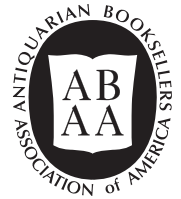




# The A B A A NEWSLETTER



VOLUME SIXTEEN, NUMBER 4 ANTIQUARIAN BOOKSELLERS' ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

FALL 2005

INSIDE: *The eBay Auction Experience* by George Krzyminski.....PAGE 3

## Members vote to change By-laws

by David M. Lesser

Considering unanimous recommendations by the Membership Committee and the By-laws Committee, the Board of Governors [also unanimously] urged the membership to amend Article V, Section C 4) of the By-laws, changing the qualifications for Emeritus Membership in ABAA. After much discussion, on the chat line and elsewhere, the members agreed by a vote of 174 to 58, comfortably exceeding the required two-thirds for passage. The Amendment, which has no effect on existing emeritus memberships, grants emeritus status only to members who have been Full Members for at least ten years and who have retired from active bookselling. The amended By-law permitted Emeritus status as well for Full Members age 75, whether retired from active bookselling or not. The

amendment also defines the term "retired from active bookselling": the applicant for Emeritus Membership must have ceased to exhibit at book fairs or to display his/her books on line, or to engage in regular efforts to sell books or acquire them for resale.

The Board and the membership concluded that failing to amend the By-laws would have been financially irresponsible, as Emeritus Members do not pay dues. ABAA's membership is aging, with increasing numbers approaching age 75; few of our members are under the age of forty. Without the amendment, substantial dues increases would loom. Those increases would deter new applications for ABAA membership, an effort that the Board is energetically and aggressively pursuing, and thus impair the organization's viability. ■

## Giving is Easy; Valuing is Hard

by Bruce Barnett

You've spent years putting together your beloved and now valuable book collection, and you're thinking about its safekeeping once you no longer can care for it. Your significant other has begrudgingly accepted your "hobby" but has no interest in perpetuating it. And your kids never even pretended to care! You love your children but can't trust them to care for the collection that you lovingly put together over the course of decades. What to do? The rational part of you says "sell the collection in an orderly way" because

your knowledge is more likely to result in maximizing the sales proceeds than if the sale is handled by other family members. You know that once the collection passes from your hands, your heirs will be unable to realize the collection's true value. By contrast, selling your collection while still under your control is the surest way to properly oversee its disposal. But, the prospect of breaking up your collection through measured sales is heartbreaking. Your thoughts naturally drift to another possibility, i.e., contributing the collec-

## Plath & Hughes Exhibit opens at Grolier Club

The Grolier Club of New York opened a major exhibition September 14th devoted to two of the 20th century's most celebrated poets. "*No Other Appetite*": *Sylvia Plath, Ted Hughes and the Blood Jet of Poetry*" brings together for the first time original letters, manuscripts and photographs from the Sylvia Plath archive at Smith College and from the Ted Hughes archive at Emory University. The exhibition documents the close creative relationship of these two poets during the years of their marriage and the repercussions of Plath's tragic suicide in the life and work of her husband, the late poet laureate of Britain.

The exhibition, co-curated by Smith's Karen Kukil and Emory's Steve Enniss, includes materials drawn from a number of recently acquired collections that have never before been exhibited to the public. Included are family letters and photographs, manuscripts of the poets' work -- sometimes with writing by each on opposite sides of the same page -- as well as books from the two poets' personal libraries that have been heavily annotated in their hands.

Among the highpoints of the exhibition is a selection of notes and typescripts for Plath's unpublished novel *Falcon Yard*. This autobiographical novel, described in Plath's notes as "a fable of faithfulness," recounts the story of her and Hughes' courtship and marriage. One of Plath's early biographers doubted the

continued on page 4

continued on page 10



## ILAB Book Fairs

**2005**

### October 28-30

Boston, MA (ABAA)  
Hynes Convention Center

### October 28-30

Sydney, Australia  
(ANZAAB)  
Masonic Center

### November 4-5

London, England (ABA)  
Old Chelsea Town Hall

**2006**

### January 27-29

Stuttgart, Germany (VDA)  
Württembergischer  
Kunstverein

### February 17-19

Los Angeles, CA (ABAA)  
Westin Century Plaza

### March 2-4

Amsterdam, The Netherlands  
(NVvA)  
Passenger Terminal  
Amsterdam

### April 20-23

New York, NY (ABAA)  
Park Avenue Armory

For a calendar including non-ILAB book fairs, visit [www.abaa.org](http://www.abaa.org)

## Letters to the Editor

*From: David Mason*

I'm writing to you in your capacity as President of the ABAA. Even though it would be easier to phone I'm writing this in case you want to use it at a meeting of the ABAA, or wherever. I've been corresponding with an inmate in a California penal colony regarding writing. I discovered him while I was appraising the files of Descant Magazine at the University of Toronto. He submitted a piece called "My First Riot" which caught my eye and on which reading I thought showed a fair bit of natural talent. He was rejected by the magazine so I wrote him a note of encouragement which led to the correspondence. It turns out he's at some sort of penal colony where artists and writers get to work at creative tasks. He hasn't got books and I've been sending some.

Some years ago I sent a lot of books to Canada's biggest penitentiary where I found out that budgets didn't allow them to buy much.

The program sounds like an interesting innovation. They seem to be trying to encourage creativity, hopefully, so

people can change their lives. Naturally I believe that books can save your life so it makes me feel good to contribute something to a cause that might work for a few guys. I've been dealing with the official in charge of that program who seems quite dedicated. She has to keep the books meaning it's a sort of in house library for all the convicts in that penal colony. She wants art books (more of the cons seem to be artists than writers). I don't deal in art but I'll round up some up here to send. I've been sending writing manuals and good modern literature in reading copies.

Does the ABAA ever do anything like donate books to such things? If they don't they should. After all we see millions of books we don't need between us all and if we could help a felon to turn his life around it seems like a good idea. Maybe your chapter could have some of their members send the odd parcel. The official's name and address is: *Lucinda Thomas, P.O. Box 9502, Lancaster, CA 93539*. Her phone is (661)729-2000 extension 7614 if you want to contact her. ■

## 29th Annual Boston International Antiquarian Book Fair



**October 28-30, 2005**

**Friday 5pm-9pm Saturday noon-7pm Sunday noon-5pm**

**at**

**The Hynes Convention Center**

**Tickets: Friday Evening Preview \$15**

**Saturday and Sunday \$8**



**For more info, please call 607.266.6540, or visit [bostonbookfair.com](http://bostonbookfair.com).**

# The eBay Auction Experience

by George Krzyminski

The following has been my experience, mostly from the selling side, since I began using the eBay system in 1998. The first full year using it I concentrated on selling items that had been “laying around the shop” for years, and sold over 1,000 items, averaging \$20 apiece. It was a great experience and rewarding to see these things move out. The past two years, every item I’ve catalogued I have started on eBay first-over 2,000 pieces. My system has been to catalogue the item using my standard Abebooks Homebase program, photograph the piece, store the jpeg file on AOL (because they host for free), transfer my catalogue listing to a word file, add my shipping blurb and cut and paste this into the eBay “description” box and generate an appropriate title for the auction. Most importantly to me and my use of time, if it doesn’t sell on eBay, I haven’t wasted my photographing and cataloguing efforts since I then use that

information to list on the ILAB, ABE & ALIBRIS sites. Even the imagery work is not lost, since ABE hosts photographs for free. (Unfortunately, I had the recent experience with ABE where they “lost” over a thousand of my older images from their server. They have no recourse for finding them; but I tried. They are not to be relied upon as repositories. Many of the eBay rejects sell fairly quickly on the online sites, since it is obvious that the online search engine shoppers and eBay shoppers are not necessarily the same people.

My pricing technique on eBay starts the item at the lowest I am willing to accept. Occasionally, items have been bid up and sold on eBay for much higher amounts than search engines quote, as if the people shopping eBay do not check these sources. Possibly this is the result of the excitement of the auction room and the competition between buyers. I don’t understand why a book that may

be bought for \$40 on ABE or ILAB can sell for \$125 – as in a regular vg copy in dustjacket of Wilbur Smith’s *Shout at the Devil*. I would cheerfully have taken \$35. Or why a \$20 booklet sold for \$400. This a copy of a nineteenth century Colorado pamphlet – five copies of which were catalogued online at the time of auction, none for over \$50. I started this item at \$20 and was paid my \$400 immediately following the auction no questions asked. At the same time, I have spent a lot of time researching and listing great books and ephemeral items, cataloguing and photographing, and have been very disappointed with the eBay auction non-results, where there were not even any watchers.

Recently, I listed some Long Island books, maps and ephemera, in which I specialize, and was able to garner some very good (\$2,000 +) repeat business after the auction from an old institutional

continued on page 8

## John Carter Brown Library offers Fellowships

The John Carter Brown Library will award approximately twenty-five short- and long-term Research Fellowships for the year June 1, 2006-July 31, 2007. Short-term fellowships are available for periods of two to four months and carry a stipend of \$1,800 per month. These fellowships are open to foreign nationals as well as to U.S. citizens who are engaged in pre- and post-doctoral, or independent research. Graduate students must have passed their preliminary or general examinations at the time of the application and be at the dissertation-writing stage. Long-term fellowships, primarily funded by the Nation Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, are typically five to nine months and carry a stipend of \$4,000 per month. Recipients of the long-term fellowships may not be engaged in graduate work and ordinarily must be U.S. citizens or have resided in the U.S. for 3 years immediately preceding the application deadline.

It should be noted that the Library’s holdings are concentrated on the history of the Western Hemisphere during the colonial period (ca. 1492 to ca. 1825), emphasizing the European discovery, exploration, settlement, and development of the Americas, the indigenous response to the European conquest, the African contribution to the development of the hemisphere, and all aspects of European relations with the New World, including the impact of the New world on the Old. Research provided by fellowship applicants must be suited to the holdings of the Library. All fellows are expected to relocate to Providence and to be in continuous residence at the Library for the entire term of the fellowship.

Several short-term fellowships have thematic restrictions: the Jeannette D. Black Memorial Fellowship in the history of cartography; Center for New World Comparative Studies Fellowships for research in comparative history of the colonial Americas; the Alexander O. Victor

Memorial Fellowship in early maritime history; the Ruth and Lincoln Ekstrom Fellowship in the history of women and the family in the Americas; the William Reese Company Fellowship in bibliography and the history of printing; the Marie L. and William R. Hartland Fund for research on maritime history; the Touro National Heritage Trust Fellowship for research on some aspect of the Jewish experience in the New World before 1825. Maria Elena Cassiet Fellowships are restricted to scholars who are permanent residents of countries in Spanish America. The InterAmericas Fellowship supports research on the history of the West Indies or the Caribbean basin.

The application deadline for fellowships for 2006-2007 is January 10, 2006. For application forms or more information, visit [www.JCBL.org](http://www.JCBL.org) or write to: *Director, John Carter Brown Library. Box 1894, Providence, RI 02912. Tel.: 401-863-2725. Fax: 401-863-3477. Email: JCBL\_Fellowships@brown.edu.* ■

# Barnett

continued from front page

tion to an institution like a university, museum or library that will not only keep it together but will properly care for it. Thinking further, you begin identifying other benefits from a donation including developing a measure of public recognition and acclaim for your good deed, establishing a rich store of material for research by academicians, facilitating exhibitions for public education by institutions, and generating estate and income tax savings.

Having determined that a contribution to an institution is at least a reasonable possibility worthy of further merit, you begin digging a bit deeper into the matter. One of the things you'll find is that your objective of preserving your collection wholly intact directly conflicts with the institutions' desire for flexibility to allow the collection to be dismantled, in whole or part, under certain circumstances. A common compromise allows institutions to dispose of "duplicates" but otherwise to retain the collection.

You'll soon bump into a series of important yet subtle tax issues, the trickiest and most consequential of which is establishing the value of the collection. The importance of this valuation issue represents the core of the discussion that follows. Note that while antiquarian books are emphasized below, generally the principles described are applicable equally to other forms of art and antiques.

An understanding of some of the fundamentals is helpful in analyzing the tax consequences of charitable contributions. A useful starting point is the set of rights afforded to creators of artistic works by the copyright laws of the United States. Those rights are in the form of protections provided by Title 17 of the United States Code to authors of "original works" including literary, dramatic, musical, artistic and other intellectual works. The owner of the copyright has the exclusive right to reproduce the work, to distribute copies and to display the work. These rights can be lawfully transferred by the copyright

owner. Such transfers in the context of books, however, are rare. More often, the owner of a lawfully obtained copy of a book has limited rights that allow the book to be resold and displayed and to be transferred to its next owner along with those limited rights. While the copyright laws do not apply to all antiquarian books because of their old age, many are young enough to be subject to the copyright provisions. The rules governing the term of copyright protection are too complicated to cover here but are important for collectors and booksellers to understand should they intend to use their books for purposes beyond simply buying, selling and displaying.

This cursory discussion of copyright principles is relevant because the value of a particular work of art may be determined in part by the range of options available to the owner. Thus, the owner of a single copy of a book may have a property worth far less than the owner of the right to reproduce that work and sell copies in prodigious quantities.

When a contribution is made to an institution, like a museum, library, or university, the value of the gift must be established for use on tax returns. That amount is called the "fair market value," defined as the price at which an item will change hands between unrelated parties where both are knowledgeable about it and neither the buyer nor the seller is obliged to act. This conception eliminates values used in transactions that may not be at "arm's length," e.g., between relatives where the price may not reflect true economic value. Also excluded from consideration are transactions where one party can take advantage of the other through superior knowledge and where one party must act because of economic necessity or legal requirements. To illustrate these points, imagine that a collector has contributed a copy of the 1894 Kelmscott Press edition of *The Complete Poems of John Keats* to a university library and that the value of the book must be established for use on the collector's tax return. Assume that the collector asks a member of the Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America ("ABAA") to value it. The

ABAA member learns that in the past year, four copies of the same book have been sold and remarkably, each copy is in exactly the same condition as the volume to be valued. The bookseller knows that in the first case, a father sold his son the book for \$500. In case two, an unscrupulous bookseller purchased the book from a 95 year old widower suffering from Alzheimer's for \$350. The seller of the third book desperately needed cash to pay for his mother's urgent surgery and quickly found and sold the old family heirloom that he knew nothing about for \$400. The fourth sale occurred at a heavily advertised Sotheby's auction where a well known William Morris collector was the winning bidder at \$3,500 before buyer's commission. Under the tax rules, the first three sales would be disregarded in favor of the fourth where both parties were knowledgeable, unrelated and under no compulsion to buy or sell. Despite three sales ranging between \$350 and \$500, the ABAA bookseller likely would conclude that the fair market value of the contributed book is \$3,500 and that is the value that the collector should use in filing the required tax returns.

The most fundamental economic task for donors then is establishing the fair market value of the items to be contributed. The market, however, for antiquarian books is tricky. Unlike the stock market, there is no exchange available to provide a reliable and ready valuation. Moreover, unlike the stock market where one share of common stock in a company is the same as every other common share, there can be substantial variations between one copy of a book and the next. Compared to the stock market, the book market can be viewed as an illiquid venue where unique items are traded. Valuing infrequently traded and unique items can be an intimidating task.

Wall Street analysts spend enormous time and valuable resources constructing economic models to calculate the value of a company's shares to decide whether they are over or undervalued and whether therefore to buy or sell them. These models normally are based upon

continued on next page



# Barnett

continued from previous page

an estimate of future dividends or interest that the asset is expected to generate. Such effort and expense is premised upon the notion that the worth of an asset is a function of the present value of its future cash flows. Said more simply, an investor is more likely to pay a higher price for a stock that provides \$500 in cash to her in five years than another stock that will return \$300 in eight years. In addition to dividends and interest, financial assets sometimes return cash in the form of capital gains representing one time payments from the disposition of the asset. Increases in value (capital gains) and decreases in value (capital losses) reflect the consensus expectation of investors about future cash that will be returned by the investment. If investors expect future cash flows to be substantial, they will bid the price of the asset higher and thereby generate capital gains. If, however, they are pessimistic about future cash flows, they will push the price down into capital loss territory.

Financial assets and antiquarian books have fundamental differences in cash flows. In the usual case, books will return cash only when sold; there are no book equivalents to periodic dividends and interest that flow from financial assets. Of course, copyright owners are positioned to benefit from the sale of additional copies but someone owning a copy has no such reproduction rights. Moreover, while owners of older books with no copyright protection can reproduce them with impunity, they have no rights of exclusivity and therefore take on extra risks in producing additional copies.

The value of a copy of a book then is reduced to the simple question of what someone is willing to pay for it without benefit of a stream of future cash flows or a readily available exchange that lists its current worth. Answering that question is far more challenging than asking it. In the absence of likely cash flows and established exchanges, one must look at comparable transactions such as the price at which the book has traded in recent

sales. The more transactions, of course, the more data that is available to ascertain value. If, for example, 10 copies of Christopher Morley's *Where The Blue Begins* illustrated by Arthur Rackham have sold for between \$75 and \$125 in the last year, another copy is likely to sell in, or closely around that range. Adjustments should be made for such factors as condition, edition, association and the like. Thus, a first edition in fine condition with a delightful inscription to a famous celebrity, signed also by the illustrator and publisher would sell at the top end of the range, if not above it. By contrast, a reading copy with nothing else to commend it likely would sell at the bottom end of the range or below it.

One difficulty, of course, is establishing the price at which a book has traded. Auctions provide some information and transparency since their results often are made public. Thus, Ebay, Sotheby's, Christies, Swann and similar auctioneers provide data that can prove useful in establishing book values. But, there are many cases where such actual sales data is unavailable. Where then does one turn for comparable transaction data? Once again, online auction sites like Ebay can provide a useful starting point as can other websites such as the one maintained by the ABAA. It is important, however, to remember that the prices listed on those sites represent the asking price and not necessarily the price at which the book will sell. In fact, stories abound of books that languish year after year on sites such as ABE suggesting that their asking price is too high and therefore not representative of fair market value. Similarly, reports of fraud and misrepresentation of books on Ebay are rampant thereby calling into question the validity of Ebay pricing.

Rarer books, of course, present even greater challenges in finding comparable transactions. How, for example, is a value established for the 1909 Richard G. Badger edition of *The Legende of Sainte Cariberte Des Oies* by Gertrude Hall Brownell, of which only four copies are known with three being found at Brown University, the New York Public Library and the Library of Congress?

Here the judgment of a rare bookseller is needed to apply her skill and experience to extrapolate values. Among the factors the bookseller would consider are the importance of the work, condition of the book and the values at which different yet similar books have traded. The bookseller will take advantage of available tools like subscription services that, for a fee, provide a running record of past auction results as well as her knowledge of actual trades in the rare book marketplace. In valuing a collection, the bookseller also would consider whether the whole is greater than the sum of the parts, i.e., whether additional value should be included to reflect the time, ability and cost of accumulating a comparable collection.

Finally, it should be noted that rigorous IRS procedural requirements attach to the computation of the amount of a charitable contribution. Thus, the donor must attach a form to her income tax return signed by the institution acknowledging the receipt of the contribution. In addition, the appraiser must sign the form and describe her capabilities to perform the appraisal. While there are some similarities in the case of contributions to institutions made by bequest in the will of a deceased collector, the stakes tend to be different since the value of the collection is offset by the amount of the contribution in the estate tax return. Unlike lifetime charitable contributions that impact the donor's income tax return, the value of a collection included in an estate but disposed of by charitable contribution generally will receive little IRS scrutiny since the amount of estate tax generally is unchanged regardless of the collection's value.

Contributing a collection to an institution such as a library, museum or university is a viable option for many collectors with a number of benefits for both the donor and the recipient. Establishing the value of the contribution, however, can be a very difficult task requiring data, investigatory tools and judgment borne of experience. Inasmuch as the IRS may scrutinize the value of the collection, the stakes can be high and the outcome

continued on next page

# Barnett

continued from previous page

uncertain. Understanding IRS valuation standards and following IRS dictates increase the chances for a smooth and successful outcome. ■

*Bruce H. Barnett is a partner in The Book Block. He is trained in and practiced finance and tax law for over 30 years and has written and lectured extensively on taxation.*

## Stolen Books Lecture to take place in Boston

Whose responsibility is it to police the world of books? What do stories of the theft and breaking of books have to tell us about the meaning of reading and learning?

A panel of lawyers, scholars, librarians, and bookdealers will address these and other questions in *DECLARED LOST: Recovering Stolen Books*, a symposium to be held in the Boston Public Library's Rabb Lecture Hall on October 29 at 10 AM. Scheduled to coincide with the Boston Antiquarian Book Fair, *DECLARED LOST* will strive to foster dialogue about books, theft, trade, and cultural heritage.

The panel discussion will bring together an internationally-known group of experts on books and cultural property. Nicholas Basbanes, author of *A Gentle Madness* and the forthcoming *Every Book Its Reader: The Power of the Printed Word to Stir the World*, (HarperCollins), will explore the story of Stephen Blumberg, who stole close to thirty thousand books valued at \$20 million from more than 300 libraries throughout the United States and Canada. Ken Sanders, of Ken Sanders Rare Books in Salt Lake City, former chair of the security committee of the Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America (ABAA), who has helped



Photo credit: John Crichton

**ABAA President John Crichton on a hike with Mr. & Mrs. Mitsuo Nitta during the recent ILAB Presidents' Meeting in Montréal.**

bring several book thieves to justice and exposed numerous frauds and forgeries, will discuss internet techniques and strategies for exposing and combating theft and deception in the trade. Jeff Spurr, Islamic and Middle East Specialist in Harvard University's Fine Arts Library, will discuss the case of Jose Torres, who stole an estimated \$1.5 million worth of books and prints from Harvard's libraries. David Szewczyk, a partner in the Philadelphia Rare Books & Manuscripts Company and current co-chair of the security committee of the ABAA, will offer his perspective on two cases in which he helped to identify and recover stolen books. Michael Thompson, a Chicago attorney who specializes in cultural property law and past president of the Caxton Club of Chicago, will discuss the recovery of Holocaust-era displaced books. The panel will be moderated by SAFE member Matthew Battles, author of *Library: An Unquiet History* and coordinating editor of the *Harvard Library Bulletin*.

After the morning's panel discussion, attendees are invited to a special tour of the Department of Rare Books and Manuscripts at the Boston Public Library, given by Curator of Manuscripts, Earle Havens. Mr. Havens will draw special attention to collections that have suf-

fered losses and thefts before coming to the Boston Public Library, including the personal library of John Adams, and the library of Thomas Prince, two of the earliest and largest private library collections in America, as well as the personal manuscript collection of Mellen Chamberlain, Librarian of the Boston Public Library, 1878-90.

*DECLARED LOST* is organized by the Book and Library Committee of SAFE/Saving Antiquities for Everyone, a group of advertising, media, and communications professionals working with experts from the academic and museum communities to end the destruction of our shared cultural heritage and undiscovered past by raising public awareness.

Attendance at the panel discussion and in the tour is free. Preregistration for the tour is required.

Please contact Committee co-chairs Irina Tarsis (itarsis@savingantiquities.org) or Matthew Battles (mbattles@fas.harvard.edu) for further information on *DECLARED LOST* and to confirm your attendance. For directions to the Boston Public Library, see [www.bpl.org](http://www.bpl.org); for more information on this and other SAFE programs, please visit [www.savingantiquities.org](http://www.savingantiquities.org). ■

## **THE NEW ILAB.ORG WEBSITE IS COMING SOON!!!**

www.ilab.org has been completely re-designed and is now fully tri-lingual: English, French and German. A Chinese version is soon to be completed and many more languages will be added in the future. Our exciting new site with its visually pleasing and efficient design can be visited at:

**[www.ilab.org/new](http://www.ilab.org/new)**

This new version is going to be launched on 1st November 2005, with an extensive marketing campaign including payment for Google front page advertising for a period of three months. Ilab.org is already indexed by Bookfinder, Addall and even Google for specific book searches.

Now is the time to support ILAB's database by joining. Over 450 ILAB booksellers have already done so, and it is ILAB's goal to get this number to 1000. There is no commission on sales, only a modest monthly fee of 45 Euros. Remember that Abebooks charges a monthly fee of 37 Euros plus a commission of 8% on each sale!

### **SPECIAL OFFER**

Newcomers signing for a period of 3 months will only pay 70 Euros\* instead of 200 Euros\*\*. This offer is valid for anyone signing up before the official launch on November 1st. So do not hesitate - sign up and make a profit while supporting your ILAB colleagues!

ILAB's website is a competitive and viable alternative to other book sites, and we want it to remain so, but it can only survive if more ILAB booksellers become members. So do join our efforts and help us make this database the best professional bookselling site in the world!

To join us, please contact **[support@ilab-lila.com](mailto:support@ilab-lila.com)**

\*Fees for up to 10,000 books. Per 5,000 books above 10,000 an extra charge of 5 Euros is charged.

\*\* 35 Euros per month plus a set up fee of 95 Euros.



# Krzyminski

**continued from page 3**

customer who had not bought anything from my listings for years. All of a sudden, there they were buying on eBay. I found out that they'd hired a new director who was hunting eBay for items.

The same good principles of cataloguing and selling apply to selling on eBay: accurate and careful descriptions and guarantee of the material sold mean there may be few problems or complaints. For years now I have indicated in my descriptions on eBay that I am a member of the ABAA and that I guarantee my items and I believe this to have helped in my sales.

PayPal is the favored method of payment with my bidders, accounting for at least 60%+ of the wins and seems to be especially appreciated by European and other offshore customers since they don't have to fuss about conversions or finding U.S. currency. Checks and money orders follow for about 25% of the total, with credit cards processed by my own system and cash the least encountered.

Depending on the item being sold, Europe and the rest of the world are pretty clued-in to shopping eBay. I have shipped many ephemeral items and books to Germany, France, Sweden, Japan and Australia and other countries. Great Britain is still the largest offshore buyer, with strong interest in travel ephemeral items (railroad, shipping, view books), classic illustrated children's books-Rackham, Dulac, Robinson- good literature, fine press books, signed items by Thomas Hardy, Vita Sackville-West, and others.

The overall deadbeat percentage rate has been about 1 per 200 sales or so. Fortunately, all of these "no sales" have been in the \$20 range and I retained the item; payment was never sent from the winner despite numerous hounding emails. I don't ship until payment has been received.

I have sold antiquarian and collectible books, maps, paintings, prints, photographs, drawings, paper ephemera of all kinds including postcards, early American manuscripts and documents, art, trade catalogues, tickets and more, anywhere from \$1 to \$3,500. I once even (on a

whim) listed a well-used Elsie the Cow matchbook circa 1960's and it sold for \$4.

Some categories of item have changed their relative hotness. At one time it seemed as if any stereoview or photographic items would sell on eBay; now it seems there isn't a lot of selling movement in that area at all unless the views are cheap.

A key for all selling on eBay (and probably anywhere) is that if a good item is priced low enough it will sell. I've become more willing to help the cash flow by sometimes reducing my retail price by half or more and then selling the book on eBay just to move it. My prices are not high to begin with, so I've had some wrenching moments when I've let go of books and paper that I put good money into, moving them for a percentage of what they 'should' bring. The simple alternative is sitting with stuff that does not sell.

I use the minimum price rather than the reserve option. There are a couple of ways to look at this. A low start price, with a reserve, may get an item's bidding started, or may not get anything because of the frustration of buyers with the presence of a reserve. I formerly used the reserve system and tried to get around buyer unwillingness to bid by revealing the reserve price right in my listing. Inevitably, I would still get asked, "What is your reserve?" Reserving can be expensive, doubling the listing fees. However, you can get around this by listing the item for \$ 9.99 or lower, pay only that minor listing fee and the reserve listing fee and keep a hidden high reserve so that you still get the money you want for the sale and get away cheaply with a lower eBay listing fee. I don't like to play that game, preferring to pay up front for the minimum bid I want and trust the process to get the result. This way, if anyone meets my minimum bid, I make my desired price and sell the item. It's more straightforward and I get fewer queries to answer. These days there is often only one bid on my sold pieces. I've had some experience with the "Buy it Now" option and it works well and also costs a little extra to use. The past half year I've only used the straight auction option with 5

day runs on the items; if they're not sold the first time I relist them once and then bump them up to the online catalogues. I try to list at least 50 items a week. I can't always manage to do it until I remember that the cash flow is worth the effort.

Listing items for auction that are similar in subject matter at the same time seems to help. I bought a collection of material that came from a Brooklyn Buick dealer: automobile catalogues and pictorial items dated 1915-1920's. Out of 50 pieces, priced in the \$ 20-\$100 range, only two items failed to sell at auction (they sold later that year to a specialty dealer) and sometimes the same bidder bought several pieces. Selling in this way seems to bring a focused attention on all the items being offered and concentrate collector interest. My offerings of art, books, photographs and ephemera together have not worked quite as well. At the same time, if the right words are in the title or description, the buyers will find the offering. Going outside my field of books and ephemera has had mixed results for me. For instance, I've had only slow sales for contemporary signed lithographs in the \$100-\$1,500 range, perhaps because those who specialize only in art sales on eBay do well in that field, or maybe because they are more recognized as art dealers on a continuous basis to the buyers. I am still evaluating this.

## **Some Advantages:**

- eBay is a way to get rid of stock which has not moved.
- Stock which is not "show" material can be sold: I have sold broken sets, binding copies of books and other items which could not be shown or placed in a shop either because of appearance or delicacy of the material.
- The cash flow is improved immediately.
- More customers to add to the database and finding out their specific wants, hopefully to become regular buyers.

**continued on next page**



# Krzyminski

continued from previous page

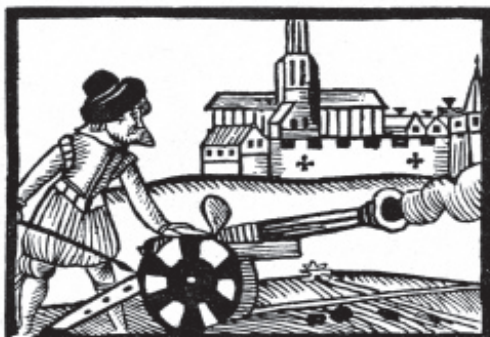
## Some Disadvantages:

- It's a boring process to constantly catalogue, photograph and list for eBay. The cure for this boredom is the occasional hotly contested auction, or something going for a lot more money.
- The fees can add up, depending on how much you're selling and at what level. PayPal and eBay listings and final value fees can become heavy. I'm averaging about \$500/month. I pay my eBay fees via an Amex card so I can at least build some air mileage from the experience.
- The shortness of the selling window makes for a limited selling opportunity. By nature the auction is quick so that not every potential customer may see the item in time to bid.
- Chasing deadbeats and slow-payers is tedious and annoying.
- Answering inane questions from unknowledgeable folks. This can turn around, if I may educate them into becoming better collectors.

So far as buying on eBay, the ever-present danger of shill bidding and rip-off artists cannot be ignored. Recently an art dealer acquaintance bought an oil painting on eBay from a reputable seller in the Midwest for \$10,000, paid for it and never received it. The seller was later arrested by the FBI and was found to be only a middle-person who had been convinced to list the item by the thieves. The dealer only recovered 25% of his money. At the same time, I've bought many items on eBay, mostly for a personal collection and all went well; many dealers I know buy regularly on eBay, reading descriptions carefully and asking questions, ensuring satisfaction.

It seems that after a certain amount of feedbacks are given, people stop leaving it for you, like it doesn't matter anymore

## THE ABAA PUBLICATION OF



### ROGER E. STODDARD'S ADDRESS

**No More Mr. Nice Guy;  
or How to Get Along When Roger's Not Around Anymore**

**Delivered before the ABAA and ILAB guests  
April 30, 2005, at the Grolier Club**

**Is Available in  
A limited edition of 250 copies,  
designed and printed by the Poltroon Press, Berkeley, California**

**\$10.00 per copy. Orders are now being taken.  
All proceeds go to the ABAA Benevolent Fund.**

***For details inquire at [sbenne@abaa.org](mailto:sbenne@abaa.org)***

if you already have a lot. I'm not sure if the feedback system means much at all except to very new buyers. There are also several ways to scam or pad the feedback system. I notice plenty of sellers with crappy feedback still blithely selling quite well. There are good sellers and good buyers out there, but at the same time charlatans and deadbeats abound.

In sum, the eBay selling experience has been good. The overall middle market seems to have dropped drastically at shows, in shops, for the online catalogues and at auction. At least eBay keeps the

cash flow going, giving a very positive impact on my bottom line. Selling on eBay is still evolving, along with the whole online marketplace. Perhaps over time it may be worthwhile to discuss an ILAB or ABAA – related auction site tied in with our online systems. At least we could control quality and become more visible to buyers through an online auction marketplace. Member dealers' stock could be linked to online shops through the auction option, just as eBay does with their shops. It's another venue, another way to sell...and I would much rather the ABAA get the listing fees than eBay. ■

# Grolier

continued from front page

existence of such a manuscript altogether. More recently Plath was thought to have destroyed the entire manuscript when she learned of Hughes' affair with Assia Wevill. The notes and typescripts included in this exhibition -- part of a larger selection of manuscript fragments of the novel in the Emory collection -- escaped destruction because of the couple's habit of composing new work on discarded manuscript pages of one another's work. These surviving fragments cast light on Plath's conception of this previously lost novel.

Also present in the exhibition are a number of books owned by Hughes and Plath that have never before been seen by the public. The copy of Ernest Jones' study of dreams, *On the Nightmare*, which Plath inscribed for Hughes their first Christmas together, is included, as is Plath's heavily underscored and annotated copy of Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*. One of the most moving books present in the exhibition is the copy of Erich Fromm's *The Art of Loving*, which Plath read on the advice of her analyst in the final weeks of her life. This

heavily underscored text offers readers a glimpse of Plath trying to come to terms with her own failed marriage in the weeks leading up to her suicide, weeks during which she also composed the poems that would insure her posthumous fame.

Equally illuminating are letters and manuscripts in Hughes' hand that reflect the hurt and guilt he felt in the years following Plath's death. In a badly-worn notebook dating from the late 1960s, Hughes records a dream in which Plath comes back to life for one day. After the subsequent suicide of Wevill in 1969, Hughes writes to a friend and confides, "I wonder sometimes if things might have gone differently with-



Smith © Estate of Ted Hughes

**Sylvia Plath drawing in the harbor at Cornucopia, Wisconsin, July 1959.**



Smith © Marcia Stern

**Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath in Concord, Massachusetts, December 1959.**

out the events of 63 & 69. I have an idea of those two episodes as giant steel doors shutting down over great parts of myself-leaving me that much less, just what was left, to live on. No doubt a more resolute artist would have penetrated the steel doors." In an undated manuscript Hughes confesses that he writes poetry in hope of some catharsis: "I am not composing poetry," he writes, "I am trying to get out of the flames."

In a letter to fellow poet Seamus Heaney written shortly before his own death Hughes explains his decision to write the autobiographical sequence of poems, *"Birthday Letters,"* about his marriage to Plath. "I'd come to the point where there seemed no alternative," he writes. He first published a small number of poems about Plath in his "New Selected," but "the rest I stuffed back into the sack. But they wouldn't stay."

"So I brought them back up & wrote at them en masse for some time-not

continued on next page



# Grolier

continued from previous page

knowing what I'd end up with or where I'd end. Till suddenly -- between one day & the next -- I realized that was it. I couldn't grasp the wholeness of it but I had the sensation of the whole load of long preoccupation dropping away -- separating itself and dropping away like a complete piece of fruit. The sense

of being released from it very strong and very weird."

This selection of documents from the Plath and Hughes archives will give readers of these poets' work an intimate glimpse of the shared life of two of the last century's major poetic voices.

LOCATION AND TIMES: '*No Other Appetite*' will be on view at the Grolier Club from Sept. 14-Nov. 19, 2005, with the exception of Oct. 10, Columbus Day. Hours: Monday-Saturday 10 AM - 5

PM. Open to the public free of charge. An illustrated catalogue of the exhibition (hardcover, 6 x 9, 84 pp., 27 illustrations, \$40) will be available from The Veatchs Arts of the Book, PO Box 328, Northampton, MA 01060; phone: (413) 584-1867; fax: (413) 584-2751; e-mail: [veatchs@veatchs.com](mailto:veatchs@veatchs.com). Copies may also be purchased at the Grolier Club (47 East 60th Street, between Park and Madison Avenues) in New York City during exhibition hours. ■

## ILAB Congress to take place in Philadelphia

by Susan Benne

The ILAB Congress Committee has planned a spectacular program for the 2006 ILAB Congress in Philadelphia. The Congress will take place from September 9-13, 2006, and the Book Fair will follow from September 15-17 in New York at the Park Avenue Armory. All participants in the Book Fair must register for the Congress. Invitations to both events will be mailed to all ILAB members at the beginning of the year.

The Congress will be based in Philadelphia's historic Park Hyatt at the Bellevue Hotel. The rooms are spacious and tastefully appointed and the hotel features a 29,000 square foot fitness facility, and is located within a major shopping district with many fine restaurants. In order to make the cost of the Congress more affordable, many of the venues are within walking distance of the hotel, eliminating the need for buses. The Symposium welcomes as guest speakers noted Philadelphia natural historian Robert Peck and renowned Princeton professor and historian Dr. Anthony Grafton.

Congress Committee chairman John Spencer says of the program, "We sought to bring a mixture of culture, education and festivity to this event. Our participants will not be starved for things to do." The Congress opens with a cocktail reception at the Beaux Arts-style Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. Other local venues to be visited include the Union League, the Chemical Heritage Foundation, and the Penn Rare Books

Collections. A concert is being organized at the Kimmel Center.

Curatorial Presentations will be given at the Library Company, American Philosophical Society, Academy of Natural Sciences, and the Free Library Rare Book Department. Buses will take participants to nearby Princeton University for a lecture, lunch and visit to the Firestone Library with curatorial presentations for several of their collections includ-

ing the Scheide, Cotsen, and Marquand. There will also be visits to the Longwood Gardens, Eleutherian Mills, and Winterthur. Many fine meals are included in the program. The Congress Concludes with a gala dinner and dance at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

For more information about the Congress, contact Susan Benne at ABAA Headquarters: [sbenne@abaa.org](mailto:sbenne@abaa.org) or (212)944-8291. ■



Photo credit: Sarah Baldwin

**Terry Lang, and members Nina Matheson, and Sarah Baldwin visit with Larry McMurtry in Archer City, Texas.**

# An Inventory of ABAA Listservs

by Susan Benne

Like many trade organizations, the ABAA hosts email listservs. These are subscription-only lists that allow booksellers to communicate important information via email. Some allow only members to subscribe, others are used for official ABAA news, and yet another allows the general public and members alike to subscribe. I have set out to define and take the mystery out of our listservs.

The first thing to realize is that none of the lists are moderated. What that means is, none of the messages are vetted or changed by another person before they are posted to the list. Occasionally, I've been contacted by a member who is unable to post and has received a message like, "Message awaiting approval from the moderator," even though they say they are subscribed to the list. All this means is that the member did not send the message using the email address with which they subscribed to the list and that our webmaster, Rockingstone, will see that a message attempted to be sent by an

unsubscribed user.

Below are the lists that the ABAA maintains. I have included the links that will allow any member to subscribe, using the email address they list in the directory.

## **discuss@abaa.org**

This is a list only for ABAA members. It allows subscribers to communicate about ABAA, bookselling, and non-book related issues. Messages and replies are seen by the entire list. <http://mailman.rockingstone.nl/mailman/listinfo/discuss>

## **abaa-books@abaa.org**

This list allows ABAA members to announce book-related news and offer books for sale to members and the general public. <http://mailman.rockingstone.nl/mailman/listinfo/abaa-books>

## **trade@abaa.org**

This list allows members to announce book-related news and offer books for sale to other members. <http://mailman.rockingstone.nl/mailman/listinfo/trade>

[rockingstone.nl/mailman/listinfo/trade](http://rockingstone.nl/mailman/listinfo/trade)

## **abaa-security@abaa.org**

This list allows the staff at ABAA Headquarters and the chairmen of the Security Committee to announce missing or stolen books to all ABAA members. All members are automatically subscribed.

## **abaa-announce@abaa.org**

This list allows the staff at ABAA Headquarters to announce ABAA-related information to all ABAA members. All members are automatically subscribed.

\* \* \*

In other news, the ABAA has launched Job Postings on the website, at the suggestion of Kevin MacDonnell. ABAA Members can add a job by signing in to their Member Services page, clicking on the "Job Postings" link and following the directions. The posts will appear in the "What's New" section, once they have been approved for content. Posts will be automatically deleted after one month, unless we are advised to do so earlier. ■

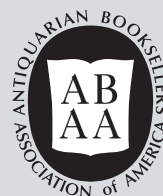
## ABAA Benevolent Fund & Woodburn Fund

A contribution to the ABAA Benevolent Fund or to the Elisabeth Woodburn Memorial Fund. A contribution can also be a thoughtful celebration of an important event in the life of an antiquarian bookseller—a birthday, an anniversary, or a retirement. It is also a meaningful way to honor the memory of a departed colleague.

At this time, the ABAA is accepting donations to the Benevolent Fund in order to benefit booksellers affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Your help is greatly appreciated.

The Antiquarian Booksellers' Benevolent Fund is a non-profit charity fund established by the ABAA in 1952 to benefit any antiquarian bookseller in time of personal need. The Elisabeth Woodburn Memorial Fund offers financial assistance for education and scholarly research relevant to the antiquarian book trade.

*Direct your contributions and inquiries to:*  
Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America  
20 West 44th Street  
Fourth Floor  
New York, NY 10036





# In Memoriam

## Tom Budd Lebanon, IN

Our friend and ABAA member, Tom Budd of Idlewood Books in Lebanon, Indiana, died September 14 at home after suffering from bone cancer. He was the only member of our organiza-



Tom Budd.

tion from Indiana. Tom was an expert in illustrated books and literature, and was well known to the trade for offering nice books at reasonable prices. He also was known for all the appraisals he did for the Lily Library. He had been a member of the ABAA since 1999. He was a very kind and decent man to all. He got his last catalog out about a month before he died. Not only did he make his own final arrangements, but he also wrote his own obituary. Here it is:

Allen Thomas "Tom" Budd Age 71, died early Wednesday, September 14, 2005 at his home near Lebanon. He was born on July 11, 1934, in Lebanon, the son of Durbin and Genevieve Welch Budd. In 1952, he graduated from Leba-

non High School. Budd graduated from Purdue University in 1956 where he was a member of FarmHouse Fraternity. In 1956-1957, he served in the U.S. Army. Tom retired as vice-president-publisher of the Farm Progress Publishing Division of ABC (American Broadcasting Company) in 1996 after 35 years with the company. His career began as a field editor for *Prairie Farmer*. He became editor of *Prairie Farmer* in 1975. In 1981, he was made vice president of the publishing division where he directed the editorial staffs of its farm magazines and the staff of the *Farm Progress Show*. Upon retirement, he moved from Hinsdale, Illinois to Lebanon. He spent the winter months at his home in Deerfield Beach, Florida. In 1993, Budd received the Distinguished Alumni Award from the Purdue University College of Agriculture. He was given the Reuben Brigham Award by the Agricultural Communicators in Education for his contributions to the field of communications in 1994. He had served as a trustee of the National FarmHouse Foundation in Kansas City, Missouri and as a board

member of the Indiana 4-H Foundation. He was past president of the North American Farm Show Council. He was a member of the First Baptist Church where he had been a deacon. Budd was a member of Ulen Country Club and a former member of Elks Lodge No 332 and the Chicago Press Club. He and his former wife, Judith, have one son, Philip Brian Budd of Clifton, VA; one daughter, Barbara Estella (Tim) Campbell of Carmel; three grandchildren, Douglas and Victoria Campbell and Madeleine Budd, and a twin brother, David Budd (Kathy) of Lebanon. He was preceded in death by a sister, Virginia, and his parents. After retiring, he published two books relating to the history of agriculture and main-

tained a book business. ■

*Ed Smith contributed to this article.*

## Mary Ann Malkin New York, NY

Mary Ann O'Brian Malkin was born 13 March 1913 (or, as she liked to say, on 3/13/13) in Altoona, Pennsylvania. She was the daughter of Agnes (Lynch) and Lawrence O'Brian, who worked for the Pennsylvania Railroad. A 1937 graduate of the Pennsylvania State University, she married Donald Woodward Lee, an instructor at Penn State, and the couple moved to New York City so that Lee could pursue a doctorate at Columbia University; this marriage ended in divorce.

While working at the R. R. Bowker Company in the mid-1940s, she met and married Sol. M. Malkin, editor of the *Antiquarian Bookman*. Malkin purchased this weekly magazine from Bowker in 1953, by which time it had become a prime source for timely news, book reviews, and coverage of trade and library conventions. It attracted a large subscription list of dealers, both those especially concerned with selling used books and those primarily engaged in the sale of new books but who ran an out-of-print search service for their customers. Mary Ann Malkin worked for the magazine as administrative assistant, copy editor, and book reviewer, signing her own reviews with her initials, MAM -- and it was as MAM that she was known to her many friends in the book and dance worlds.

Sol. Malkin sold the magazine in 1972; a year later, the Malkins were jointly awarded the Clarence Day Award of the American Library Association, an award annually made to a librarian or other individual for outstanding work in encouraging the love of books and reading. The Malkins were the first non-librarians to receive this honor.

In 1985, MAM established an annual lecture under the auspices of the Book Arts Press at Columbia University in honor of her husband Sol, who died in March 1986, a few months after Michael Winship gave the first lecture. The

**continued on next page**

# In Memoriam

continued from previous page

Malkin lecture, later renamed the Sol. M. and Mary Ann O'Brian Malkin Lecture in



Mary Ann Malkin in 2003.

Bibliography, moved with the Book Arts Press and Rare Book School (RBS) to the University of Virginia in 1992. MAM was a frequent attendee of RBS courses during the school's Columbia days, and a regular visitor to the school after its move to Charlottesville.

From 1999 through 2004, MAM funded the New Scholars Program of the Bibliographical Society of America (BSA); each year the BSA invited three early-career scholars to present 20-minute papers at a panel preceding the annual meeting in New York City in late January. The program gave participants an opportunity to present unpublished research and to acquaint members of the Society with new work on bibliographical topics.

Though never a dancer herself, MAM always had an interest in the subject, and she was a supporter of many dance groups and societies, including the American Dance Guild (ADG). In 2003, the ADG and Columbia University co-spon-

sored a Mary Ann Malkin Gala Concert of dance at the Peter Norton Symphony Space in New York City in honor of her generous support of dancing and dance history.

MAM began to collect dance books in the mid-1970s: "Neither Sol. nor I collected books seriously during our AB days," she wrote in recollections published last year in the newsletter of the Fellowship of American Bibliophilic Societies. "Sol felt deeply that it would have been unfair to our subscribers for us to do so." In the 1970s, MAM acquired an 18th century book on the history of dance that used a visual shorthand system of dance step notation. "I had trouble reading this book: stenochoreographic dance notation has an alarming re-

semblance to chicken tracks," she said, but she decided to collect books showing the history of dance notation as three-dimensional objects that could be loved for themselves, as well as for their contents.

She soon had a substantial collection of dance notation books, thanks in large part to the English dealer Richard Macnutt, who represented her at the 1979 Jack Cole Sotheby's sale in London. Other dealers who helped her form her collection include Bennett Gilbert, Gordon Hollis of Golden Legend, the Lubranos, Bruce McKittrick, the Sallochs, and Stephen Weissman. Some of MAM's dance books were exhibited at the Grolier Club in New York City in 1986 and at the Houghton Library at Harvard in 1987. She was the principal lender to Madison Sowell's 1993 exhibition at Brigham Young University, *The Art of Terpsichore: From Renaissance Festivals to Romantic Ballets*, mounted in conjunction with a meeting of the Society

of Dance History Scholars. In 2002, she mounted a solo show of her books at the Grolier Club, and then gave her collection to her alma mater, Penn State, which mounted an exhibition of the books in October 2003.

In 2003, she privately published the substantial *Dancing by the Book: A Catalogue of Books, 1531-1804*, in the Collection of Mary Ann O'Brian Malkin, which she wrote with the assistance of dance historians Moira Goff and Jennifer Thorp and bibliographical specialists Terry Belanger and Richard Noble. In the Introduction to this book, MAM wrote: We could have (and should have) done more -- and worked longer and harder -- before publishing this catalogue. But I am now 90 years old, and it seems an appropriate time to show the results of our work thus far.

The book, distributed by the Penn State Libraries, was handsomely designed by Jerry Kelly.

In recent years, MAM's eyesight began to fail, and she became unsure on her feet. She fell twice in 2004, breaking first one hip and then the other. Mentally she remained alert, however, and with help from home care worker Ceceal Sergeant, she graduated to a walker and then to a cane.

MAM took a train to Charlottesville to attend the 21st annual Sol. M. and Mary Ann O'Brian Malkin Lecture in Bibliography, given on July 27th by Richard Wendorf, Director of the Boston Athenaeum, and to attend a dinner in her honor. She seemed tired but well when she returned to New York City on Friday, 30 July, and in a telephone conversation on Sunday night she gave a lively account of her visit to RBS to a friend; but she died, apparently in her sleep, later that evening. She was 92 years old.

MAM's temperament was a sunny one. She was remarkably without self-pity of any kind, and she was always good company. In later life, she enjoyed being a little old lady -- one with bright orange hair -- and she was glad that she had the means to support generously two of her principal interests: dance and the history

continued on next page

# In Memoriam

continued from previous page

of the book.

There are no near surviving relatives. A memorial service is planned for the fall in New York City at the Grolier Club, where she became a member in 1986. ■

Terry Belanger

## John McLaughlin Endicott, NY

Longtime ABAA member John Kevin McLaughlin died at his home in Endicott, New York on June 30, 2005 at age 63.

From an old Endicott family, John spent his youth through high school in that city. After graduation, he came west for college where he attended a most unusual program sponsored by Chapman University in Orange, California. Named the World Campus Afloat, a cruise liner was transformed into a floating university and students had their classes on board as they visited countries around the world. Returning home, he taught for a time at Broome Community College.

Liking what he had experienced in Southern California, John moved back to Orange County and in 1968 opened his bookstore, The Book Sail, in Anaheim. In the middle 1970s, John decided he wanted to create a new elaborate antiquarian bookstore and moved to the nearby city of Orange. While filling the store with handsome finished bookcases and yards of display cases, he gave vent to his quirky nature by installing a full bar in his office on the second floor and enclosing on all sides the stairwell leading to it which then had a special door in which he had a hidden water bed and the interior mirrored.

Antiquarian bookselling is a trade that attracts eccentricity, and John was indeed an eccentric among dealers and collectors. Entertaining anecdotes of his behavior and flamboyant spending abound in the bookselling community. To some John was a "wild crazy man." An intense and complex man who could be, at times, very difficult. but unlike many, John had a vision of what he thought was impor-

tant in the worlds of collecting and stuck to it all his life. John McLaughlin was a man in love with the worlds of popular culture. Illustrated books and imaginative art, comic books, pulp magazines, big little books, science fiction and fantasy, magic books, signed and inscribed first editions, mystery and detective fiction, movie memorabilia, film posters, original film scripts, etc. were all part of his passion both as a dealer and a collector. He truly loved his collections, and he enjoyed showing them to fellow collectors. In the areas he collected and sold, he was a knowledgeable and consulted expert in many popular culture fields. He always was helpful to researchers and you will find him thanked in a number of books. He believed preserving popular culture was important and he did not care what others thought. Time proved him right and his collections achieved great financial and historic value. John was the uncommon example of someone willing to put considerable money and time behind his originally unfashionable interests and in the process helped to create and develop new areas of collecting.

Coming from one of the early families involved in the Computer Tabulating Recording Company, the Endicott business that eventually became the giant, IBM, John had wealth in the 1960s when he began to seriously assemble his personal collections and buy extensively for stock. In those days anyone buying popular culture was looked down upon by dealers as someone wasting his money. He bought virtually whatever he wanted, sometimes going into bookstores and buying whole sections en bloc or obtaining large archives. But John was not a pushover when acquiring material, he could be a hard bargainer and knew the reality of what money could buy. The Book Sail was a bookstore like no other and many dealers were impressed by the number of unusual and unique pieces he maintained in stock.

The highlight of his bookselling career and candidate for the most unusual catalogue ever issued by an antiquarian bookseller was when in 1984 John issued *Literature, Art and Artifacts That Will Forever Remain Among THE UNDEAD*

– *The Book Sail 16th Anniversary Catalogue*. The signed limited deluxe edition of the catalogue was bound in full decorated cloth numbered in an ink compound containing human blood with a 3-D plastic insert on the front cover showing horror film hostess. Elvira – Mistress of the Dark, reaching out and showing lots of cleavage, with original specially commissioned contributions by Ray Bradbury, Robert Bloch, fantasy artist Rowena, and William F. Nolan. Extensively illustrated, it was an amazing collection of hundreds of items offering such things as the original 529 page manuscript of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* entitled *The Undead* and printing a previously unpublished sequence from the manuscript about the destruction of Castle Dracula; the rare 1912 first appearance of Edgar Rice Burroughs's *Tarzan of the Apes* in *The All-Story Magazine*, dozens of letters and manuscripts by H.P. Lovecraft, Robert E. Howard, A. Merritt, Richard Matheson; original artwork by Willy Pogany, Hannes Bok, Virgil Finlay, Arthur Rackham; the 1939 first appearance of Batman in *Detective Comics #27*; the producer's archive of scripts and acetate recordings for Orson Welles's famous *War of the Worlds* radio broadcast.

In the 1990s, John moved The Book Sail a few blocks down from his second location, to a more spacious store, and instead of having a sign that announced the name of the firm, he erected a large lighted sign that stated in bold letters: "THE MUSEUM THAT SELLS ITS EXHIBITS." Several years ago, after a long difficult divorce, John moved back to Endicott to live in his family home. He had various health problems throughout most of his life, but was still active until shortly before his death. He leaves behind two sons, Michael and Sean, and three grandchildren.

Over the years, John had an unfulfilled desire to create a popular culture museum or place his collections in an institution. Before his passing he created the McLaughlin Foundation to insure that his various personal collections would be preserved, exhibited, and studied. ■

James Pepper



# New Members

The ABAA *Newsletter* is pleased to welcome the following new members who were accepted at the Board of Governors Meeting in August:

**Robert Brian Bilby**, Appledore Rare Books, 233 Mead Street, Waccabuc, NY 10597. Phone: (914)763-0166.

**Ian Brabner**, Ian Brabner Bookseller, P.O. Box 4900, Wilmington, DE 19808. Phone: (302)998-2886. Fax: (302)345-6572.

**Kurt Gippert**, Kurt Gippert Bookseller, 2910 West Eastwood Avenue, #1, Chicago, IL 60625. Phone: (773)583-7613.

**James Goldwasser**, Locus Solus Rare Books, LTD. Please note new address: 790 Madison Avenue, Suite 604, New York, NY 10021. Phone: (212)861-9787. Fax: (212)861-9788.

**Stephen P. Hanly**, Bickerstaff's Books, Maps &c., 3 Ellery Road, Waltham, MA 02453. Phone: (781) 899-5504. Fax: (781) 894-2732.

**Alan Jeffrey Zipkin**, Derringer Books, 355 Buena Vista East, Suite 507W, San Francisco, CA 94117. Phone: (415)864-6710.

# Membership Updates

**Stuart Bennett Rare Books** has a new email address and phone number: stuart@sbrarebooks.com; (415)457-0121.

**James M. Dourgarian, Bookman** has a new website: www.jimbooks.com.

**La Scala Autographs, Inc.** has a new address, phone, and fax number: 301

N. Harrison Street, Box 900, Princeton, NJ 08540. Phone: (609)430-1111 or 800.622.2705. Fax: (609)430-2262.

**Edward T. Pollack** has a new website: www.edpollackfinearts.com.

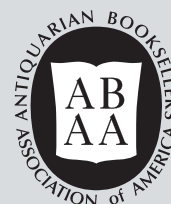
**Vagabond Books** has a new phone number: (310)915-7188.

**The deadline for submissions to the next *Newsletter* is**

**December 7, 2005**

**Send your contributions to:**

**ABAA Newsletter**  
**20 West 44th Street**  
**New York, NY 10036**  
**FAX: 212.944.8293**  
**EMAIL: rulon@rulon.com**  
**sbenne@abaa.org**



*The* ABAA Newsletter

(ISSN 1070-7000X)

is published quarterly under the auspices of the Publications Committee of The Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America

20 West 44th Street, Fourth Floor  
New York, NY 10036-6604.

PHONE: 212-944-8291

FAX: 212-944-8293

www.abaa.org

EDITOR: Robert Rulon-Miller

ASSOCIATE EDITORS: Susan Benne,  
Liane Thomas Wade

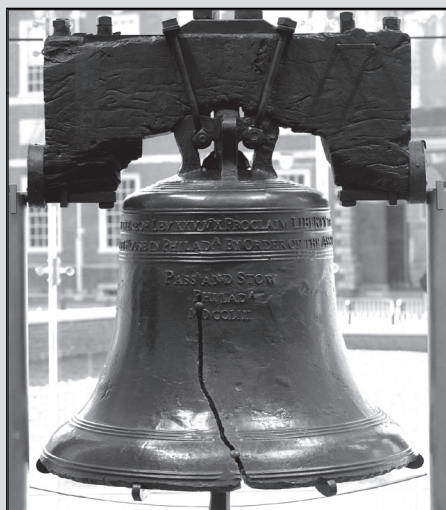
Annual postpaid subscriptions are \$25.00 domestic; \$30.00 Canada and Mexico; and \$35.00 overseas.

COPYRIGHT 2005 by The Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America

**Send submissions and letters to:**

*ABAA Newsletter*  
20 West 44th Street  
New York, NY 10036 USA  
PHONE: 212 944-8291  
FAX: 212 944-8293  
EMAIL: rulon@rulon.com  
sbenne@abaa.org

## ILAB CONGRESS SEPTEMBER 9-13, 2006



*Photo: Anthony Sinagoga*

**PHILADELPHIA, PA**