



The Aldus Society

NEWSLETTER

Winter 2002 -03

Volume 3, No. 3

Modern Conservation Profession Subject of January 23rd Program

Our January Aldus program will be presented by Harry Campbell, who will speak on *The Conservation of Books and Paper*. His talk will focus on the history and development of the modern conservation profession, particularly since the devastating 1966 flooding of Florence, Italy, which became a catalyst for these practices. Although not involved in the recovery operations at that time, Campbell has since worked on items that were damaged in the flood. And, from 1995 through 2001, he worked under Don Etherington, who was involved for several years with the initial recovery and the invention and implementation of many of the techniques used to salvage and conserve the devastated mass of books and paper.

Campbell, a Professional Associate Member of the AIC, will talk about specific approaches, techniques, and principles, including guidelines for ethical practice provided by the American Institute for Conservation of Art and Historic Artifacts (AIC). The presentation will include projected illustrations of books, documents, and art on paper in various stages before, during, and after treatment, along with images of procedures taking place and specialized equipment in the conservation lab and bindery. Campbell will also be discussing reversibility/re-treatability; deacidification; preventative conservation such as environmental control and proper storage and housing of items; disaster recovery; stabilization vs. restoration; and various other concepts.

There will be time for discussion, and Campbell will be happy to answer specific questions that audience members may have regarding preservation and conservation of their personal collections.

From 1985 to 1995 he was the Head of Collection Maintenance and Bindery Preparation in the Preservation Office of the OSU Libraries, reporting to Preservation Officer Wes Boomgaarden (who has also given a program to Aldus). Subsequently he had the opportunity to work with world-renowned conservator Don Etherington

continued on page 3

Conserving Torahs and Sacred Materials Focus of February Program

Our speaker on February 20th will be Rabbi William Goldberg, who specializes in restoring Torahs and other Jewish manuscripts. Goldberg is one of about 50 people in the nation certified in *sofrus*, or scribal arts.

Goldberg's work is linked to antiquity not only by the writings passed down in Jewish history but also through the traditional assortment of pens, inks and parchments (all kosher) that he uses in restoring several hundred Torahs each year. Tradition has it that each Torah today bears exactly what appeared on the original 12 handed to Moses on Mount Sinai; a Torah cannot be used if it has a broken letter, loose seams, or torn parchment. In addition, Jewish law prescribes what materials he must use in working on or repairing the Scriptures.

Goldberg will be sharing parchment scrolls, or *parshios*, which he is in the process of restoring. The scrolls are then wound onto wooden rollers called *etzy chiam*. The ink he uses is generally purchased from suppliers in New York or Israel, although he knows how to make black ink from nut gall, which are concentrated tannic-acid tumors on oak trees. Unlike the illuminated manuscripts from the Middle Ages which have been featured in previous Aldus programs, color or decoration are forbidden by Jewish law, so black is the only color of ink he needs.

He will also show how he uses tools such as pens made from quills from ducks and turkeys, although he sometimes uses reed pens to complete the meticulous Hebrew lettering.

Continued on page 3



Permanent Meeting Place for Aldus Programs Announced

Unless otherwise noted, future programs for The Aldus Society will be held at the Thurber Center.

Thurber Center is at 91 Jefferson Avenue,
next to Thurber House.

(Jefferson Avenue is one block west of I-71
off East Broad St. in downtown Columbus)



The Aldus Society

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The Newsletter is published quarterly by the Communications Committee of The Aldus Society. If you have submissions or ideas for articles, please contact Genie or Jay Hoster, Newsletter Co-editors, 267-7774 (days) or at bookshigh@aol.com

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

From Geoffrey D. Smith

I imagine that most, if not all, Aldus members will be both givers and recipients of books this holiday season. Although the major book outlets possess a certain appeal (I hold a discount card for one of them), the holiday book hunter is subject to the promotions of what the publishers have deemed to be their big books for the season. That's business, and I understand that, but I would rather discover books for myself: older books, overlooked books, forgotten books, those books that stand on their own merit awaiting a destined reader. I prefer to roam through the used bookstores, especially during the holidays, trying to match the spirit of a book with the personality of a loved one.

I like to chat with the proprietors who are not pushing any particular book, but rather, offering their assistance to bring books and readers together. The used book dealers are not receiving incentives from the publishers. Oh, they have their favorite titles that they may direct their customers to, but only because they believe that the book and the reader belong together. The easy chat between customer and proprietor becomes a dialogue and each learns from the other. The assiduous shoppers learn about the stock and specialties of the shops and the attentive owners learn about the collections and interests of their clientele.

In short, a bibliophilic relationship develops that is difficult to emulate at the large, retail book centers. And just as Macy's Kris Kringle of *Miracle on 34th Street* will guide anguished parents to the right toy regardless of which store carries it, so the attentive dealers in the used book world direct their patrons to their confreres at other used book shops.

If many of you are like me, you enjoy searching the Internet, especially the rare and used book sites. Still, the ease of browsing and searching online cannot equal the sensory experience of being in a book shop: the smells (sometimes coffee in addition to books), the texture of old volumes, the wonderfully non-coordinated range of colorful spines, the ringing bell when another customer enters the shop. Nor does the internet reflect what books are out there for discovery.

Ask the book dealers and they will attest to the small percentage of their stock that they can reasonably put online. More, many more titles remain on the shelves unrecorded for the online

Aldus Calligraphy Workshop Whets Appetite of Attendees

On October 19th, in a basement classroom of Pressey Hall on the OSU campus, Ann Alaia Woods lead an enlightening workshop on the art of calligraphy to a group of about ten Aldus Society novices who wanted to learn more about this wonderful form of lettering. First, we were introduced to the history of different styles, or hands, as well as vocabulary such as stem, arcade, minim, boot, bowl, counter, ductus, and serif. Then, we became familiar with the nature of the nib and pen: the parts; filling it with ink; holding and angling it properly; and – often the hardest part – applying the ink smoothly.

Calligraphy, from the Greek word, *kalligraphia*, literally means “elegant writing.” I think most of us agreed, after practicing a gothic blackletter style until our hands cramped (experienced calligraphers know how to avoid this unfortunate side effect), that we have quite a way to go before reaching the “elegant” level! However, our appetites for learning calligraphy were whetted, and I expect most of us will be visiting calligraphy supply stores or signing up for more classes very soon.

Thank you, Ann for the brilliant introduction, and thanks also to the OSU Center for Epigraphical and Palaeographical Studies for co-sponsoring the event!

— Laura Masonbrink

Books on Books, Book Collecting and Related Topics Make Great Holiday Gifts

If you missed our November program, Aldus member Ron Ravneberg shared a number of titles that would be of interest to book lovers everywhere. They included:

Lawrence and Nancy Goldstone have written four fun books in which they share their adventures on the way to becoming book collectors. The titles are: *Used and Rare*, *Slightly Chipped*, *Out of the Flames*, and *Warmly Inscribed*.

In a more serious vein, Nicholas Basbanes' books tell about legendary collectors and collections: *A Gentle Madness*, *Patience and Fortitude*, and *Among the Gently Mad*, which is his latest.

shopper. I hope that many of you will visit our local book dealers. I cannot mention them by name for fear of omission, but you know who they are.

Happy holidays to the good members of The Aldus Society.

November Program Focused on State of Publishing Industry

"I was addicted to the library!" confided Suzanne Jaffe, the executive director of Thurber House for the past 15 months, as she spoke of her youth in the suburbs of New York.

Jaffe addressed an interested Aldus audience at the Thurber Center on November 14th. Appropriate to her background of 26 years in publishing with Simon & Schuster, Avon, and Random House, she talked about her impressions of the current state of that industry.

"It was the opportunity to work with an author and watch their work grow which inspired me to get into the publishing business," Jaffe announced.

She spoke of the many ills of the publishing (and the book-selling) industry today, where fewer people determine the fates of greater numbers of authors, books, and readers, leading to less diversity and selection in the marketplace, *i.e.*, Borders and Barnes & Noble and the few assorted independent booksellers still in business. "Everybody misses the independent bookstores," Jaffe added.

The program was very informative, with the question-and-answer period bringing out many interesting insights from this publishing maven. Columbus is fortunate to have her leading Thurber House, itself one of the city's crown jewels.

One of her closing comments was, "The wonder of books is that books are a wonder."

— George Cowmeadow Bauman

Program on Slavic Cyrillic Manuscript Tradition Continues History of Text Series

On October 22nd, Aldus members were treated to an insightful and visually stunning talk by Predrag Matejic on "The Slavic Cyrillic Manuscript Tradition, 9th-20th Centuries." Dr. Matejic, Director of the Hilandar Research Library at The Ohio State University Libraries, discussed schisms of the early Christian church that led to the establishment of the Eastern Orthodox church, the origins of the Cyrillic alphabet, and the development of the Slavic manuscript conventions and traditions that are still practiced in some parts of the world today.

The Hilandar Research Library has preserved many of these manuscripts on microfilm and is the largest library of its kind, used by scholars throughout the world. Dr. Matejic extended an open invitation for Aldus members to visit the Hilandar Research Library in Rooms 225/227 Main Library, on the OSU campus. The Hilandar web site is <http://www.cohums.ohio-state.edu/cmrs/rcmss/>.

Dr. Matejic's talk was the third in the History of Text series. Each program in the series is videotaped, and Aldus members are encouraged to borrow the tape for their own private showings.

— Geoffrey D. Smith

Goldberg, continued from page 1

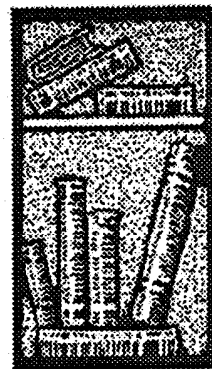
In addition to Torahs, Goldberg also repairs *mezuzot*, parchments with writings from the book of Devorim (known as Deuteronomy to Christians) which mark the doorpost of Jewish homes. He will bring these to share with Aldus members, as well as thylacteries, which have parchment on the inside and are worn on the head and arm.

Rabbi Goldberg's Program on Conserving Torahs and Other Sacred Materials

DATE: Thursday, February 20

TIME: 7 p.m.

PLACE: Thurber Center, 91 Jefferson Avenue



Mark Your Calendar for More Aldus Events!

March 13: Sylvia and Kenneth Marantz will tell about their collection of children's books housed at the Columbus College of Art and Design.

April 17: Anna Grotans will speak on the Germanic manuscript tradition as part of the History of Text Series.

Details on these programs and our May program will be announced soon.

Visit our new website:
www.aldussociety.com

Campbell, continued from page 1

as Chief and Senior conservator at the Etherington Conservation Center, a for-profit business in Greensboro, NC. This was a rare opportunity to work with a world-class conservator and fine binder, and it provided him with extensive experience working with a huge variety of paper-based objects, especially rare books and art-on-paper.

In February, 2002, Campbell returned to OSU as Book and Paper Conservator, working entirely with the special collections of the OSU Libraries. In his free time he provides consulting and conservation services for individuals and institutions outside of the OSU Libraries.

Harry Campbell's Program on Modern Conservation Techniques

DATE: Thursday, January 23

TIME: 7 p.m.

PLACE: Thurber Center, 91 Jefferson Avenue

Cleveland's Rowfant Club Hosts The Aldus Society

Cleveland's Rowfant Club hosted thirty-six members of The Aldus Society in early November. The day's activities included a visit to the Cleveland Museum of Art followed by a buffet dinner at the Rowfant clubhouse.

Leaving Columbus early Sunday morning by chartered bus, Aldus members arrived at the Cleveland Museum of Art and had time to tour the galleries.

The museum offers many high points ranging through the history of art, including *Stag at Sharkey's*, a celebrated boxing painting by Columbus native George Bellows. The arms and armor exhibit is always a popular venue, and Aldus members also had a chance to view "Magna Graecia," a stunning traveling exhibition of ancient Western Greek art culled from eight Italian archeological museums.

Following lunch, Rowfant and Aldus members assembled for a lecture by Stephen Fliegel, a Rowfant member who serves as curator of Medieval Art for the museum. In his talk, entitled "Gothic Art for the Industrial Age: The Middle Ages Revisited in the Art of the Pre-Raphaelites," Fliegel reviewed the Pre-Raphaelites, a nineteenth century group of painters, poets and architects with a fascination for the art forms of the Middle Ages.

Through this movement and the artwork that it engendered, Fliegel noted that "nineteenth-century England discovered the Middle Ages anew."

The full text of Stephen Fliegel's thoughtful and carefully crafted lecture can be found on the Aldus Society website, www.aldussociety.com.

Following Fliegel's talk, the Rowfant Club hosted Aldus Society members at a reception and buffet dinner at the historic home that has long been Rowfant's clubhouse and library. For many Aldus Society members it was their first visit to Rowfant, and they marveled at the extensive collection of books and hundreds of candlesticks that lined the shelves many of the rooms. In a long-standing tradition, a new member of Rowfant brings a unique candlestick inscribed with his name. At club meetings, members place their lit candles at the tables. Upon the death of a member, in a solemn ceremony, the member's candlestick is capped, to be used no more.

Following kind words of welcome by Ted Sante, president of the Rowfant Club, Aldus Society president Geoffrey D. Smith extended an invitation to the Rowfant Club to visit Columbus in the fall of 2003, and to attend an event that Aldus will host. Program details for this meeting, which will be open to all Aldus members, will be announced in an upcoming newsletter.

— Emerson Gilbert

Not a Member Yet? Copy or Clip this Form and Return it TODAY!

The Aldus Society

"May you find yourself always in the company of good books and kindred spirits."

Colleen Sell

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME: _____

STREET: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____

Yearly Dues:

- \$15 - Student
 \$35 - Individual
 \$60 - Family
 \$100 - Patron

YES, please include me in the Aldus Membership Directory

YES, please include me in the Aldus e-mail group.

My e-mail address is: _____

We welcome the names and addresses of anyone you think would like to join our organization.

Return this form with your check to The Aldus Society, P. O. Box 1150, Worthington, Ohio 43085-1150