

Remembering Abel Berland

Kathryn DeGraff surveys his DePaul connection

The life of Abel Berland reads like the proverbial Horatio Alger myth of American accomplishment, and DePaul University played an unexpected and important role.

In the 1930's, the depth of the Great Depression, Abel had been denied admission to the University of Chicago because their quota of Jewish students had been filled. He was accepted at DePaul, but his family ran out of funds to pay for his education. Abel went to the office of the Dean, Rev. Comerford O'Malley C.M., to let him know he would have to withdraw his application. Then as now, administrators at DePaul take a personal interest in their students, and Fr. O'Malley assured Abel that he could enroll, that the University would assist with his financial needs. So started the career of a man who became important to both the University, to the Library here, and to me. Abel graduated from DePaul's Law School in 1938, practiced law for a few years, and went on to join Arthur C. Rubloff & Co. in 1940. When Dean O'Malley became President O'Malley, Abel Berland repaid the trust shown in him by engaging in fundraising for the Law School and in 1969, Abel was appointed to the Board of Trustees of DePaul. He served on that board for almost twenty years, until he retired in 1986, and proved a powerful force in encouraging the University and the Library towards the establishment of a Special Collections Department, among many other great ideas and enthusiastic support for the intellectual life of DePaul. He continued to serve his alma mater with advice, assistance, and encouragement as a Life Trustee until his death.

Abel had a large vision for Special Collections at DePaul, an outgrowth in part from a friendship with the Rev. Redmond Burke, C.S.V., DePaul Library Director (1948-1967). Fr. Burke was a book collector himself, with a wide ranging interest in building special collections at DePaul; an interest that was



Abel seated next to Comerford O'Malley in a 1973 photograph

not then supported by the University administration. That part of a library was certainly not how the "Little School Under the El," as DePaul was known, saw itself.

Abel's vision in 1975 included a Library Friends Group, a student book collecting club, the donation of the Vincentian Rare Books from Perryville, Missouri (given to the Vincentians in the 1950's from the library of Estelle Doheny), and a gentleman scholar librarian. Preferably someone he knew.

The department Abel sought was established in 1975, but not quite as he had seen

it. An elderly lady librarian was made department head as a pre-retirement sinecure. Hardly the vision Abel had for Special Collections. Eventually, in 1980, the elderly lady librarian did retire. Glenn Scharfenorth, Library Director (1974-1984), had been badgered by Abel for the department, and needed to create something that suited DePaul more than it pleased Abel.

I was already at DePaul, working as Acquisitions Librarian, still hoping for the job working with rare books and archives I had hoped library school would lead me to, and ready to work with patrons and books more than dollars and cents. It

was a clear solution for Glenn to accept my application for the position. I got the job I so long wanted. And while Abel got the department at DePaul, he had his own ideas about the department, as the Library Director and I had ours. We had to be aware of our role in a University that was and is dedicated to teaching, driven by tuition dollars, and needed to incorporate collections into the curriculum; rather than an institution funded by endowments and focused on the scholarly use of resources by researchers.

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CAXTONIAN

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ABEL BERLAND, from page 1

Of course Abel was gracious and polite, but he and I took some time to achieve a balance. I was aware that I was being baited to test my knowledge, to see if it equaled his. Of course it did not. As a librarian, I learned to defer to his incredible knowledge of books, printing, collectors, and to never assume that I could outsmart him. The differences between lawyers and librarians, though we all rely on the printed word, kept me in awe of him in my early years.

He had made his own way, and had little interest in me personally; I didn't have enough ambition to interest him, nor did I have a family so that we could share anecdotes about our children and our obligations to them. He made it clear, on more than one occasion, that family trumped University, and his books would be sold for the benefit of his family rather than donated to any institution, let alone to DePaul. The trick for me in working with Abel was to learn to respect him and his position, but to not let the Abel Berland steamroller flatten my enthusiasm and goals.

But, slowly, perhaps even grudgingly, over time he learned to appreciate my dedication to DePaul, my commitment to the students, and my gratitude for his support.

For support us he did. Abel wanted the best books, in the best condition, with the best provenance. And sometimes he chose not to sell editions that were not the best, but to donate them. So DePaul benefited from his collecting up, and we were (and still are) deeply grateful for the gifts of his "less important" editions of Samuel Johnson, John Locke, John Gay, Thomas Fuller, and others.

The generosity of spirit shown by the Vincentians in the 1930's was reflected in notable gifts to DePaul in the 1990's.

He provided Special Collections with a generous endowment fund, which



This 1966 photo includes librarian Redmond Burke (wearing glasses); Abel is at the far left.

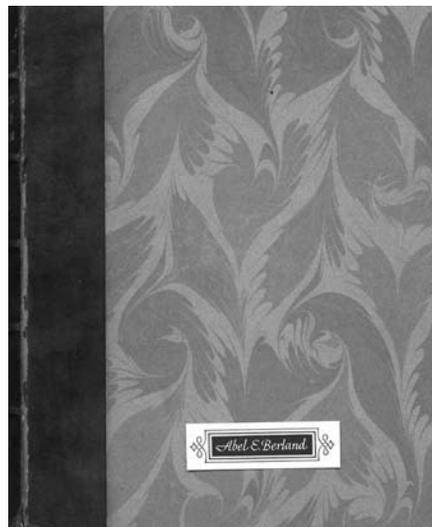
continues to support the acquisition and preservation of books for the collections.

And his most notable contributions to DePaul's holdings consist of two items:

10 September 1648, Vincent de Paul. Letter to Rev. John Dehorgny, C.M., in Rome, concerning the errors of Mr. Arnauld.

*The Jansenist, M. Arnauld, insisted that communion should be offered infrequently, and only as a reward for high virtue. This letter is Vincent's strong response to M. Arnauld. The Jansenists would, in Vincent's words, "estrangle everyone from Communion, not for eight or ten days but for five or six months, not only great sinners but good nuns who live in great purity." Vincent makes specific appeal to the decrees of the Council of Trent, and concludes that M. Arnauld has "made these provisions at a point so elevated that a St. Paul would fear to communicate."

Abel Berland's copy of *Boswell's Life of Johnson* came to rest at DePaul.



Abel purchased this letter in the 1987 Christie's sale of Estelle Doheny's collection, donated by her to St. John's Seminary, Camarillo, Calif. Abel then donated it to DePaul in 1990 to honor Fr. Richardson at time of the construction of the Richardson Library of DePaul.

The second item is truly, completely representative of Abel as the collector of his reputation:

Council of Trent. [Canones et decreta. 1564]. Canones, et decreta sacrosancti oecu-

Photos courtesy DePaul University Library

menici, et generalis Concilii Tridentini : sub Paulo III, Iulio III, Pio IIII, Pontificibus max. Romae : Apud Paulum Manutium, Aldi f., MDLXIII [1564].

The sparse bibliographic entry belies its importance. An important work, of course, particularly for a Catholic university; but also in an important binding, with impressive provenance, having belonged to the Noailles family, one of the most ancient in France, and held by Raphael Esmerian, who assembled

the finest collection of bindings in the 20th century. What makes it truly unique is that it is signed at the end by the secretary and the two notaries of the Council, so that the annotations throughout the text are those of one who participated in the Council.

Many librarians throughout the special collections world, but particularly in Chicago, hoped for his collection to remain intact, preferably at a Chicago institution. But Abel wanted to return his books to the stream of collecting which had been such a part of his

own life. So he arranged for a sale at Christie's in the fall of 2001. He remains now in the hands of those who hold his books and the memory of the man. DePaul and I are not unhappy to be among that number.

Berland was born August 27, 1915 and died on Dec. 6, 2010. He is survived by sons Richard, Michael, and James; grandchildren Scott, Robert, David, Andrew, and Elizabeth; and great-grandchildren Ryan and Casey.

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Abel Berland – Friend of Humanity – and of Books

Robert Cotner talks of the man's spirit

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

–Psalm 1

Abel Berland was a devout man. Beyond his many successes as a Chicago business executive, his achievement as one of the great book collectors of our time, and his presence in so many public venues throughout the greater Chicago community, he was a spiritual man.

Abel and I first met at a Salvation Army Chicago Advisory Board luncheon in 1988. He was the only Jewish member. I was the newly appointed fundraising executive for the Army. One of my responsibilities was to organize and administer the monthly luncheon meetings. In so doing, I had to find an Advisory Board member willing to give the invocation, a duty which I passed around, making certain that all would share in the responsibility.

I extended to Abel an invitation to offer the prayer. "They don't want a Jew praying in their meetings!" he exclaimed. "Abel, if they didn't want a Jew praying, why would they invite a Jew to be a member?" I countered. After much discussion – *pleading* might be a better word – I convinced him to say the prayer – and it was beautiful, a prayer fashioned around the First Psalm, one of his very favorite passages

of scripture, a passage he often quoted in conversation, and one he loved and lived by.

From our first meeting, Abel and I found a kinship in books, in ideas, and in concerns of the heart, a friendship uncommon in these days. He loved Robert Frost – whom he'd met when Frost visited Chicago – and I had a Frost collection. I loved William Shakespeare – my wife, Norma, and I visit Stratford, Ontario each summer – and Abel had the finest Shakespeare collection in private hands. At lunch in the Mid-Day Club one noon early in 1990, Abel invited me to join the Caxton Club. At my first Caxton dinner meeting, Abel and I sat with Rhoda Clark and Rupert Wenzel. I fell in love with the people and the society that brought friends together around the love of literature and fine books.

He was my greatest ally as Centennial President of the Club, and, when we launched the *Caxtonian* in September 1993, Abel became our most faithful cheerleader. It is fitting that the very first issue of this publication carried a photograph of Abel, whom the club had chosen as Honorary Member the previous month.

In the May 1996 issue of the *Caxtonian*, I wrote a cover story on Abel and his splendid library. I was with him in that library for five hours, holding the great books of his collection, hearing the stories told

of them and their acquisition, and sharing with him the sense of joy great books bring – listening, making notes, enjoying the rare experience in his remarkable private library.

"The heart and soul of my collection is William Shakespeare, whom I consider to be the most important writer in any language and who created the greatest body of work, other than the Bible," he told me that day. We held gently the great books and incunabula – the hand-drafted *Magna Carta*, the *Book of Hours*, the *Nuremberg Chronicle*, the *Dialogo*, *On Origin of Species*, Holingshed's *Chronicles*, *Plutarch's Lives*, and, of course, the four folios of Shakespeare. It was one of the most remarkable afternoons I've ever had.

"The room," Abel said that day, "is my library of the mind, the habitation of books literary, scientific, and historical that I consider

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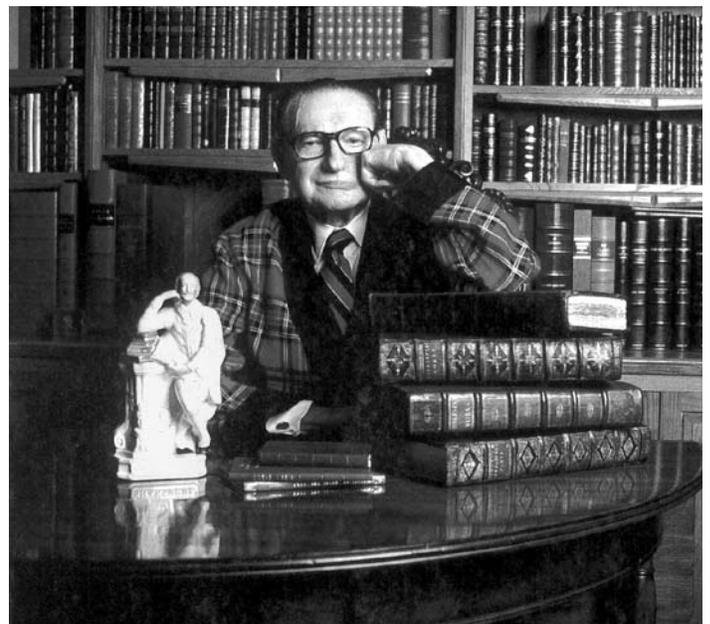


Photo from Caxtonian electronic archive

ABEL BERLAND, from page 3

important. I often read into the night and am stimulated by the great ideas of these remarkable people." Before leaving, I asked to see his first edition of Gray's "Elegy Wrote [*sic*] in a Country Church Yard," one of my favorite poems of English literature. He handed the book to me, and said, "I like to hear you read poetry, Bob – read it aloud to me." Thomas Gray brought our delightful afternoon to a splendid conclusion, and we sat in the momentary silence great literature always inspires.

That afternoon in Abel's Glencoe library was like private gatherings he arranged for special friends upon occasion. Norma and I were pleased to be guests in 1997, when Abel and Meredith invited us, with two other couples, to dinner and then a viewing of Abel's greatest books. He would begin modestly, with a 1467 edition of Cicero's *Laelius De Amicitia*, and then the 1499 edition of *L'Arbe des Battailles*, to first editions of Byron or Shelley, Wordsworth or Tennyson. He would pass each book, guest to guest, and we would all experience the joy of holding ancient tomes that had been held by so many over the years. Then he would come to the folios of Shakespeare, culminating in his grandest of all, the First Folio of 1623, his copy of which at one time was owned by John Dryden. We held it reverently, knowing it to be one of the ultimate books of Western literature – the "center of the Western canon," as Harold Bloom called it.

To be a friend of Abel Berland was to have a shared friendship. Though I don't have statistics at hand, I would judge that more members of the Caxton Club have been nominated by Abel Berland than by any other Caxton member. All of us consider it a high honor to be so chosen.

When we were planning the Gala for the Caxton centennial, Abel was the natural choice as our keynote speaker. He accepted our invitation, and on October 14, 1994 – after a Salvation Army Advisory Board luncheon at the Mid-Day Club – he invited me to his office in the Rubloff suite, and rehearsed the entire speech for me, seeking my comments, my approval. It was a remarkable lecture, given almost solely without notes, coming from the heart and soul of a man who held as intimates the greatest minds of literature and history. But alas, I was the only one who ever heard it, for family circumstances prevented his giving the speech at the Gala on January 26, 1995.

Our friendship – as good friendships always do – brought us together regularly for lunch, either at the Mid-Day Club or, at his

favorite luncheon site, the Standard Club. He had a permanent luncheon reservation at a table beneath the east windows. Joyce was always our waitress, whom he would tease as she served us. We talked. He often shared his dread of the Holocaust – convinced that it could happen again, which made him sad and apprehensive. But he loved talking about his family – his sons, of whom he was very proud, his wife, Meredith, his grandchildren. And we talked of our pasts – how dissimilar they were in strangely confluent ways, which, perhaps, brought us together as such close and intimate friends.

When he could no longer travel to the city, Norma and I often visited him in Glencoe, sitting always in his library, with Meredith for a time, and then with him alone when Meredith was gone. He always called Norma "Laura", for she reminded him of Gene Tierney in the motion picture *Laura*. Then there came a time when we had to communicate with pad and pencil, when he could no longer hear.

In our final visit with him, on October 9, 2010, we could communicate no longer. Norma wrote on the board, "Laura is here!"

Abel Berland, Father

Richard Berland on being Abel Berland's son

Our father, Abel E. Berland, who was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, was the product of Russian immigrant parents, whose ability to communicate in English was somewhat limited. He worked hard and achieved the American Dream. Dad's love of books began at a very early age. After being put to bed at night by his parents, he would read by using the light which emanated from beneath his closed bedroom door. Dad's love of books continued throughout his life. His primary interest was English literature. After we left home to go off on our own, he turned our old bedrooms into libraries. There were even bookshelves in the basement of the family home.

Our Dad was always there for his three children. He put family first. Dad provided us with love, comfort, security, support, and disciplined us when necessary.

He would always listen and give us guidance with any personal problems we thought we had at the time. Our father taught us to aim high always – to be the best that you can be. He was involved in our lives. He was a role

There was no recognition. I wrote in bold letters, "William Shakespeare!" Nothing.

I asked his housekeeper, Ida, for a copy of the scripture, and I read to him:

The Lord is my shepherd;

I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:

he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul:

he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil:

for thou art with me;

thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Abel left us quietly on December 6, a fitting conclusion to his sojourn, which touched so many lives in such magnanimous ways. It was a perfect *dénouement* for a man whose life was honed by the Psalms.

I could think of no better way to close our friendship than to read to Abel in his final, gentle silence, the Twenty-third Psalm.

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model – a tower of strength.

Our father was very patriotic. He loved the U.S.A. He proudly flew the American flag in front of our home. We would often discuss current events as well as the issues facing our nation.

Like our Dad, all three sons became attorneys. We all married and had children of our own.

You've heard about "Jewish mothers"? Our Dad was a Jewish father. He was very protective. Even after we reached middle age, he would insist that we call him after leaving his home to make sure we got home safely.

Dad was a very religious man. He prayed every day. We celebrated all major holidays together as a family. He would sit at the head of the table and lead us in prayer. After dinner, we would talk and laugh. These were fun times that we will always remember.

Our father was awesome. We hope to continue to make him proud. He is dearly missed – he will always be in our hearts and minds.

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Abel Berland, the Book Collector

R. Eden Martin on his mentor in book collecting

Abel Berland was Chicago's greatest book collector. Others have magnificent collections and are outstanding scholars in their fields. But Abel brought together wonderful books from a wide array of literature and thought: copies of the masterpieces of English literature, including the four Shakespeare folios, books from the early years of printing with movable type, and books of science and the intellect. He had a hand-written manuscript of the Magna Carta from the early 14th century. He had 60-some incunabula. Abel's copy of the first folio of Shakespeare was one of three complete folios in the United States. It had once belonged to John Dryden. His copy of the fourth folio was arguably the finest in the world. The first editions of Newton's *Principia Mathematica* and his *Opticks* rested on his shelves. He had Blake's 1789 edition of *Songs of Innocence* – written, illustrated, printed and hand-painted by Blake.

Others have written about Abel's collection – most notably Bob Cotner in his fine article in the *Caxtonian* (May 1996), and again in the *Caxtonian* (August 2004) after his collection brought over \$14 million in auction at Christie's in October 2001. (The collection would have brought more but for the depressing effects on the market caused by the 9/11 attack a month or so earlier.) Any reader of the *Caxtonian* who wants to learn more about Abel's books should consult those articles – or the beautiful two-volume catalogue of the collection published at the time by Christie's. [Both *Caxtonian* articles are available online.]

Abel the man was every bit as magnificent as Abel's collection. Indeed, the first made the second possible. He was passionate in his love of books and literature. His attitude toward Shakespeare was beyond scholarship: it was reverence. Some people acquire expensive books by relying on the judgment of others. Abel relied on dealers, to be sure, but he used his own judgment. It was a different kind of judgment than he brought to the evaluation of real estate. Abel was one of Chicago's great real estate men. Investors and business leaders relied on his judgment of what properties were worth – compared to each other, and perhaps compared to alternative investments. When it came to books, Abel sought out the great works of literature – Shakespeare being the best example – regardless of what they were worth to somebody else. If it was the best

copy of one of the great works of the imagination or science, he wanted it; and because of his genius as a real estate man, he had the resources to get it.

Other successful people I have known tell stories about their business coups – or the trials they've won – or the game when Larry Bird beat Michael Jordan's Bulls single-handedly at the old Stadium. Abel would tell how as a child, after his parents had told him to turn out the light and go to sleep, he would read in bed with a special light. Or how, as a young man, he would bring home a book in its wrappings and place it outside a window in his house, so he could smuggle it in without having to provide an explanation. Or how he built up a great collection of pristine firsts of American literature, and then allowed a friend to buy the collection for a song as a way to encourage him to become a serious collector – and also to enable Abel to bring sharper focus to his own collecting efforts. Or how, in another unusual act of friendship and generosity, he yielded to the persistent entreaties of an old friend who had taken a position in a rare book library – sold him an extremely rare first edition of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* – and then spent the next three decades wishing he could somehow get it back.

Bob Cotner writes in one of his articles that Abel helped navigate more people into the Caxton Club than anyone else – including Bob. Abel did better than that for me. I somehow became a member of the Caxton Club without knowing Abel. But I soon got to know him – through the Club, and also by periodically having lunch with him at the old Mid-Day Club. The subject was always books. He kindly asked me what I had – and I told him, without realizing how pitifully insubstantial my little gatherings were compared to his. Then he told me about how he collected – how he had worked with, and relied on, a

few great dealers to help him find what he wanted, even before he knew he wanted them. He introduced me to two prominent American dealers. He set up a lunch for me with a handful of Chicago's other notable collectors. He regularly sent me copies of pages from auction catalogues. He spread his enthusiasm like a virus, which in a way it was. He helped me grow from an accumulator into a collector. By his example, he taught me – and many others – to take pleasure from the search, the self-education, the competition, and the scholarship made possible by the books themselves.

arship made possible by the books themselves.

I asked him once if he intended to give his collection to a private library or university. Abel unhesitatingly brushed aside the idea. He believed private collectors took better care of books than most institutions; and he pointed out that it was the sales by earlier generations of private collectors, through auctions and dealers, that had made it possible for Abel himself to enjoy building and treasuring his own collection. He did not want to deprive future generations of that same pleasure.

In his last years, Abel was unable to move around and could not hear well. My wife and I would occasionally visit him in his home. Abel invariably told my wife he was so delighted to see her, and how lucky I was. He would tell us how much he missed his departed wife. And we would talk about books – or exchange notes. The last time I went, the President of the Civic Federation came along and presented an award to Abel for his long-time service to that organization.

To anyone who hadn't known about the rarities which had been sold, Abel's library would have still looked astonishingly full and attractive. He had finely bound copies of hundreds of literary classics, along with many shelves of scholarly and other secondary works. But Abel knew his Shakespeare folios and other treasures were gone. He missed them.

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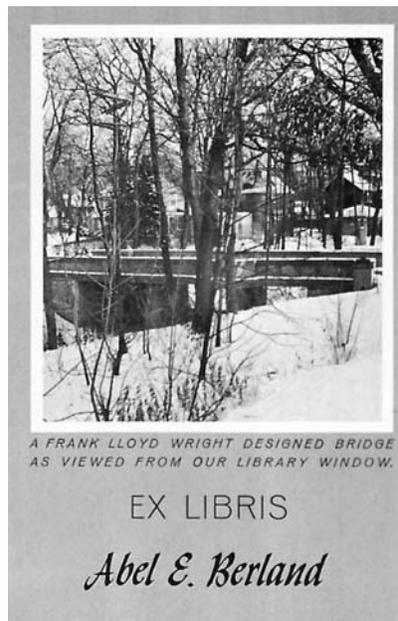


Photo courtesy DePaul University Library

Book and manuscript-related exhibitions: a selective list

Compiled by Robert McCamant

(Note: on occasion an exhibit may be delayed or extended; it is always wise to call in advance of a visit.)

Art Institute of Chicago, 111 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, 312-443-3600: "Richard Morris Hunt and the American Renaissance in Architecture" (features Hunt's drawings for real estate magnate William Borden's Gold Coast residence as well as a Renaissance Revival palace designed by Boston architect R. Clipston Sturgis for Victor Lawson, founder of the Chicago *Daily News*), Gallery 24 through May 15.

Chicago Architecture Foundation, 224 South Michigan, Chicago, 312-922-3432: "Chicago Model City" (unique models of downtown, of the Eisenhower expressway from 1950, more.) Atrium Gallery, ongoing.

Chicago Botanic Garden, Lenhardt Library, 1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe, 847-835-8202: "Caring for Collections: Conservation of the Rare Book Collection" (techniques used by professional conservators for rare books), through May 1.

Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington Street, Chicago, 312-744-6630: "Sears at the Center: New Work by Donald Fels" (collages from historic Sears catalogs), April 2 through June 26.

Harold Washington Library Center, 400 S. State Street, Chicago, 312-747-4300: "Alfred Appel on Classic Jazz" (works by the late Alfred Appel, Northwestern professor, who wrote widely on the history of jazz with special focus on Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, and Fats Waller), Upright Case, Eighth Floor, through June 30. "Midstream: Chicago River 1999-2010" (28 black and white photographs by Richard Wasserman reveal the historical use of the river and its evolution), Congress Corridor, Ground Floor, through September 2.

Columbia College Center for the Book and Paper Arts, 1104 S. Wabash, Chicago, 312-369-6630. "Counting on Chance: 25 Years of Artists' Books by Robin Price, Publisher" (a mid-career retrospective of the contemporary book artist and fine press printer), Second Floor gallery, through April 9. "MFA Thesis Show" (including work by Caxton scholarship winner Daniel Mellis), opening April 29.

DuSable Museum of African American History, 740 East 56th Place, Chicago, 773-947-0600: "For all the World to See: Visual Culture and the struggle for Civil Rights" (the historical role played by visual images in shaping, influencing, and transforming the fight for civil rights), through May 16.

Lake Forest-Lake Bluff Historical Society, 361 E. Westminster Avenue,

Lake Forest, 847-234-5253: "Uncanny, Unabridged, Unforgettable: 150 Years of Lake Forest" (honors Lake Forest's Sesquicentennial), through December 29.

Loyola University Museum of Art, 820 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, 312-915-7600: "Eric Gill: Iconographer" (wood engravings drawn from the University of San Francisco's Albert Sperisen Collection), through May 1.

Museum of Contemporary Art, 220 East Chicago Avenue, Chicago, 312-280-2660: "MCA DNA: Thomas Ruff" (ranges from his early large-scale portraits of German citizens, to studies of modernist architecture, to digitally modified pornographic images appropriated from the internet), through June 19; "Jim Nutt: Coming Into Character" (the first major exhibit of his work in 10 years), through May 29.

Newberry Library, 60 W. Walton Street, Chicago, 312-943-9090: "Exploration: The 25th Annual Juried Exhibition of the Chicago Calligraphy Collective" and "Calligraphic Purchase Prize Winners at the Newberry Library," both through June 25. "Illuminated Manuscripts and Printed Books: French Renaissance Gems of the Newberry," Spotlight Exhibition Series, R. R. Donnelley Gallery, through May 28. Lecture: "Bankruptcy in the Eighteenth-Century Book Trade" (Christine Ferdinand of Magdalen College Library, University of Oxford, in a history of the book talk), 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 21. Reserve for lecture by sending an e-mail to renaissance@newberry.org.

Northern Illinois University Art Museum, NIU Altgeld Hall, DeKalb: "Music to my Eyes: Musical Instruments as Visual Art," opens April 7.

Northwestern University, Charles Deering Library, 1970 Campus Drive, Evanston, 847-491-7658: "René Binet and Ernst Haeckel's Collaboration: Magical Naturalism and Architectural Ornament" (one of the few complete copies of the French architect René Binet's *Esquisses décoratives*), Special Collections and Archives, opens April 28. "Best of Bologna" (reproductions of children's-book illustrations), newly-installed permanent exhibit, 4th floor, main library.

University of Chicago, John Crerar Library, 5730 South Ellis Avenue, Chicago, 773-702-8740: "Sweet Home Chicago: Chocolate and Confectionery Production and Technology in the Windy City" (drawing from items in the substantial cookery collection at the Library, this exhibit explores the history of chocolate and confectioners in the city and the science and technology of the candy making process), Atrium, through June 11.

Details of exhibits and events that are part of the **Festival of the Architecture Book, 1511-2011**, should be available at the festival web site, <http://1511-2011.org/>

Until a replacement exhibit editor is found, please send your listings to bmccamant@quarterfold.com, or call 312-329-1414 x 11.



Harold Washington Library: Richard Wasserman
MIDSTREAM: CHICAGO RIVER 1999-2010. © 2011 RICHARD WASSERMAN.

Caxtonians Collect: Bill Locke

Interviewed by Robert McCamant

“I think they paid me 85 cents an hour, or maybe 95,” says Bill Locke of his first library job, as a page at the Newberry. The time was the late 50’s; he was an undergrad student at Illinois Wesleyan University. “But I really enjoyed it there. It was what clinched libraries for me as a career. I’d always used libraries while growing up, and loved libraries. I mistakenly tried working in the family trucking business, not to mention going to graduate school, first in business and then education, before I realized that library school was where I belonged.”

He thinks he had to have known a number of Caxtonians when in grad school, but he was not aware of the Club at the time. He remembers Peggy Sullivan when she was a graduate student at the University of Chicago library school (now gone) – but of

course it was many years before the Club had any female members.

As it turned out, Locke joined the club in 2003, subsequent to his nomination by John Notz. Locke and Notz had known each other for many years due to both being members of the Society of Architectural Historians (which Locke joined in 1963!). Once Locke was a Caxton member, it did not take him long to become deeply involved with Club activities. When Leonard Friedman retired from management of the Friday Luncheon, Locke started working with Ed Quattrocchi on the process of finding speakers and organizing the events. (He now works with Dorothy Sinson on that committee.)

By far his most difficult and thankless task for the Club was all the research in finding facilities for meetings, beginning with the Club learning that the Mid-Day was going to close. Then-president Steve Tomashefsky

had asked him to look into venues for lunches and dinners. During that first peripatetic year, when Locke was in charge of arrangements, events were held at a variety of venues, in order to provide members with a way to judge from among them. That resulted in the Club settling on the Women’s Athletic Club for lunches and the Newberry Library for dinners. Before long, price increases at each one led us to our current combination of the Union



Photograph by Robert McCamant

League and Cliff Dwellers clubs.

Locke is a lifelong Chicagoan. At the time of his birth, his family lived in South Shore. He attended Illinois Wesleyan in Bloomington as an undergraduate. (But he didn’t hang out in the book stacks of the library: the ceilings were so low that he often hit his head on light fixtures when he discovered the book he was looking for and stood up.) After library school, Locke moved to Beverly for his first professional library job – four years as upper school librarian at Morgan Park Academy. From there he moved to Loop City Junior College, now Harold Washington College, in 1968, where he was Librarian until 2003, when he retired.

Meanwhile, he and his wife, Judith, raised three sons in Flossmoor (all three sons now live in the Chicago area). Bill and Judith – who are fast approaching their 50th wedding anniversary – are empty-nesters on the Gold

Coast.

Locke has always loved and accumulated books. He points to his father, who not only bought current fiction which he then left around the house, but also read aloud Shakespeare and other classics to the family.

The principal category in his collection proved to be architecture, especially of the Arts and Crafts schools. He traces his interest to a family trip to California in the 50’s. “I saw

the Gamble House in Pasadena, and was immediately fascinated.” That translated into intense interest in the Wright and Prairie schools, but he’s tried to cut back lately. “I’ve finally decided I have enough books on Wright,” he confesses. “The trouble is that there are a half-dozen new books on Wright every year.”

He fondly recalls buying from Richard S. Barnes at his store on Wells, where he found his association copy of the *Plan of Chicago* and other local-interest items.

Looking at build-

ings in books leads inevitably to looking at buildings in person, and he and Judith are avid participants in guided tours of an architectural nature. “We’ve been to Scotland three times, since there is so much Arts and Crafts work to be seen in Glasgow and Edinburgh. But my fondest memory is a two-week Arts and Crafts tour we took in England. We got into several William Morris sites, the Grimsley and Barnsley furniture sites in Cheltenham, Chipping Campden in the Cotswolds, Watts chapel in Surrey...and so much more,” he sighs.

As if Locke doesn’t have enough to do between his books and his volunteer activities for the Caxton Club and the Society of Architectural Historians, he’s also been a long-time board member of Shaw-Chicago, the theatrical group. “Don’t worry, though,” he laughs. “I haven’t done acting myself since college.”

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Bookmarks...♦♦♦

Luncheon: Friday April 8, 2011, Union League Club
Jeff Jahns
Highlights and Favorites of the Current Architecture
Book Festival; also, the Challenges, Frustrations and Pleasures
of a Long-time Book Collector

With outstanding Architecture Book Festival exhibits beginning to pop out from 17 first-class institutions in Chicagoland, who better to address the Club than the man who envisioned it all: Caxtonian Jeff Jahns, former Chairman of the Chicago Architecture Foundation? Besides taking us on a beautifully illustrated, selective, power-point journey of the last 500 years of illustrated architecture books (including Chicago's extensive involvement), Jeff will tell how he came to collect books (architectural books being but a part of his collection), where he finds his books, how he organizes and deals with a multitude of books, the one that got away and other anecdotes, collecting as entertainment, and the internet and collecting. Also hear of Jeff's newly-researched list of talented Caxtonian architects, joining the ranks of Frank Lloyd Wright and Daniel Burnham. Jeff is a partner in the law firm Seyfarth Shaw and is a member of the board of the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in Fine Arts.

The April luncheon will take place at the Union League Club, 65 W. Jackson Boulevard. Luncheon buffet (in the main dining room on six) opens at 11:30 am; program (in a different room, to be announced) 12:30-

April Dinner Cancelled

Our speaker, Ed Colker, broke his leg in a January snowstorm in New York City. He is undergoing surgery, and trusts that he will be able to reschedule next year.

*1:30. Luncheon is \$30. For reservations call 312-255-3710 or use the newly augmented Caxton web site; **reservations are needed by noon Tuesday for the Friday luncheon.***

Beyond April...

MAY LUNCHEON

We will meet Friday, May 13 at the Union League Club with Paul Saenger, Newberry Curator of Rare Books, talking about the Best of New Acquisitions at the Newberry since 2006, when he last talked on new books.

MAY DINNER

On May 18, Dennis McClendon will talk about how historic maps tell Chicago's history. McClendon produced the maps for the *Encyclopedia of Chicago*.

JUNE LUNCHEON

We will meet Friday, June 10 at the Union League Club John Metoyer, interim President of Harold Washington College, will speak on his artist book, *Blood Migration*, imagined and published by 21st Editions and containing John's poetry and photographs.

JUNE DINNER

Wednesday, June 15 at the Cliff Dwellers: speaker and topic to be announced.