

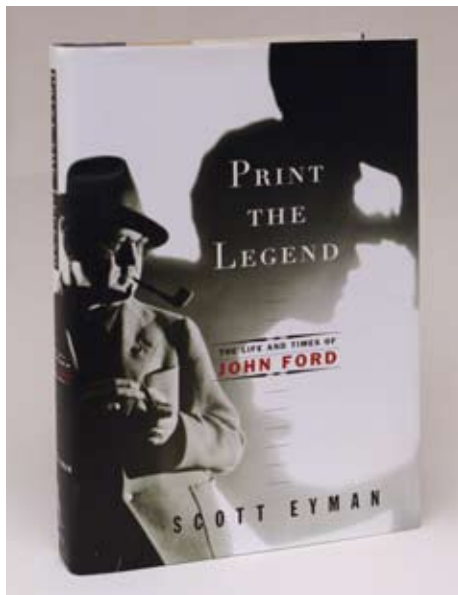
Monument Valley and the Great American Western A Journey Through John Ford Country

John C. Roberts

Few art forms can lay a stronger claim to being quintessentially American than the western film. At its best, the western celebrates our special values of boundless enterprise, fierce independence, self-reliance, and community. At its worst, it starkly reveals the selfish exploitation of both our western lands and their native peoples. The western movie tradition springs naturally from America's long fascination with our frontier experience and the settlement of the west. Those films had a special meaning for

me, as I had a grandfather who was a homesteader in far western North Dakota. From a young age growing up in South Dakota and Nebraska I had always put in the first rank of westerns the films of John Ford, and especially those starring that most iconic of western actors, John Wayne. Recently several important books have explored this artistic territory, notably Scott Eyman's new biography *John Wayne: The Life and Legend* (2014) and Glenn Frankel's *The Searchers: The Making of an American Legend* (2013), which explores Ford's film as novel, film, and real-life frontier saga. I resolved to look further into these classic westerns of my youth.

In order to bring the world of John Ford's western films truly alive, I decided to drive from my second home in Jackson, Wyoming, to John Ford Country – Monument Valley on the Utah-Arizona border. In that austere and colorful landscape I hoped better to understand two of my favorite Ford movies, both filmed there – *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* and *The Searchers*. I also wanted to know more about the three fascinating men who made those films possible – director Ford, his cinematographer Winton Hoch, and the obscure



Indian trader who brought Hollywood to Monument Valley, Harry Goulding.

My trip was largely on a single highway, U.S. Route 191. Remarkably, it traverses some of the most striking scenery in the American west. Highway 191 starts at the Canadian border in Montana, passes through Lewiston and Bozeman, and follows the Gallatin

ABOVE *The single road into Monument Valley.* LEFT *Scott Eyman's serious and complete biography of John Ford.*

Gateway to Yellowstone National Park. From West Yellowstone it takes the traveler past Old Faithful and other familiar features of the park, through Grand Teton National Park, and to Jackson, where my trip began. From Jackson U.S. 191 winds through Hoback Canyon and into the upper Green River basin, site of several mountain-men rendezvous in the early 19th century. It passes through Pinedale, site of the excellent Museum of the Mountain Man, with the magnificent Wind River Range to the east, then skirts the historic area just west of South Pass, crossing both the Oregon and California trails on which so many immigrants travelled before the Civil War. Just off road and west of Rock Springs is Expedition Island, where Major John Wesley Powell began his historic expeditions down the Green and Colorado rivers to explore the Grand Canyon for the first time. The route passes Flaming Gorge, its original beauty now much diminished by a dam and

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reservoir, and crosses the Uinta Mountains in Utah. Farther south into Utah the wonders continue, as the highway runs through the towns of Green River and Moab, and near Arches and Canyonlands National Parks and the wondrous scenery along the Green, Colorado and San Juan Rivers. Just to the east of Monument Valley it enters Arizona; Bryce Canyon is to the west in Utah, and Mesa Verde to the east in Colorado. U.S. 191 traverses Arizona to the Mexican border, crossing the Great Navaho Reservation and passing close to both the San Carlos Apache Reservation and the legendary western town of Tombstone.

The landscape from Jackson to Monument Valley is as varied as the mountain west itself. It features sagebrush flats and high mountains in Wyoming, grasslands in the Uinta Valley of Utah, and finally the unique arid sandstone mesas and canyons of southeastern Utah. Colors gradually change until the gorgeous red-orange hues of Arches, Canyonlands and Monument Valley predominate. A single road takes the visitor into Monument Valley, and its grandeur is truly breathtaking. It remains remote today, much as it was when John Ford first saw it in 1938.

John Ford, known to his friends as Jack or Pappy, is in many ways an elusive figure. He disliked interviews, particularly those by pretentious critics; he often toyed with questioners and spun webs of misleading information. He avoided talking about his movies, preferring that they speak for themselves. The director told many different versions of his life, and left confusion even about his name. He often said that his given name was Sean Aloysius O'Feeney or O'Fearnna, though he was actually born John Martin Feeney in 1894, in a small town near Portland, Maine. While many books have been written about Ford, by far the most serious and complete are Scott Eyman's *Print the Legend: The Life and Times of John Ford* (1999) and Joseph McBride's *Searching for John Ford: A Life* (2001). Ford's grandson Dan Ford produced a highly personal book about his grandfather, *Pappy: The Life of John Ford* (1979), which contains many insights into his character and family life. Director Peter Bogdanovich interviewed Ford extensively for his very useful book *John Ford* (1978), and directed an excellent documentary in 1971, *Directed by John Ford*, which is available on DVD.

Ford was the son of a modestly successful tavern owner, and grew up as part of a large immigrant Irish community. His older brother Francis went off to Hollywood in 1912 and began working in silent films, changing his last name to Ford. John Ford had wanted to attend the Naval Academy after high school, but was not selected. When Francis made a visit home to Portland in 1914, young John was

swept away by the romantic lure of Hollywood and joined his brother in the picture business, rooming for a time with western star Hoot Gibson. He soon changed his name to Jack Ford. The Fords were very active in silent films, especially westerns, with Jack slowly eclipsing his brother as a director. Francis worked later in life as an actor in Ford films, often as a comic drunk or barkeep (as in *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*). Jack Ford went on his own as a director at Universal in 1917, and became a busy and reliable maker of westerns, often starring his friend Harry Carey. He took on more complex and ambitious projects starting in 1921, after his first major western hit, *The Iron Horse*, and preferred then to be called John Ford. By the thirties he was one of Hollywood's most successful directors, winning his first Academy Award in 1936 for *The Informer*. A comprehensive reference work about Ford is *John Ford: A Bio-bibliography* (1998) by Bill Levy, which contains details of all of his films (though some of the early silents are lost) and an exhaustive listing of books and articles.

John Ford is often spoken of as a director of westerns, but many of his mature films – *Young Mr. Lincoln*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *The Informer*, *They Were Expendable*, *How Green Was My Valley*, *Mr. Roberts*, and *The Quiet Man*, for example – were not westerns. His films all contained common themes, however. These included reverence for all things Irish, the importance of community and family life, and rugged male individualism. Though some critics criticized his tendency toward sentimentalism, he seemed for the most part to avoid being maudlin. Director Martin Scorsese, a big fan, observes that his movies were really “a collection of rituals.” His visual style was simple and uncluttered. Most of all, he said, he liked to tell a good story.

John Ford is considered one of the creative geniuses of American film, but he was also an Irish rogue. Like many great artists, the director was a bundle of contradictions. He was not college educated, and may have been sensitive about that fact, but he was a voracious reader of both fiction and history all his life. While he had a close relationship with the Navaho in Monument Valley, he often portrayed Indians in his films in the most stereotypical terms. Though he placed a high value on warm, happy family life in his films, he was away from his own family for long periods and had difficult relationships with his wife and his two children. While placing the highest value on tight-knit communities of comrades, he had fraught relationships even with his closest friends. He used a small group of star actors in many of his movies – Harry Carey (and later his son, Harry Carey, Jr.), John Wayne, Wayne's USC football buddy Ward Bond, Henry Fonda, Victor McLaglen, and Maureen O'Hara, to name a few. He also used the same secondary actors, stuntmen and technicians on many of his films.



This spread from Peter Cowie's *John Ford and the American West* (2004) pairs a Frederic Remington illustration with Henry Fonda in *My Darling Clementine*.



View from the porch of the original Goulding's Lodge building.

Together they made up the John Ford Stock Company, whose most insightful chronicler was Harry Carey, Jr., known as Dobe, in his book *Company of Heroes: My Life as an Actor in the John Ford Stock Company* (1994). At the same time, Ford could be famously cruel to his actors, even the stars. In Dobe Carey's words, the director was "kind to the tough and cruel to the fainthearted," while always "paternal and gentle to the girls." In the 1971 Bogdanovich documentary, James Stewart remembers that on each film someone was "bottom of the list" and therefore the target of abuse. Ford was especially hard on John Wayne, and after the war never tired of reminding people on set that Duke had not served in the military. He

loved to bait actors into making artistic suggestions, only to punish them loudly for their hubris. In several instances, he inexplicably stopped casting an actor for years, while continuing to see him socially. Peeved at Wayne for appearing in a rival director's movie *The Big Trail* in 1930, for example, he didn't cast Duke again until his breakout film *Stagecoach* (1939). Without apparent reason, he stopped using his close friend Harry Carey after 1921. And after Ben Johnson talked back to him at a dinner on location he didn't cast Johnson again for 13 years. Despite his reputation for provoking and insulting actors, however, they wanted to work for him over and over because of his unique vision and simple style.

John Ford also loved the sea. From youth in Maine he had sailed, and in 1934 he bought a large sailboat. It was named *Araner* in homage to Irish islands of Aran, where his mother was born. It became a second home and a place to get away for drinking and carousing with his friends. Ford sometimes sailed *Araner* to Mexico and even to Hawaii. In the 30s he

joined the Naval Reserve, and when war broke out he convinced Wild Bill Donovan, head of the OSS, to create a film unit to produce a series of war documentaries and training films. While making his award-winning *The Battle of Midway* Ford displayed extraordinary courage while personally handling a camera during the Japanese attack on Midway Island. The director thereafter treasured his wartime experiences, and kept in close contact with members of the film unit. He used his salary from the wartime film *They Were Expendable* to establish a retreat for veterans of his film unit called the Field Photo

Farm. For many years it served as a kind of clubhouse for Ford and his circle. The director's wartime exploits and their effect on his later work are insightfully explored in Mark Harris's engrossing book *Five Came Back: A Story of Hollywood and the Second World War* (2014).

John Ford may never have come to Monument Valley had it not been for an obscure sheepman and trader named Harry Goulding, who had come with his wife Mike to the arid and isolated valley in 1921. A few years later he built a small trading post and began trading with the local Navaho tribesmen. He learned the Navaho language and established a close relationship with those who lived in Monument Valley. The site of his trading post was originally not within the boundaries of the Navaho reservation, and he was able to lease land from the state of Utah. Later he was able to buy an entire section from the state before the area was added to the big Navaho reservation in Arizona, and today it remains a private in-holding.

The Depression was especially hard on the Navaho, who struggled to survive even in good times. The Gouldings' business was also in trouble. While later in life both Ford and Wayne claimed to be the first to discover Monument Valley, Goulding's account of his first meeting with Ford is accepted by most scholars. The only book written about the Gouldings and Monument Valley is little
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Monument Valley formations known as Yei Bi Chei and the Totem Pole.

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more than an edited oral history: Samuel Moon's *Tall Sheep: Harry Goulding, Monument Valley Trader* (1992). In it Goulding recounts a desperate trip to Hollywood with Mike in 1938 after hearing that a movie company was looking for a location to shoot a new western, taking with him a portfolio of photographs by his friend Joseph Munsch. He camped out in the office of producer Walter Wanger until he was finally allowed to speak with Ford. The director was taken with Munsch's extraordinary pictures of Monument Valley and agreed to travel there to scout the location. Ford was convinced by the grandeur of the setting, and immediately agreed to film part of his upcoming film, *Stagecoach*, there with Goulding's trading post as his headquarters. It was the beginning of a relationship between Ford and Monument Valley that was so close that other directors were loath to use it out of deference to the master; people eventually began to refer to it as "John Ford Country."

In 1938, Monument Valley was one of the most isolated places in the United States, 180 miles from the nearest railroad at Flagstaff, Arizona. Ford's crew and equipment had to be reloaded onto trucks in Flagstaff; the large caravan then journeyed northward to Goulding's on a primitive dirt road. While none of the scenes with principal actors for *Stagecoach* were filmed there, some of the iconic outdoor scenes for the movie were. The bonds among Ford, Monument Valley, and the Gouldings were forged.

Ford in the end filmed parts of seven movies in Monument Valley. He and the Gouldings became close friends. He often stayed in a stone cabin "up on the bench" near the trading post, and even visited with the

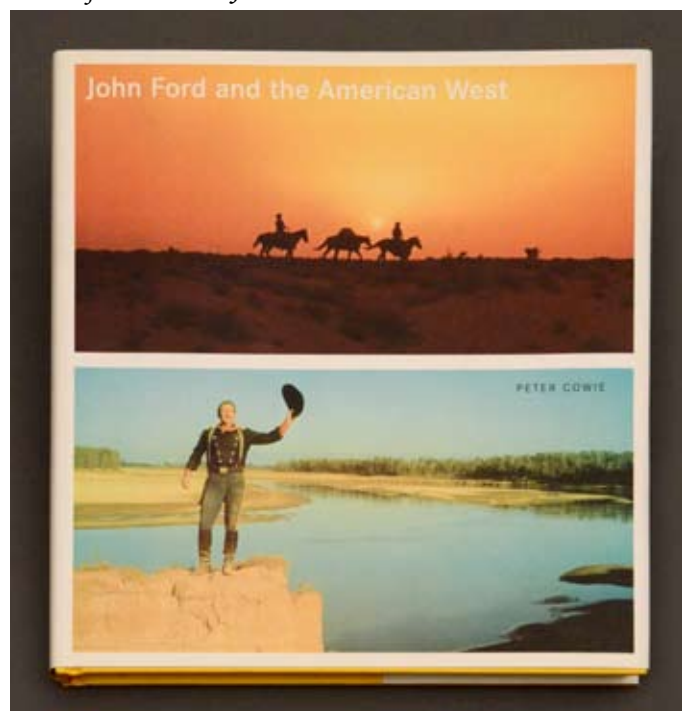
Gouldings when he wasn't making a movie. Those older stone buildings are now gone, but I stayed in the motel section of present-day Goulding's Lodge in that same location. The old trading post and a few other original buildings are still there.

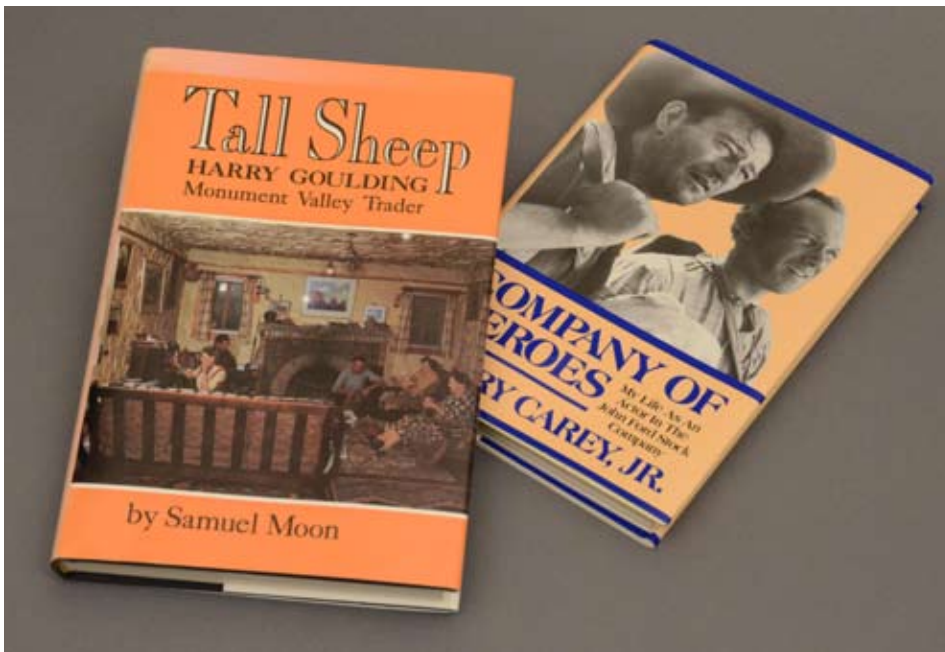
In the years that followed the *Stagecoach* shoot, Harry Goulding became a crucial link between the moviemakers and the Navaho. He helped to recruit many tribesmen to portray warriors from several different tribes in Ford's movies, and others to work as stuntmen and technicians. Goulding persuaded Ford and his producers to pay the Navaho a fair wage. With his intimate knowledge of the area, he even helped Ford find locations for particular scenes. The location work for *Stagecoach* and later films injected vital dollars into the local economy and the Navaho were enormously grateful. They even bestowed a Navaho name on John Ford – Natani Nez (tall soldier). With the war disrupting Hollywood, Ford was not able to return to Monument Valley until 1946 when he filmed *My Darling Clementine* there. For that shoot, he erected a huge set re-creating the town of Tombstone, which was then given to the Navaho. It was torn down for the materials a few years later. It would be two years later, in the fall of 1948, when the entire

cast and crew returned for the film that would make the most extensive use of Monument Valley in all of Ford's work, *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*.

The third person responsible for the enduring success of Ford movies like *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* and *The Searchers* was legendary cinematographer Winton C. Hoch. Hoch's best work was probably done in Monument Valley, but Ford biographer Joseph McBride argues that all of the director's most beautiful color films were photographed by Hoch – 3 *Godfathers*, *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*, *The Quiet Man*, and *The Searchers*. Hoch was trained as a scientist at Cal Tech, and worked for many years for the Technicolor Corpora-

Cover of Peter Cowie's *John Ford and the American West*.





Tall Sheep: Harry Goulding, Monument Valley Trader (1992) tells the story of the man who talked Ford into using the valley for shooting, while Harry Carey Jr. wrote the insightful Company of Heroes: My Life as an Actor in the John Ford Stock Company (1994).

tion on the advanced three-color process that began to be used in the late 1930s. He photographed a number of color travelogues for Technicolor, served with the Naval Photographic Science Lab in World War II, and after the war turned to feature films.

Hoch was unique among his contemporaries in that he emerged from the laboratory and not the movie set. He exploited his intimate knowledge of the Technicolor process, using special filters and innovative laboratory work to achieve extraordinarily rich and vivid effects. Many prominent directors were leery of Technicolor, especially on location, because it required more cumbersome cameras. It also used special film that was not as light sensitive as black-and-white film. Some of the most famous, including Ford, felt that black-and-white film made possible more subtle shadings and contrasts. But in the hands of a master

like Hoch, Technicolor proved to be capable of striking and innovative effects. Because of the sweep of the Monument Valley terrain and its amazingly evocative red and orange colors, it was an unusually good canvas for Hoch's talents. Later, on *The Searchers*, he used Paramount's new wide-screen VistaVision system, which allowed for greater depth of field and additional sumptuous effects.

The first collaboration between Hoch and Ford was *3 Godfathers*, filmed in California in the spring of 1948. It would prove to be one of the most beautiful of all Ford films. The crew, and many of the same cast, then moved to Monument Valley in the fall of 1948 to shoot *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*. In many ways, Hoch and Ford were opposites, and despite their five well-received movies together never became close. Dobe Carey remembered that Hoch acted like a field general on *3 Godfathers*,

meticulously arranging each shot. He was a perfectionist and a slow worker, in contrast to Ford's more casual, intuitive style. He was said to move prop cacti into a scene to achieve just the right visual balance with



The North Window, an iconic Monument Valley feature which appears in *The Searchers*.

the landscape and the actors. Ford called him "pedantic." All the same, reports of Hoch at work recount that he was modest and professional, and not submissive to the director.

Regrettably, there is no full-length biography of Winton Hoch, and he is often forgotten today. When critics and historians emphasize John Ford's "eye for color," or his "visual sensibility," they often fail to credit the contributions of his cinematographer. On my visit to Monument Valley it was a special thrill to look for the exact positions from which iconic scenes from Ford-Hoch westerns were shot, which is possible because of the unique characteristics of the prominent buttes and mesas and their relationships to one another. The landscape is unchanged; dusk and dawn were particularly magical.

Ford experienced a remarkable period of productivity immediately after World War II, and filmed six well-regarded westerns from mid-1946 to mid-1950. Three – *My Darling Clementine*, *Fort Apache*, and *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* – were shot in Monument Valley. *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*, considered Ford's most beautiful film, was the second in the director's "Cavalry Trilogy," after *Fort Apache* and before *Rio Grande*, and the only one shot in color. Ford and his team did meticulous research for the three films, lavishing attention on the details of 1870s cavalry dress and equipment, and on the troopers' daily routine. The director wanted the films to pay homage to the contributions of the U.S. Army in opening the frontier, and especially those of the ordinary cavalryman, who were often Irish. He told cinematographer Hoch that he wanted a special look for *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*, echoing the western paintings of Frederick Remington. Critics agree that this goal was achieved to a remarkable degree, bringing out the rich reds and oranges of the sandstone formations and the bright blues and yellows of the cavalry uniforms. Ford often told interviewers that he was consciously trying to emulate the look of such famous western artists as Remington, Charles Russell, and Charles Schreyvogel in his westerns. How well he succeeded can be seen in a remarkable book by Peter Cowie, *John Ford and the American West* (2004). The large-format book includes color reproductions of western paintings by those masters juxtaposed with shots from Ford westerns and insightful commentary on Ford's visual style.

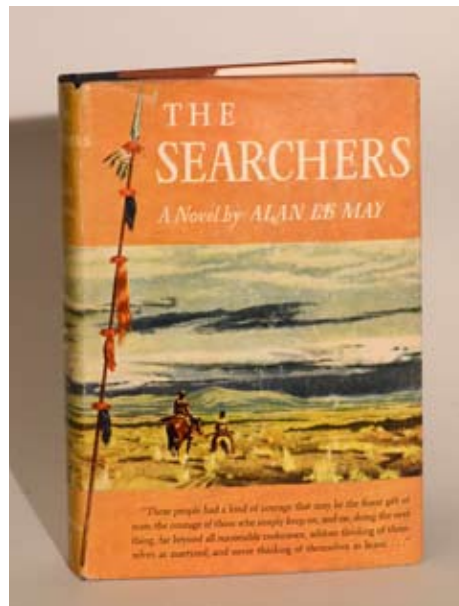
She Wore a Yellow Ribbon derives from several short stories by James Warner Bellah, with a screenplay by Frank Nugent, one of See MONUMENT VALLEY, page 6

Ford's most frequent collaborators during this period, and Laurence Stallings. Ford biographer Joseph McBride calls *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* "a lyric poem about mortality." The film is really a series of vignettes about cavalry life in the period immediately after Custer's defeat at the Little Big Horn in 1876, and centers on Captain Nathan Brittles, who is about to retire but makes one final attempt to bring peace between the encroaching whites and the Indian tribes. After seeing John Wayne in Howard Hawks's *Red River*, Ford realized that his friend could actually handle more demanding roles than that of the stereotypical cowboy. For once Wayne plays a character older than his actual age, and gives a sensitive performance that he later said was the favorite of all his film portrayals. The film has a rather leisurely pace, taking full advantage of the glories of Monument Valley. It undoubtedly succeeds in giving the full flavor of cavalry life on the frontier, including such stereotypes as the hard-drinking Irish sergeant played by Victor McLaglen and a splendidly staged formal dance with officers, noncoms, and their wives. It contains several memorable scenes, the most famous, the long shot, with minimal camera movement, of the cavalry column riding across Monument Valley in a violent thunderstorm, with huge lightning flashes in the background. The storm, of course, was completely unplanned, and presented some danger to the actors and crew. Hoch famously advised Ford that he could not guarantee that the shot would turn out well, because of the limited light sensitivity of the Technicolor film. Ford told him to go ahead, recognizing the unique beauty of the scene. Hoch delivered, undoubtedly owing to his wizardry in the processing lab. Also special is Brittles's retirement scene, as he sits on his horse in front of the regiment and receives a watch inscribed with the words "Lest We Forget." Finally, my own favorite is an unforgettable long shot of Ben Johnson (an actual cowboy played by Sergeant Tyree) racing across Monument Valley at dawn to intercept Brittles with the news that he would not have to retire after all, but would return to the regiment as chief of scouts. Ford added a sentimental narration by Irving Pichel and stirring martial music for the scenes in which the cavalry column is on the move (including the title song).

By all reports, the shoot was an extremely happy one. Ford loved working on location away from California because it minimized interference by producers and studio executives during filming. This was especially true

in remote Monument Valley. The director established the atmosphere of a boys camp with himself as camp director. It was his own world, tightly controlled, and had its own rules. He presided as patriarch over family-style dinners with the principal cast, and with the help of Harry Goulding and the Navaho organized races and games for cast and crew. He and the principal actors stayed at Goulding's while others lived in a tent city below on the valley floor. Goulding's trading post served as battalion headquarters in the movie, and the potato shed out back became Brittles's cabin. Both are still there for visitors to see. Ford's aim was to make the actors and production people feel that they were actually living in the west of the 1870s. As was his practice, he brought along buddy Danny Borzage to play western music on his accordion during filming and in the evening. All of his favorite actors, stuntmen, and technicians were present; his brother Eddie O'Fearn and his brother-in-law Wingate Smith acted as assistant directors. His older brother Francis, who first brought him to Hollywood, played a barman. Though Ford himself was a binge drinker between movies and on his boat, he allowed no liquor on his location shoots. And to reinforce the sense of community during filming, he required, as

A first edition of Alan LeMay's novel from the author's collection.



The author at the John Ford Monument in the historic Irish immigrant neighborhood of Portland, Maine.

he did on other films, that actors remain in costume and on the set watching the action, even when they were not being used in a scene.

Harry Carey Jr., in his memoir, described Ford's way of working. There was no chain of command: Ford was in charge of everything. He wore the same rumpled clothes each day. He had serious eye problems and wore dark glasses, which made it hard to judge his mood, and habitually chewed on a handkerchief. He could visualize each scene beforehand and was extremely economical in his shooting; filming *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* in Monument Valley took only 31 days. Stewart and Wayne both remember that the director disliked too much dialogue and was always cutting lines from the script in order to emphasize the visual elements. Ford did not give actors detailed instructions about how to play a scene. He disliked rehearsals, believing that they reduced the actor's spontaneity, and usually filmed each shot in one take. This technique made it difficult for studio executives later to re-edit the film, since there was no alternative footage to choose from. He preferred to set up his camera carefully and then leave it stationary, letting the action unfold across the scene. For many of the most famous Monument Valley shots, the camera was placed on a small promontory, from which Hoch could shoot both the remarkable buttes and mesas and action on the valley floor. Called John Ford Point, it is a favorite stop on the primitive road that



The potato shed behind the original Goulding's Lodge, used as Captain Nathan Brittles' quarters in *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*.

takes visitors around the valley. I was able to stand there and visualize the storm scene, the location of the fort gates in *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*, the Indian camp from *The Searchers*, and many other iconic views as framed by Ford and Hoch.

She Wore a Yellow Ribbon was well received by critics and the public, and especially praised for its lush color photography. It is now seen as one of Ford's best films, as much a meditation on tradition and change as an action western. Winton Hoch won an Academy Award for the film's cinematography.

The Searchers was an altogether different kind of movie, though it reunited Ford and Hoch in 1955 after seven years away from Monument Valley. Merian Cooper, the director's producing partner during much of his

career, brought Alan LeMay's successful novel *The Searchers* to Ford at a particularly difficult time in the director's life. Pappy was beginning to age, and was recovering from a humiliating debacle during the filming of *Mr. Roberts*. Violating his own rule, Ford had started drinking on set, fought fiercely with star Henry Fonda, and suffered a gall bladder attack. He was replaced by director Mervyn LeRoy, who finished the picture. Ford immediately saw that LeMay, who was a screenwriter as well as a novelist, had created a story that was perfect for his next project.

LeMay's novel was based on the real life legend of Cynthia Ann Parker. During the bitter wars between the Comanche and Texas settlers in 1836, her family was massacred and Cynthia Ann was kidnapped by Indians. She became the wife of a Comanche warrior, and the mother of three. Her uncle searched for her for eight years without success, but Cynthia Ann was recaptured by the Texas Rangers in 1860 and returned against her will to her white family. She never adjusted to being torn from her Comanche life and died deeply unhappy. Ironically, her son, Quanah Parker, became a renowned Comanche chief noted for his efforts to reconcile Indian life with encroaching white civilization. The tale of Parker's captivity represents a version of the Fate Worse Than Death myth, which appears in many western stories and films. It plays upon the fear of many frontier families that their women and girls would be abducted and raped by "savages." "Save the last bullet for yourself," the rancher advises his wife when under Indian attack.

Ford's favorite screenwriter Frank Nugent produced a brilliant script, which made major

changes to the novel. The central character is Ethan Edwards, returning to his brother's Texas ranch in 1868. Though we see that he is a hardened Confederate veteran, we are told virtually nothing else about his past. Ethan arrives at his brother's place alone, greeting his sister-in-law Martha and her children, among them teenager Lucy and young Debbie. We immediately see that Martha is Ethan's unspoken love. Ethan and his brother's adopted son Martin Pauley, who is part Cherokee, join a posse to chase suspected Indian cattle thieves, but return to find that the theft has been a diversion. Aaron Edwards' ranch was raided; Ethan's beloved Martha was sexually violated and killed, along with other family members, but the two girls have been captured and taken away by the Comanche. Thirsting for revenge, Ethan, Martin, and neighbor Brad Jorgenson, who had been engaged to Lucy, begin a five-year quest to rescue the two girls. Along the way, Lucy is found raped and murdered, Brad is killed by the Comanche band, led by Chief Scar, and it becomes increasingly clear to Martin that Ethan intends to kill Debbie, rather than rescue her. His hatred of Indians, reflected in his attitude toward the mixed-race Martin, leads him to consider her defiled and no longer white. The Comanche are finally confronted, and Martin kills Scar and frees Debbie. In a memorable scene, Ethan seems ready to kill Debbie but in the end embraces her and takes her home to the white world.

John Ford was not noted for the emotional complexity of his characters, but in Ethan Edwards he created what director Martin Scorsese has called the key character in his entire body of work. Most of the actual violence, surprisingly, occurs offscreen, but the effect is just as powerful. *The Searchers* is a dark, disturbing film. Gone are the bright colors and martial themes of the cavalry movies; in *The Searchers* the cavalry slaughters Comanche women and children. Ethan has some of the same virtues as Nathan Brittles – bravery, loyalty, and frontier skills – but he is utterly alone, driven by rage, revenge, and racial hatred. Indeed, the movie contrasts in many ways with the earlier *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* by showing the dark side of the great frontier myth. Instead of community, camaraderie and chivalry, we see cruelty, violence, and racial prejudice. Ethan and the Comanche chief Scar are in fact much alike. Just as Scar massacres Ethan's family, Ethan shoots out the eyes of a dead Indian and takes Scar's scalp near the end of the film. While Nathan Brittles leaves his post after a warm and

See *MONUMENT VALLEY*, page 8

We are saddened to note the passing of

Henry Adamson

who died on September 3, 2014
and

Allan Steinberg

who died on December 30, 2014
and

Marshall Yablon

who died on January 4, 2015
and

William L.M.H. Clark

who died on January 5, 2015

A remembrance for each will be published in a future issue.

emotional farewell tribute from his troops, Ethan Edwards turns away and leaves alone after returning Debbie to the remnants of her family.

Winton Hoch again creates beautiful visual effects for *The Searchers*, often suggesting on film the watercolors of Charles Russell. It is a vast canvas, as Ethan and Martin trek over the entire west in search of Debbie. There are gorgeous winter shots in deep snow (filmed in Colorado), stark images of the searchers silhouetted against the sky at dawn and dusk, and magnificent pictures of Scar against a deep blue sky. But overall, the look is more somber, darker. Ever the experimenter, Hoch faced great challenges using the new VistaVision process, which involved a larger dual 35-millimeter negative. It required much more equipment and a bigger crew in the usual primitive Monument Valley environment. Ford and Hoch also created some memorable sequences reflecting the director's familiar preoccupation with community and family life, including a scene much

admired by critics and other directors in which a stationary camera records a complex and raucous homecoming breakfast soon after Ethan's arrival. The special deep-focus capability of VistaVision allows everything in the scene to be in focus and remarkably clear. The viewer can watch action going on all across the wide screen, in both the foreground and background, making close-ups unnecessary. And of course Ford included his obligatory dance scene, a humorous fight sequence, and a carefully framed and beautifully lit funeral. Showing that this will be a different kind of Ford movie, incidentally, the script has Ethan rudely cutting short Martha's funeral by insisting that he begin the search immediately. And finally, there is the last scene, one of the most revered in all of American film: we see Mrs. Jorgenson framed from behind in the front door of her house and Ethan approaching with Debbie in his arms. He dismounts and brings Debbie to Mrs. Jorgenson. She takes Debbie and turns to go inside the house. Behind Ethan, Martin comes forward to greet Laurie, his love, and they walk past Ethan into the house. Ethan then pauses, clasps one arm with the other at the elbow, and slowly turns

and walks away alone, still framed by the door. Max Steiner's music swells in the background. The scene memorably echoes his earlier arrival at Aaron's home and his reunion with Martha, which is also shot through an open door. It is especially poignant in ways not apparent to the viewer, because Ethan's last gesture is copied from Ford's old hero Harry Carey, whose wife Olive plays Mrs. Jorgenson. She reported later that the scene reduced her to tears on the set.

Filming of *The Searchers* in Monument Valley took place in June and July 1955. Dobe



In the foreground, John Ford's Point, from which many well-known Monument Valley scenes were shot. Merrick Butte is in the right background.

Carey remembers that the shoot was especially serious, and that the cast seemed aware that the movie would be something special. Wayne was so deeply into his character that he seemed to be Ethan even after the day's shooting and around the dinner table. After his difficult struggles in 1954, Ford seemed relaxed and happy. Filming was a family affair. Ford's son Patrick served as a producer and his son-in-law Ken Curtis had a secondary role. Duke Wayne's son Patrick played a young cavalry officer. As noted, Ford's old friend Olive Carey played Mrs. Jorgenson, and her son Dobe played Brad Jorgenson. Producer Cooper's wife Dorothy Jordan played Martha. Natalie Wood, who played the grown-up Debbie, managed to bring along her sister Lana to play her as a young girl. Large sets had to be constructed, utilities brought in, and roads built to accommodate the cast and crew. Another huge tent city for the crew was erected on the flat below Gouldings's Lodge, where Ford and the principal players were billeted. Accordionist Danny Borzage was again on hand to lend atmosphere. Ford put on an enormous Fourth of July party for his crew and the Navaho, complete with the usual games and races.

After filming was completed, the tribe insisted on a large farewell ceremony in which John Ford, who had been given the Navaho name "Natani Nez" or "tall soldier," was inducted as an honorary member of the tribe.

John Wayne had come a long way since his portrayal of the young and innocent Ringo Kid in Ford's *Stagecoach*. Ethan Edwards is surely his finest film performance. He manages to make Ethan's hatred and rage believable, despite his well-developed film persona. Two shots in particular illustrate this: First is the look of pure, stony hatred on

Ethan's face when he looks at recovered women captives at the cavalry fort. His line is "They ain't white, they're Comanche," and the look, in close-up, is chilling. Second is the famous scene with Dobe Carey when he refuses to describe the mutilation of Lucy he has witnessed. You can almost feel the pain on his face.

The Searchers was received respectfully;

most reviews were favorable, but the movie was not a box office success, and it received no Academy Award nominations. Perhaps Ethan Edwards was simply too harsh a hero, too different from the John Wayne moviegoers knew and loved. Perhaps this was not the west that Americans wanted to remember. But the picture is now considered Ford's best and is often mentioned on lists of the finest American films of all time. It has influenced a number of younger directors, and may have paved the way for many more "adult" westerns in later years.

In the end, my journey through John Ford Country – both literally and figuratively – was richly rewarding. I come away with a much deeper understanding of why the magnificent Monument Valley captured the imaginations of men like John Ford, Winton Hoch, and Harry Gouling. More broadly, my journey underscored for me the powerful role the iconic western movie plays in our culture, and in turn the crucial importance of the frontier experience in our history.

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Monument Valley photographs by the author, and book photographs by Robert McCamant from books in the author's collection.

Why do you think we call it the Revels?

A few scenes from the Newberry on December 17



1 David Mann and Michael Thompson. **2** Peggy Sullivan entertains Newland Smith. **3** Lisa Schsblasey, JoEllen Dickie, Jill Gage. **4** Auctioneer Tom Joyce. **5** Arthur Frank, Mary Kay Dawson, Carole Liebson. **6** Paul Gehl, Jackie Vossler, Rob Carlson.

photographs by Robert McCamant

Book- and manuscript-related exhibitions: a selective list

Compiled by Lisa Pevtzow

(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: **“Decidedly Surreal: The Bindings of Mary Louise Reynolds”** (bindings by an American who became a central figure in the Parisian Surrealist movement), through March 23. **“Burnishing the Night: Baroque to Contemporary Mezzotints from the Collection”** (works on paper with mezzotint illustrations over many centuries, curated by Caxtonian Suzanne Karr Schmidt), through May 31.

Chicago Botanic Garden, Lenhardt Library, 1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe, 847-835-8202: **“Succulents: Featuring Redoute’s Masterpieces”**, through February 8. **“Orchidelirium”** (illustrated Orchidaceae), February 14 to April 19.

Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clark Street, Chicago, 312-266-2077: **“Railroaders: Jack Delano’s Homefront Photography”** (the federal Office of War Information assigned photographer Jack Delano to take pictures of the nation’s railways during World War II), through June 10.

City of Chicago Expo 72, 72 E. Randolph Street, Chicago: **“Rolled, Stoned & Inked: 25 Years of the Chicago Printmakers Collaborative”** (exhibit by Chicago’s oldest printers’ collaborative), through February 28.

Columbia College Center for Book and Paper Arts, 1104 S. Wabash Avenue, Chicago, 312-269-6630: **“Simultaneous: Seripop and Sonenzimmer”** (Chicagoans Nick Butcher and Nadine Nakanishi and Montreal-based Yannick Desranleau and Chloe Lum exhibit screen-printed work that investigates the relationship between the materials of fabric and paper), February 12 through April 11.

Harold Washington Library Center, 400 S. State Street, Chicago, 312-747-4300: **“Love Me Forever! Oh! Oh! Oh!”** (cartoonist Jeremy Sorese explores the idea of getting married, both gay and straight), through March 8.

Newberry Library, 60 W. Walton Street, Chicago, 312-943-9090: **“Love on Paper”** (collection items, from proclamations and pictures to cynical put-downs and comical send-ups of love), through April 4.



Art Institute / Mezzotints

THOMAS FRYE. YOUNG MAN WITH A CANDLE, 1760.

Northwestern University Block Museum, 40 Arts Circle Drive, Evanston, 847-491-4000: **“Toulouse-Lautrec Prints: Art at the Edges of Modernity”** (posters, illustrated books, theater programs, privately circulated portfolios from the last decade of the artist’s life), through April 19.

Northwestern University Library, 1970 Campus Drive, Evanston, 847-491-7658:

“William Hogarth’s Modern Moral Subjects: A Harlot’s Progress and A Rake’s Progress” (prints from an 1822 edition of Hogarth’s works), ongoing.

Oriental Institute of Chicago, 1155 East 58th Street, Chicago, 773-702-9520: **“A Cosmopolitan City: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Old Cairo”** (documents and artifacts from Cairo’s multi-cultural society, 7th to 12th centuries), February 17 to September 13.

Pritzker Military Museum and Library, 104 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, 312-374-9333: **“SEAL The Unspoken Sacrifice”** (features photographs from Stephanie Freid-Perenchio’s and Jennifer Walton’s 2009 book and artifacts on loan from the Navy SEAL Museum), ongoing.

University of Chicago, Joseph Regenstein Library Special Collections Research Center Exhibition Gallery, 1100 E. 57th Street, Chicago, 773-702-8705: **“I Step Out of Myself: Portrait Photography in Special Collections”** (from the work of Eva Watson Schütze, Carl Van Vechten, Layle Silbert, Mildred Mead, Yousef Karsh, Alice Boughton, Joan Eggan, and Tina Modotti), through March 21.

University of Illinois at Chicago, Richard J. Daley Library Special Collections, 801 S. Morgan, Chicago, 312-996-2742: **“Visualizing Uncle Tom’s Cabin: Interpretations of Harriet Beecher Stowe”** (representations of the characters and events in various editions of the book, film stills and posters, and other popular culture artifacts), through April 30.

Send your listings to lisa.pevtzow@sbcglobal.net

CAXTONIANS COLLECT, from page 11

Rush both attended Princeton and worked at Philadelphia General Hospital, and Huckman worked his whole career at an institution named for Rush.

His wife, Beverly, spent her entire working career at Rush as well. (A mere 38 years in her case. She was Associate Vice President for Equal Opportunity upon her retirement. Between them, they had 80 years!)

Actually, neither of them had wanted to live in Chicago. They had picked the Washington area as being located halfway between his parents in Newark and hers in Virginia. (And this was not long after the summer of 1968, when the older Mayor Daley’s troops had cast

the city in an armed-camp light.) But Rush was on the hunt for someone to spearhead development in its radiology department and made an offer nobody in Washington even came close to. So the couple decided to give Chicago a year’s try, and found it was not bad at all.

Today, the Huckmans live in the Hancock building, the architect for which was Bruce Graham of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. “In a used bookstore, I came across a biography of Graham, which I purchased for a pittance,” he says. “When I got it home I realized it was signed by both Graham and Stanley Tigerman, who had written the introduction.” The further amusing coincidence is that both had signed

“to Mike,” of course an entirely different and unknown one.

Huckman’s other leisure-time pursuits include crossword puzzles and writing personal poetry. With respect to the former, his informal directive to his wife as to when to have the doctors “pull the plug” is when he can no longer do the Sunday crossword in the *New York Times*. With respect to the latter, it’s not a literary pursuit. “I’m not writing poetry for journals. When I’m trying to express myself to my wife or my children or a close friend, poetry is a way to say things that are hard to say in prose. It’s something I picked up from my father,” he concludes.

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Caxtonians Collect: Michael Huckman

Interviewed by Robert McCamant

Michael Huckman '86 is a retired radiologist, who spent his working life of 42 years at Rush University Medical Center. His particular specialty is neuroradiology, which is the application of radiological techniques to diagnosis and treatment of the nervous system. It was a tiny field when he graduated from St. Louis University School of Medicine in 1962, but with the addition of computers to the tool kit, it has become more and more useful. "Computed tomography" (CT) and "magnetic resonance imaging" (MRI) are the techniques we are most likely to hear being discussed by our doctors.

In May 2010, Huckman published an article in the *American Journal of Neuroradiology* called "Neuroradiology Without Benefit of Computers: A Memoir," where he writes about the days before computers took over. But he actually spent a very short time practicing in that era: "In 1970, I entered the practice of neuroradiology. My hospital invested \$1.3 million to build and equip a neuroradiology suite with 'state-of-the-art' pneumoencephalography, arteriography, myelography, and hypocycloidal tomography equipment. Little did any of us know that three years later, with the advent of CT, Rush bought the third CT scanner in the United States that made most of the equipment obsolete."

But being present at the inception gave Huckman a leg up on his career. He served as President of the American Society of Neuroradiology, delivered many lectures, wrote many papers, and edited the *American Journal of Neuroradiology* from 1989 to 1997.

Huckman says that he traces becoming a book collector back to feeling uncomfortable reading his radiology textbooks on the commuter train. There were two problems: occasionally they had graphic illustrations that were not suitable for public viewing, and it made him feel a bit like he was advertising his occupation on the way to work. Next he tried the *Wall Street Journal*, but "though there were some interesting articles, the prose was the same every day."

So step one in becoming a collector was switching to reading novels. "I became particularly interested in English novels of the 18th and 19th centuries...I enjoyed them because all the authors were great storytellers and I didn't have to 'deconstruct' them."

But it was because of a modern author



photograph by Robert McCamant

he had read earlier that he took his second step toward "collecting" – of seeking books with value as objects beyond the words they conveyed. When he was in the Navy earlier (serving as a medical officer), he had read and enjoyed a paperback edition of Thomas Pynchon's *V*. Now he was living in Evanston. "Two blocks from our home was a small area of street-level shops, one of which, P. Rohe and Son, sold used books. One day, browsing in the shop, I asked the owner if he might have a hardback copy of *V*. He replied, 'Are you kidding? If you could find anything by Pynchon in hardcover, it would be worth at least 200 bucks.' I asked 'Why so much? It was only about 20 years old.' His explanation was that there were very few hardcover copies and that it had become sort of a 'cult' novel."

Two years later, while in New York for a radiology meeting, Huckman happened to notice an antiquarian book fair in progress at the Park Avenue Armory. Having a little free time, he paid his \$5 entry fee and took a look around. "I noticed on one of the tables a first edition of *V* for \$295. But before long, I discovered another dealer with what looked like an identical copy for \$400. I approached the latter telling him I was a novice book collector and was wondering why there was such a price difference between his copy and the one on the table across the room. He replied, 'Take a look at his dust jacket. It has a tear.'"

"I was stunned," he said. "Up to that point, when I bought a hardcover book I would discard the dust jacket before putting it on the shelf. I had no idea of the value a dust jacket, let alone a perfect dust jacket, added to a book."

The point at which he decided he was a real book collector was when he finally found a signed (by Walker Percy and Toole's mother) copy of John Kennedy Toole's *A Confederacy of Dunces*. He had much enjoyed reading a paperback copy, but he knew that the first-edition hardbacks were in short supply. (Walker Percy had personally shopped it around with publishers after the author's death, and the Louisiana State University Press, which finally took it, had issued only 2,500 copies.) So when

Huckman happened to be in New Orleans with a bit of time, he systematically scoured the local book dealers for a copy, and was rewarded with a signed copy marked at only \$100.

In 1985, a fellow radiologist at Rush – in fact Richard Buenger, the one who had recruited him from St. Louis – joined the Caxton Club. (Buenger, who died in 2010, was an aficionado of limericks and a long-time member of the local Society of the Fifth Line.) By the following year, Buenger talked Huckman into joining the Club, too. He has never regretted it. Soon he was keyed into the joys of association copies and first and limited editions. He had an avocation that made an excellent contrast with his vocation – practically any city that was important enough to host a radiology meeting was likely to have some interesting bookstores.

Huckman grew up in Newark, went to Princeton for college, and did his internship and residency at Philadelphia General Hospital. Those connections provided a wealth of ideas of books to look for. Philip Roth was a near contemporary in the suburbs of Newark, and Huckman has many of his books, but none are signed. He received a copy of the first edition of Benjamin Rush's *Observations on Diseases of the Mind*, published in Philadelphia in 1812. That one is a triple connection: he and See CAXTONIANS COLLECT, page 10



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Bookmarks...

Luncheon: Friday, February 13, Union League Club
Anita Mechler on "A Rich Source of Chicago and
US History: The Union League Archives!"

As Head Librarian and Archivist at the Union League Club, Anita will deliver a well-illustrated historical talk from a different perspective: that of a group of successful businesspeople with money, talent, and a burning loyalty to their city and their country. Hear, for example, why Chicago's World Columbian Exposition of 1893 was considered (even by neutral observers), to be a Union League Club affair, including crucial contributions from Harlow Higinbotham. Al Capone was done in by the Secret Six: six strong men whose names have never been officially revealed to this day, but, there they are, five of the six, in Club history! Learn about the Club's deep involvement in WWI, spelled out in a priceless WWI scrapbook, lovingly saved by Anita from certain death (red rot, brittle acidic paper). This item and archival materials will be on view. A final treat from Anita: you will hear of her unbelievable pre-librarian career, one she never imagined possible.

*February luncheon: Union League Club, 65 W. Jackson Boulevard. Luncheon buffet opens at 11:30 AM; program 12:30-1:30. Lunch is \$32. Please reserve or cancel by Wednesday for Friday lunch. **Reserved nonattendees will be billed.** Check room information upon arrival.*

Beyond February...

MARCH LUNCHEON

Herb Lubalin (1918-1981), a brilliant graphic arts designer and director, who delivered shock and delight while profoundly changing our perception of letterforms, words and language, is the subject of artist and teacher Neil Steinberg's March 13 richly illustrated talk, including Herb's extensive work with Ralph Ginsberg.

MARCH DINNER

We will meet March 18 at the Union League Club to hear John Neal Hoover, of the St. Louis Mercantile Library, talk on "Mississippi Mystery, Henry Lewis and the English edition of One of the Greatest 19th-Century American Illustrated Books," *Das Illustrierte Mississippithal*. Social hour at 5, dinner at 6, presentation to follow.

APRIL LUNCHEON

Due to the April 18 symposium ("Preserving the Evidence: The Ethics of Book and Paper Conservation"), and its associated events, there will be no luncheon meeting in April.

APRIL DINNER

Nick Wilding, of Georgia State, will discuss his discovery of the forgery of Galileo's "Sidereus Nuncius." He will discuss how he discovered it, and the forgery's continuing revelations. Wilding's new book, *Galileo's Idol*, will be available for signing. This April 15 event, at the Union League, will have the social hour at 5 and presentation at 6.

Dinner: Wednesday, February 18, Newberry Library
Gala 120th Anniversary Celebration

The celebration of the Club's anniversary features highlights of our last 20 years, including the return of many of our grant recipients and displays of their work, a showcase of our publications, a tribute to our symposia and exhibits, and a roll of honor for our many *Caxtonian* contributors. Our speaker will be Dan Crawford, our own Caxton Club expert. There will be a hearty buffet dinner with vegetarian options, a celebratory toast and anniversary cake, a commemorative bookmark, a take-away "goodie bag," and the Caxton Club Bar we have learned to love at our annual Revels.

*The evening begins at 5:00 PM with a social hour and an opportunity to see our grant recipients' work and displays highlighting our last 20 years. **This event REQUIRES reservations (and any cancellations) by 5:00 PM Monday, February 16.** Dinner with toast is \$48. For reservations call 312-255-3710 or e-mail caxtonclub@newberry.org.*