ideas or concerns for ABAA public relations efforts to contact any member of the Committee. [Ann Marie Wall, chairperson]

SECURITY

In November of 1988 Barbara Rootenberg succeeded the late John Jenkins as ABAA Security Officer, and in April, Ann Marie Wall, representing the Board of Governors, joined her as Co-Chair of the Security Committee. Upon her appointment, Mrs. Rootenberg immediately involved herself in discussions with librarians and ILAB board members on the increase of thefts and security problems in the rare book trade. Out of discussions with librarians and ABAA board members on both the East and West coasts emerged the outline for a new security system for ABAA. This new system, a substantial revision of that published by ABAA in 1982, and like that already in place in Great Britain, depends largely on phone chains. These chains will be initiated, in the event of a theft of a book valued at more than \$500, or a group of books valued at more than \$1000, by a security officer within each ABAA chapter. The system also allows for lists of stolen material received by ABAA from librarians, book dealers and collectors to go out to all members on a regular basis. When the telephone chain has been activated nationwide for a theft, a written description of the stolen items should go out immediately following the telephone alert.

The first list of material stolen in 1989 was issued on June 15, 1989, and included an introduction to the revised security program, as well as a sample Purchase Agreement form to be adapted by members to suit their particular needs. Any members who have not received this June 15 mailing should immediately notify the Security Committee (Barbara Rootenberg, 818-788-7765, or Ann Marie Wall, 401-846-6890). On June 20, a letter went out to all the chapter security officers detailing their responsibilities. While the individual chapters are encouraged

to organize their telephone chains to suit each region (including responsible non-ABAA members), the Security Committee hopes that each will attempt to incorporate the basic steps recommended in the June 20 notice. Chapter Security Officers are in place in all chapters but the Mid-Atlantic where the size of membership requires further sub-division and more than one officer. Varying degrees of success with the telephone chain have been already been reported. If your chapter has not informed you of your place in the telephone chain, please contact your chapter president.

Ann Marie Wall reported to the Rare Books and Manuscripts Security Committee this past June at a meeting of the American Library Association in Dallas, where it was agreed that ABAA would maintain closer ties with ALA regarding security matters, and that the chairman of the RBMS would receive an up-to-date mailing list of all ABAA members which would be made available to any library wishing to do its own mailing to ABAA members regarding a theft. Many questions were asked at this conference about the possibility of setting up a joint on-line data base of stolen and recovered material for ABAA and RBMS use. BAM-BAM, an independent computerized register operated by Daniel and Kathy Leab and described in ABAA's 1982 security pamphlet, could meet this need, but does not appear to be widely used by book dealers and librarians. The ABAA Security Committee will continue exploring ways of working with BAM-BAM while attempting to put such a system in place at ABAA headquarters.

At the Dallas conference, Ms. Wall was invited to attend preliminary hearings on the revision of the RBMS guidelines for security in libraries. One matter under discussion that should interest book dealers was the renewed interest on the part of librarians to

have libraries mark all valuable holdings. Both members of the ABAA Security Committee feel strongly that the use of carefully placed markings on valuable material is an essential factor in the recovery of stolen material and would greatly assist conscientious book dealers. This position has been made known to ABAA's Board of Governors and to the RBMS Committee. Members of RBMS are now investigating the availability of invisible inks and will report on this to the ABAA Security Committee.

A successful ABAA Security System, one which would make the circulation of stolen material more difficult and protect the book dealer from unwittingly buying such material, will require the daily attention of the ABAA's administrative assistant or executive director. The Security co-Chairs hope to make the system reliable by having its functions incorporated into the job description of ABAA's administrative and secretarial aide. The person running the day to day affairs of the Association will be relied upon to receive all notices of theft, to initiate the telephone chain by contacting regional officers, and to maintain a permanent register of stolen material, eventually entering it into an on-line data base that can be called up by librarians, collectors and dealers. The history of ABAA shows that Board and Committee members come and go more frequently than do our paid staff. In developing a system which could be one of ABAA's best services to dealer and client alike, the continuity and efficiency of operation which a paid employee can provide will be of paramount importance. [Ann Marie Wall, co-chairperson]

A D D E N D A

[The following two reports were received one day after going to press with the first issue of the *Newsletter*. As both reports contained information relevant to the present goings-on at ABAA, it seemed propitious to include them as addenda on a separate sheet. The woes of editorship are fast becoming apparent.]

MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT GINSBERG

As this association approaches the nineties, we must begin to think about our future and where we are heading. A plan of action with a set of goals must be established -- a plan that can be implemented for the betterment of all our members.

Perhaps the most important message we do face is that of security. The theft of books is on the rise. As fast as thieves are caught, they are slapped on the wrists and set free to steal again. To my mind, this kind of action by the courts encourages these criminals. It is important we all become security officers of our businesses and help our chapters telephone and fax information as quickly as it becomes available. Also, librarians must be induced to cooperate with us.

Financially, we are better off than we were a few years ago, but we are still trying to do the work of an association of the 90's with dues that reflect the 70's. Realistically, our dues should be increased \$75/\$100 per year as soon as possible. Programs of publicity, security, ethics, membership, book fairs, etc. are all being carried on. However, many great ideas are being held back because of funding. Hopefully, a budget will be issued.

Membership is growing. This year we have had only two resignations, have added ten members, and in November, fourteen more memberships will be voted upon.

The last eighteen months have been tumultuous for our ABAA. We have weathered the storms, and will emerge stronger than before. Let us all meet our challenges of the 1990's with the same degree of commitment and love our founders had in 1949.

Michael Ginsberg
President

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

As the ABAA has grown in size, careful control of our monies has become a more difficult task. The cost of the expensive law suit which we incurred in defending our membership policies a number of years ago, really woke us up. The current Finance Committee was formed early this year to improve our financial control while keeping costs down and develop a budget for the organization that reflected actual Board decisions.

Our first step was to ask the accounting firm of Dingle & Kane to perform an audit of the 1988 financial year so that we would have a firm basis for future years. This audit is continuing and will be completed in November. There was some difficulty in locating all necessary documentation caused in part by the lack of an Executive Secretary. Dingle & Kane were also instructed to develop a series of guidelines that the Treasurer of the Finance Committee will use in performing self audits. These guidelines will also be delivered to us in November.

The Finance Committee recommended a number of cost saving measures to the Board in April which were accepted. These recommendations will be put in place beginning in our 1990 financial year (for more detail please consult the attachment to the minutes of the April Board meeting which were mailed to all members).

A budget was developed by the committee which was also adopted at the April meeting. This budget was based on expected revenues, all outlays as passed by the Board, estimates of outlays based on future Board actions and estimated overhead costs. Our current Treasurer will present the 1990 preliminary budget at the November meeting of the Board in Boston. It is essential that all committee chairpersons submit their budgets as soon as possible. [Robert Fleck, chairperson]

CHAPTER REPORTS

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

The primary event of 1989 for the Northern California Chapter of the ABAA was without question the highly successful 22nd California Antiquarian Book Fair, held in San Francisco in mid-February, 1989. It was one of the largest book fairs ever held in this country, in terms both of exhibitors and visitors; and most dealers reported stirring sales. Despite the efforts of the Book Fair Committee, headed by George Robert Kane, some problems did present themselves; and the chapter has been addressing possible solutions to these problems during our quarterly dinner meetings.

A special satisfaction for the members of this chapter was the contribution from Fair income made to the San Francisco Public Library. It was the first time that the ABAA's California Book Fair -- at least its Northern California embodiment -- had made such a donation.

The Chapter has suffered several losses in 1989. Our most venerable member, George Oppenheim, died in July at the age of 80. His enthusiasm and wide-ranging scholarship will be missed. Edwin C. Evans, who was a partner in the firm of William J. B. Burger though not himself a member of the ABAA, also died during the summer. Pauline and Tom Grosch of Antiquus Bibliophile in San Francisco have retired from active bookselling, and Sergio Domeyko of Sergio Old Prints, also in San Francisco, has evidently withdrawn from business.

The summer closed on a happier note, as member Michael Hollander and Ellen Heffelfinger, an associate member with the California Book Auction Galleries, were married on August 27 in Marin County -- though not to each other. Eminent booksellers came from thousands of miles away to attend the two ceremonies.

Jeffrey Thomas

SOUTHEAST

ABBA's newest chapter, Southeast, is perhaps the smallest, but ambition and service are two characteristics of this chapter. At its initial meeting, an agreed-on activity was a reception at the Atlanta 1989 Book Fair for non-ABAA members to discuss the purpose of membership and to answer questions. With the folding of Atlanta, the purpose is not dead and already plans are being considered for a comparable event at the Roslyn DC Book Fair in March, 1990.

Ambition manifested itself in hoping for hosting a roving biennial book fair. Out of respect to existing fairs, demographics and logistics, present thinking has zeroed in on the research triangle (Raleigh/Durham, Chapel Hill) or a joint show in conjunction with the Mid-Atlantic Chapter in the DC area. Dialogue with Mid-Atlantic Chapter has already been established and some individual Mid-Atlantic Chapter members have indicated enthusiasm for the idea. ABAA outside of Southeast will find welcome attention given to their opinions by their newest chapter. Please send comments to me.

James S. Presgraves

MIDWEST

The Midwest Chapter's activities over the past year centered on their bi-annual bookfair which came off with nary a hitch in May this year. Most of the exhibitors were pleased with the results -- some down-right ecstatic. And thanks to the fair committee's hard work, the fair came to within \$100 of its budget. Special thanks and congratulations are due to Beth Garon (Beasley Books), Florence Shay (Titles, Inc.) and the rest of the committee for their superlative efforts. A chapter president could not want or ask more of a fair committee. On the success of this fair, plans are already being made for another two years hence, in the hopes that the Chicago fair can find

a permanent niche in ABAA's fair schedule. In the interim, the Midwest Chapter continues to meet on a quarterly basis, twice a year in Chicago (as this is where the bulk of our membership resides) and once or twice a year in the outlands.

Rob Rulon-Miller

[Ginsberg, continued from page 1]

inquiries, etc. should be directed to past ILAB president John Lawson [ABA]. Once completed, this *Dictionary* is expected to be a very profitable item for the League.

The bibliographical prize given by the League will be \$2500.00. All entries must be in the hands of the judges by December 31, 1989. If anyone would like to enter the competition, please contact me for further details.

The 1990 ILAB Congress and Book Fair in Japan was discussed for a long time. A final list of events, dates, etc. was presented. Anyone interested in attending should contact me. The book fair will have fifty/sixty stands with shelves at a cost of \$1800/\$2000. These booths may have to be shared at the discretion of the ABAJ judge should there be an oversubscription. There will also be one hundred glass cases at the cost of \$350/\$400. This amount of cases could be expanded if there is a larger demand. Mitsou Nitta of Yushodo has suggested that the Japanese market is more receptive these days to fewer books at a higher value, henceforth the glass cases.

A survey was taken to ascertain how many could be expected to attend the congress and fair. The estimates were 180-250 people attending the congress, and 100-

120 booksellers displaying at the fair. Again, if you are considering attending this congress and/or fair, please contact me before the end of this year. Final invitations and contracts will be in the mail from Japan in March.

VAT 1992 is of great concern to our European colleagues. These taxes on antiquarian books can only be stopped by pressure from each national association and the League. In France, there is a new law requiring an export license to send new books outside of their country. This will cost 2000 francs. Also, the new Canadian president reported that his government will be putting a 9% tax on all reading materials as of January, 1991.

The Texas forgeries were on the agenda, and I read the report from our Vice-President, John Curtis, and his committee. The report was an accurate summary of events to this date. John and his committee are to be highly commended for their efforts. After I read the report, I solicited questions, but none was asked. President Rota commented on an article by Nicholas Barker in his *Book Collector* that stated ABAA had done nothing about the affair at all. He has asked me to respond immediately to Mr. Barker and his charges.

The Australian Association proposed two items with regard to collating books, authenticity, and general business practices. These topics which are covered in the booklet *ILAB Compendium of Customs and Usages* brought on heavy debate. There will be a new edition of this 1978 booklet. Also, a formal ILAB position should be printed in all national publications such as our membership directory. This position should state what a purchaser can expect from a member of the ILAB. Lou Weinstein will present that statement to our Board of Governors upon its completion.

Future Congresses and President's Meetings will be as follows: 1990: Tokyo, Japan (Congress / President's Meeting / Book Fair); 1991: Copenhagen, Denmark (President's

Meeting); 1992: Cologne, Germany (Congress / President's Meeting / Book Fair); 1992: Montreal, Canada (President's Meeting); 1994: Amsterdam, Netherlands (Congress / President's Meeting / Book Fair).

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

EDITORIAL

[This column is open to all members of ABAA. Any *grammatically correct* submission of reasonable length and timely content will be considered for publication. The opinions expressed in this column are strictly editorial in nature, and do not necessarily represent ABAA's policies or positions.]

Nicholas Barker's comments in the recent issue of *The Book Collector* (Autumn, 1989) about ABAA's failure to perform in the face of the revelation of the Texas forgeries, and "remain silent or rather inactive at a time when the good name of the trade calls for decisive action" are to a degree uninformed. Barker was not privy to the agonizing discussions about the forgery issue that went on in ABAA board meetings, nor does he seem to appreciate the complex legal problems involved were ABAA to attempt to police the affair. Nonetheless, Mr. Barker's words sadly echo much of the public sentiment about ABAA.

Our organization ought to be sufficiently healthy and beneficial so that every credible bookdealer should want to be a member. When we find credible dealers submitting resignations, and we hear the murmurings of splinter groups forming rival associations, we can take these acts as either threats to our existence, or fodder for action now.

It is within our power to provide information and benefits to the membership that are not immediately available elsewhere. (This might

include anything from medical insurance to the best deal on library supplies.) We can be actively engaged in the promoting of rare and fine books, and we can encourage scholarship and professionalism in the trade. But above all, and before these things are truly attainable, ABAA must promote and enforce a code of ethics and integrity within its membership.

Promoting ethics is one thing. On this count ABAA has performed, not superlatively, but satisfactorily. At least our collective heads seem to be in the right place on this one. But enforcing ethical standards is another thing all together; for even within the most conservative guidelines we are free to roam as close to the gray area of unethical behavior as we please. Who among us can say they have not caught a glimpse of the gray?

I favor muscle in the governing body of ABAA. The Benevolent Fund is a wonderful thing, a symbol of what we want our profession to be. But, the workaday world 1990 demands we be more than merely altruistic. We should create, write, distribute, and enforce guidelines of ethical and professional behavior. We should squeak with cleanliness and offenders should be swiftly and effectively punished. A legal contingency fund, legal insurance, and sage counsel should be at hand, as should the courage to use them if needed.

By accomplishing this we can affect the book trade as a whole, both in America and abroad. We will attract better candidates for membership. Our customer base will become more broad. Public Relations will become an offensive, not defensive office. And good will from all quarters will flow like spring water in Saratoga, from whence those of Mr. Barker's opinions can drink.

Rob Rulon-Miller

A MESSAGE FROM ABAA TO LIBRARIANS, COLLECTORS AND FELLOW BOOKSELLERS

The Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America views with great concern the existence of forgeries which have recently come to light in Texas and elsewhere. In November, 1988, as part of an effort to identify this material for the benefit of fellow booksellers, collectors and librarians, the ABAA Board of Governors appointed a Committee on Questioned Imprints which in turn produced a questioned imprints register whose availability we have made known through advertising and by direct communication with the library community. At the same time, ABAA authorized its Ethics Committee to investigate complaints about the sources of any questioned imprints.

Among those of our members who were initially deceived by one or more of these forged documents are some who have worked tirelessly to alert other members and the collecting world to the nature and extent of the problem. We join with them in encouraging our membership to identify these imprints, to advise any of their clients who have purchased them of their status, and to make restitution where appropriate. We recognize that considerable harm has been done to the record of history, as well as to the relationship of trust between bookseller and client, by the sale of this material. We give our full support to all efforts to identify promptly any reprints, facsimiles and fabrications which may pass as originals and to apprehend and prosecute anyone responsible for the fraudulent sale of such items.

Forty years ago, when the Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America was founded, we set many goals for ourselves, among which were commitments to maintaining the antiquarian book trade's highest professional standards and to encouraging the advancement of the technical and general knowledge of those engaged in book selling. We

hope to live up to these commitments today, partly through the participation of several of our members at this gathering, and partly by bringing to the attention of our entire membership the work and scholarship of the community at the Houston Conference On Forged Documents.

IN MEMORIAM -- JOHN H. JENKINS

[John Jenkins, a well-known dealer from Austin, Texas, was found dead of a large-caliber gunshot wound to the head in the Colorado River near Bastrop, Texas on April 16, 1989. Whether Jenkins was murdered or committed suicide is still a matter of debate, and is a mystery that may never be solved. His was a flamboyant life, filled with the stuff movies are made of, a life that often transcended a notable career in bookselling. The following sketch of that career is provided by Michael Parrish, a long-standing employee of The Jenkins Company, and an associate member in ABAA.]

John Holmes Jenkins, III was born March 22, 1940, in Beaumont, Texas, son of John Holmes Jenkins, Jr. and Sue Chalmers Jenkins. From an early age he was involved in numerous social and civic activities, and he became an Eagle Scout. Above all, he identified with his Texas ancestry -- he was a sixth generation Texan.

In 1958 he was voted Outstanding Young Man of Beaumont, and on the day he graduated from high school, the University of Texas Press published his first book, *Recollections of Early Texas*, the edited memoirs of his great-great grandfather, John Holland Jenkins. J. Frank Dobie stated in his introduction to the book, "many a Ph.D. thesis shows less scholarship and less intelligence than Johnny's work and is not nearly so interesting."

Jenkins received a General Motors Fellowship and Rotary Fellowship to attend the University of Texas, and he spent a year in law school before beginning a career in the publishing and rare book business. Since 1963 the

Jenkins Publishing Company has produced over 300 titles. Jenkins himself wrote and edited numerous works. His ten-volume *Papers of the Texas Revolution*, which won the Roberts Award, presented by the Texas State Historical Association for the outstanding title of 1973, was cited in a review article as "the most important publication on Texas history in years, perhaps ever." His most recent work, *Basic Texas Books*, a detailed guide to the outstanding volumes on Texas history, was rated by Professor W.W. Newcomb as "the best research tool I've ever come across for Texas."

In 1971 Jenkins was instrumental in helping the F.B.I. recover a set of the Audubon colorplate folio volumes on American birds, stolen from Union College. His autobiographical book about this and other experiences, *Audubon and Other Capers*, was praised by *Southwest Review* for its "wonderfully wicked sense of humor." He was elected a lifetime Fellow of the Texas State Historical Association at age 26, and in 1976 he received an honorary Doctor of Literature degree from Union College for his "high standard of integrity in business, intellectual contributions, and activities in the world of literature and scholarship." He was also elected a member of the Texas Institute of Letters and the Texas Philosophical Society.

In the rare book business, Jenkins' most important accomplishment came in 1975 with the acquisition of the famous Eberstadt collection of rare Americana, the largest single purchase in the field at the time. In 1980 he was elected president of the ABAA, and he was a primary organizer of a national system for identifying and publicizing the theft and loss of rare books from libraries, bookstores and private collections. In addition, several bookdealers now in business received valuable

experience working for the Jenkins Company.

John Jenkins will be remembered by those who knew him best as an energetic and inspiring personality who also could be retiring and scholarly; a man who believed thoroughly in his own talents and ingenuity yet who was fundamentally a shy and sensitive person; a flamboyant, carefree Las Vegas poker player who also showed the fullest devotion to family and friends -- in short, a man supremely complex, often frustrating, and utterly lovable. Most of all, he made a profound impression on all he touched, and his influence, particularly in the field of Texas history and rare Texana, will be permanent and far-reaching.

ILAB PLAQUES AVAILABLE

ABAA has a supply of glass plaques with the ILAB logo on them for sale to the membership. The cost per plaque is \$20.00 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling. Checks should be made out to the ILAB. Orders for the plaques are being taken by Lou Weinstein (Heritage Bookshop). The supply is limited -- order now.

QUERY: BOOK ROW AMERICA

Marvin Mondlin (Strand Book Store, Inc.) is working on a history of "Brick Row America: The Fourth Avenue [NYC] Book Trade." Mondlin has been associated with the Fourth Avenue

trade since 1951. In addition to drawing upon his own archives, he is conducting taped and photographic interviews with the now largely dispersed booksellers who were active on Fourth Avenue, as well as with others associated with, or with personal knowledge of the Fourth Avenue trade from 1926 to present. Any information our membership may have would be appreciated by Mr. Mondlin, who asks that he be contacted through his home address: 889 Broadway, 3-C, NYC 10003.

The next issue of the *Newsletter* will be appear in the Spring, and will coincide with the New York Bookfair at the end of March. Submissions from chapter presidents and committee chairpersons are due no later than March 1, 1990. If there was no report from your chapter in this issue it means that your chapter president did not submit one. If there was no report from a committee it means that the committee chairperson did not submit one. Adequate warning was given to all in writing, and in some cases, orally. As editor of the *Newsletter* I feel no shame in calling to task those who should have submitted reports, but didn't. I urge you all to complain to the appropriate individuals so that the *Newsletter* serves all of us as best it can.

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