

The Florida Bibliophile

February 2021 • Volume 37, No. 6

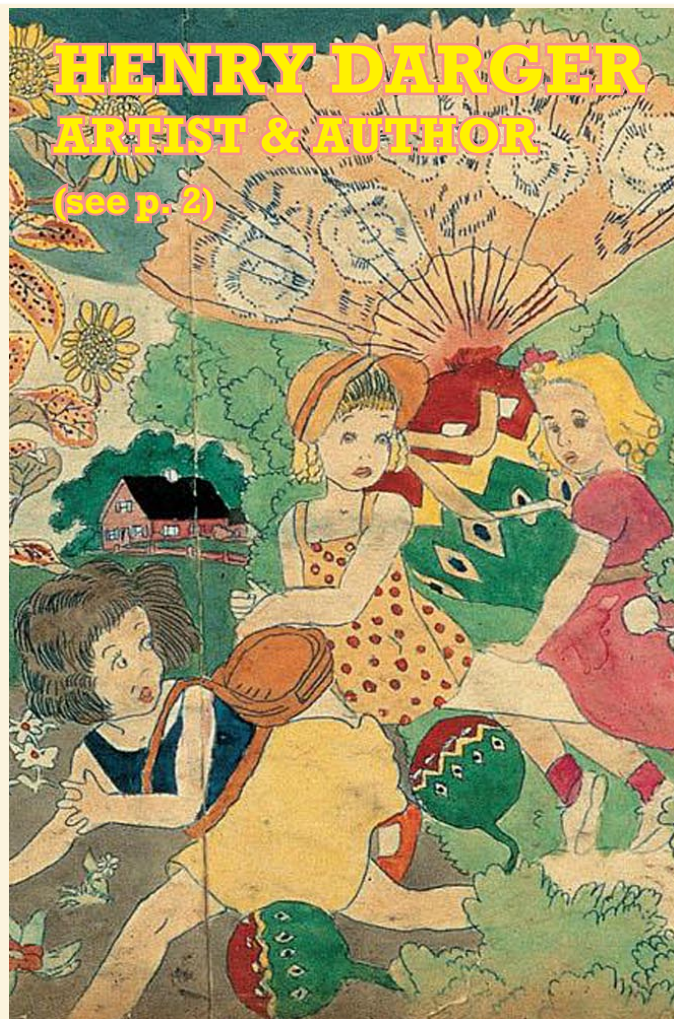


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Deadline for the January newsletter is February 25, 2021.
See page 27 for details.

Membership in the Fellowship of American Bibliophilic Societies is included with your FBS membership. The FABS newsletter is now electronic as well as in print. Access a PDF of the Fall 2020 FABS Journal [here](#).



WHERE'S BERNIE?



Florida Bibliophile Society
A community of book lovers

Minutes of the January Meeting of the Florida Bibliophile Society

by Gary Simons, FBS Secretary

FBS vice-president Jerry Morris convened our meeting a little after 1:30 p.m. He opened the meeting by welcoming the assembled members and guests and proceeded to announcements, upcoming speakers, and introducing the day's speaker and his presentation.

Jerry announced that because of the Covid-19 virus, the Lee J. Harrer Student Book Collecting Essay Contest was being cancelled for this year. Similarly, the 2021 Florida Antiquarian Book Fair has been cancelled. Also, we learned that FBS founding member Lee Harrer had recently relocated to apartment 345 of the senior living community at Regal Palms in Largo.

Jerry Morris gave us a heads-up as to upcoming meetings: Rebecca Rego Barry, editor of *Fine Books & Collections*, will speak in February on "Carolyn Wells in the Library"; Eric Steckler will present "Jews and the American Civil War" in March; and Lola Haskins will give "A Reading of Selected Poems" in April.

Next, Jerry introduced our speaker, FBS president Charles Brown. Of course, we all know Charles, but some of us might not know his background. As Jerry informed us, Charles began as a chemist at the University of Florida, specializing in kidney stone research, a research dear to his heart (or rather to his kidneys!) because he mentions in his university bio that he had a couple of kidney stones. He switched to research communications in the 1990s as an editor of safety and disaster preparedness programs at IFAS, the Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences at the University of Florida. He has been at the T2 Center, Florida Transportation Technology Transfer Center, since 2010, currently as its Research Communications Writer/Editor. In his spare time, he writes, makes art, and (as we all do know) is an avid book collector. His presentation was entitled "Henry Darger, Author and Artist."

Charles began by noting that Henry Darger is one of the most famous and prominent *outsider* artists in the

U.S. and in the 20th century. His influence is now widespread; his biography is a narrative of tragedy and creation in isolation; his writings are immense, and his masterwork, *In the Realms of the Unreal*, is a creation of extraordinary textual and psychological complexity. Yet his discovery as a creative artist was serendipitous.

Discovery

Henry Darger (1892–1973) lived a solitary life in his

Chicago apartment at 851 Webster Avenue. In 1972, as Darger sickened, his landlords Nathan and Kiyoko Lerner, found him a place to stay in a charity nursing home. When they entered his apartment, they found an unexpected trove of materials that Darger had collected during the 40 years he had lived in the room: "newspapers, magazines, comic books, phone directories, the complete run of *Nancy* strips, balls of twine, hundreds of pairs of worn-out shoes, dozens of broken eyeglasses, crucifixes, and dolls." They also encountered artwork that Darger had created and hung on his walls – illustrations made through tracing, watercolor, and collage – some several feet long. And they found dozens of hand-bound volumes that contained thousands of pages of Darger's original writing, including Darger's epic novel, *In the Realms of the Unreal*, which runs over 15,000 pages, accompanied by hundreds of illustrations.

Influence

Many landlords would, of course, have tossed all this material out as junk. But Nathan Lerner, whom Charles noted was "described by the International



One of the very few photographs of Henry Darger, taken in his later years. Note the glasses: heavily reinforced at the temples and padded behind the ear.

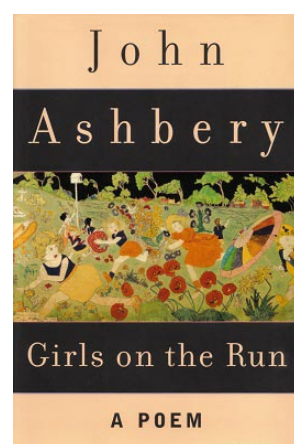
Minutes, continued

This illustration from *Realms* is in Darger's characteristic style: rendered through tracing (the girls) and Henry's freehand drawing (the dragons) and water-colored. It shows the seven Vivian sisters being escorted from a massive forest fire by two protective Blengiglomeans (Blengins for short).

Center for Photography as 'an influential graphic designer, photographer, and educator who helped transmit Bauhaus ideas in the United States during the 1940s,' was not an ordinary landlord. He recognized the importance of Darger's work, and both preserved and publicized it. The Lerner's organized the first exhibition of this work in 1977 at the Hyde Park Art Center, and sold some of the illustrations to private collectors and museums around the world. As a result, Charles summarized, "Darger rose to rock star status in the world of outsider art."

Darger and his work have been the subjects of numerous articles and books, films, and documentaries, and countless exhibitions. In addition, Darger's illustrations, stories, and personal history have influenced many other artists. Jessica Yu's 2004 documentary *In the Realms of the Unreal*

details Darger's life and artworks. Another documentary, *Revolutions of the Night* by Mark Stokes, looks at Darger's early life and examines lesser-known works by the artist. In 2008, an exhibition at the American Folk Art Museum, titled "Dargerism: Contemporary Artists and Henry Darger", examined the influence of Darger's work on 11 artists, including Trenton Doyle Hancock, Robyn O'Neil, and Amy Cutler, "who were responding not only to the aesthetic nature of Darger's mythic work — with its tales of good versus evil, its epic scope and complexity, and its transgressive undertone — but also to his driven work ethic and all-consuming



John Ashbery's Girls on the Run is a book-length poem inspired by Darger's work.

Minutes, continued

devotion to artmaking.” Also in 2008, Intuit: The Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art in Chicago, opened a permanent exhibit, the Henry Darger Room Collection, which recreates Darger’s two-room Chicago apartment in great detail.

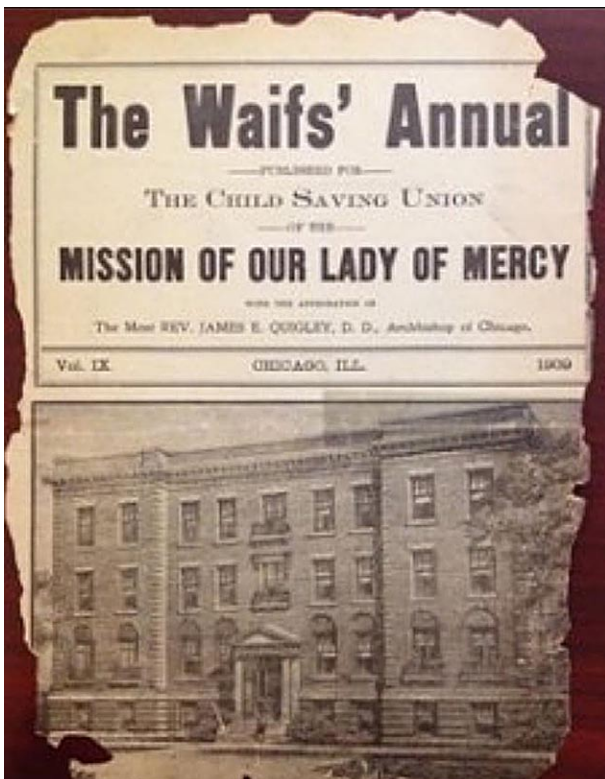
Biography

Darger’s biography is both tragic and simultaneously exceptional in terms of artistic commitment and creativity. Darger was born in Chicago in 1892. When he was four years old, his mother Rosie died of a postpartum infection. His father, Henry Sr., already aging and disabled, gave up the infant daughter for adoption. Henry never forgot the loss of his mother and his sister. Three years later Darger’s father, disabled and impoverished, was moved to St. Augustine’s Home for the Aged.

Without a father at home, Henry was taken to the Mission of Our Lady of Mercy, a Catholic orphanage, where his peculiar habits earned him the nickname “Crazy.” Orphanage authorities considered Henry “mentally and morally disturbed,” and persuaded Henry’s father to allow the boy to be committed to

the Illinois Asylum for Feeble-Minded Children in Lincoln, Illinois. This “school” was a brutal place, characterized like many institutions of its time by forced child labor at the adjacent farm and severe punishment for even minor infractions. Darger’s “acting out” resulted in frequent punishment by school authorities and retaliation by fellow students.

In 1908, Darger escaped this institution and after a short time working on a farm, set off on a two-week, 180-mile walk back to Chicago, traveling mostly at night to avoid detection. Once there, with the help of an aunt, he found menial employment at a Chicago hospital. Outside of a brief stint in the army, he supported himself in this fashion at several institutions for the next 55 years. As Charles summarized Darger’s life, “He worked his job. He attended Mass daily and up to several times on Sunday. And he wrote and made art.” His inner life, his creative life, was spent unbeknown to the world in his small apartment on Webster Avenue, where he lived for 43 years. One friend, William Schloeder, may have been aware of Darger’s prolific writing and artistic creation.



Left: At age 8, Darger’s father was taken to a nursing home, and Darger was taken to the orphanage Mission of Our Lady of Mercy. It had been established only a few years before to help address the problem of homeless boys living and working on Chicago’s streets. So many of these boys sold newspapers that the orphanage was also called The Newsboys’ Home.

Above: In this postcard from the early 20th century, the Illinois Asylum for Feeble-Minded Children in Lincoln, Illinois, is depicted at its most idyllic. When it was established, it was a progressive idea to put “feeble-minded” children in a safe, standardized environment, but it became a warehouse for children with many kinds of problems.

*Minutes, continued***Darger's Writings**

When the Lerner's entered Darger's apartment, they found many thousands of pages of writing: novels, diaries, weather logs, and an autobiography. Of course, they also found the hundreds of illustrations that he had created for his great novel, *In the Realms of the Unreal*. Darger had originally written the work in longhand, but later typed it out and bound it in over a dozen volumes. Three additional volumes are devoted to the hundreds of illustrations that he created for the work over 60 years. The largest part of the work is the central story, entitled in full *The Story of the Vivian Girls, in What is Known as the Realms of the Unreal, of the Glandeco-Angelinian War Storm Caused by the Child Slave Rebellion*, often shortened to *In the Realms of the Unreal*. A second novel, *Adventures of the Vivian Girls in Chicago* (also called *Crazy House*) is about 10,000 handwritten pages in 16 volumes. The major characters of *Realms*

— the seven Vivian sisters and their companion/secret brother, Penrod — reappear in the Chicago adventures. Other surviving writings include (a) *The Book of Weather*, which includes commentary on daily newspaper weather forecasts from 1958 to 1967; (b) *The History of My Life*, the first 200 or so pages of which are autobiographical, but the next 5,000 pages concern a fantasy adventure involving a tornado called Sweetie Pie and the mysterious deaths of many children in an orphanage; and (c) a diary covering approximately five years, from March 1968 to January 1973.

Realms of the Unreal

Darger's main work, *In the Realms of the Unreal*, takes place on an imaginary planet which Darger describes as "a thousand times as large as our own world" and which has the earth as its moon. On this planet, all the countries are Catholic; however, one country rebels against the faith and enslaves,



West wall of Darger's apartment is dominated by the nine-foot-long collage *The Battle of Calverhine*. On the table are the three volumes of Darger's illustrations, about 12 feet wide when open. Henry lived in this two-room apartment at 851 Webster for 43 years.

Minutes, continued

tortures, and murders children. A particularly brutal killing sets off a daring rebellion of the child slaves.

In addition to the striking accomplishment of creating such a massive work, two features of the illustrations have attracted much attention and interpretation. First, as the story of a war involving children, many of the illustrations created by Darger involve violence against children. These are often quite graphic depictions of strangling, stabbing, or hanging, and because the victims are children, the images are more shocking. Darger produced many images of children in joyful and pastoral settings as well. Second, the children are often naked, and strikingly, even the little girls have the genitals of young boys. However, the children are always innocently nude and never sexualized.

Religious themes are also prominent elements of *Realms*, the struggle between good and evil, life and death, being the main motivation of the story. Darger was a devout Catholic, but his life experience gave him a fraught relationship with the church and with his god. In *Realms*, Darger wrestles with God, and



This is volume one of *In the Realms of the Unreal*. Darger worked on the text of *Realms* from about 1910 to the 1930s, writing and then retyping. He produced 11 of these handbound volumes of single-spaced legal-size typed pages. Five handwritten volumes contain additional *Realms* material.

the ultimate victory of Christian forces is his win-win resolution.



"At Jullo Callio via Norma, they [the Vivian girls] are captured by the Glandelinians," an illustration by Darger for *In the Realms of the Unreal*

*Minutes, continued***Darger's Sources**

Darger's solitariness, unusual methods, and unusual product, in addition to the violence and frankness of his images, have been analyzed in terms of his life history and purported psychology. One author points out that the newspaper comic strip and Henry Darger Jr. were born on the same day. From the beginning, Darger selected images from magazines and newspapers to use as the models for his illustrations, essentially casting an epic film from popular media.

Darger was also fascinated with the Civil War. The images and descriptions of its battles informed his writing for *Realms*, making him a journalist reporting on the great Glandeco-Angelinian war.

While Darger was writing *Realms*, he witnessed the violence of the First World War. But for him, that paled in comparison to the fate of a little Chicago girl, Elsie Paroubek, who disappeared in 1911, only to be found dead some weeks later. Her innocence and her victimization seem to have resonated powerfully with Darger. Elsie appears as a main character in *Realms*; her murder sparks a great war.

Darger was an avid reader, and his library was full of the important fantasy and adventure literature of the early 20th century, many of which feature child characters, providing the tone and imagery for *Realms*. There were also books that reveal Darger's interest in the Civil War, providing the theme and a rough outline for *Realms*.

Among the 100 or so books found in Darger's room were numerous volumes from the Oz series of L. Frank Baum, many of them first editions. He owned several Charles Dickens titles, the Bobbsey Twins, *Heidi* and several other books by Johanna Spyri, *Kidnapped* by Robert Louis Stevenson, and *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea* by Jules Verne. There were also grade school texts on language and mathematics and numerous books related to his Catholic faith.

Charles movingly summarized his talk:

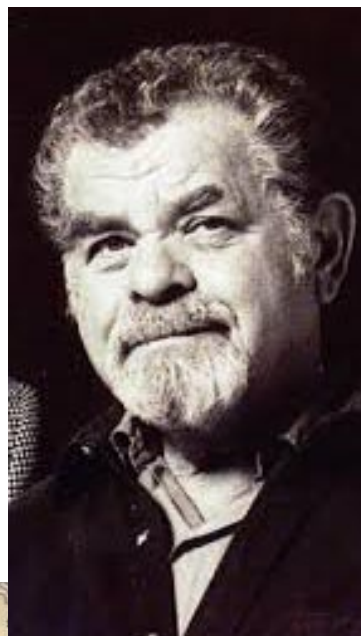
Henry Darger died on April 13, 1973. He wrote tens of thousands of pages and produced hundreds of artworks in virtual secrecy for



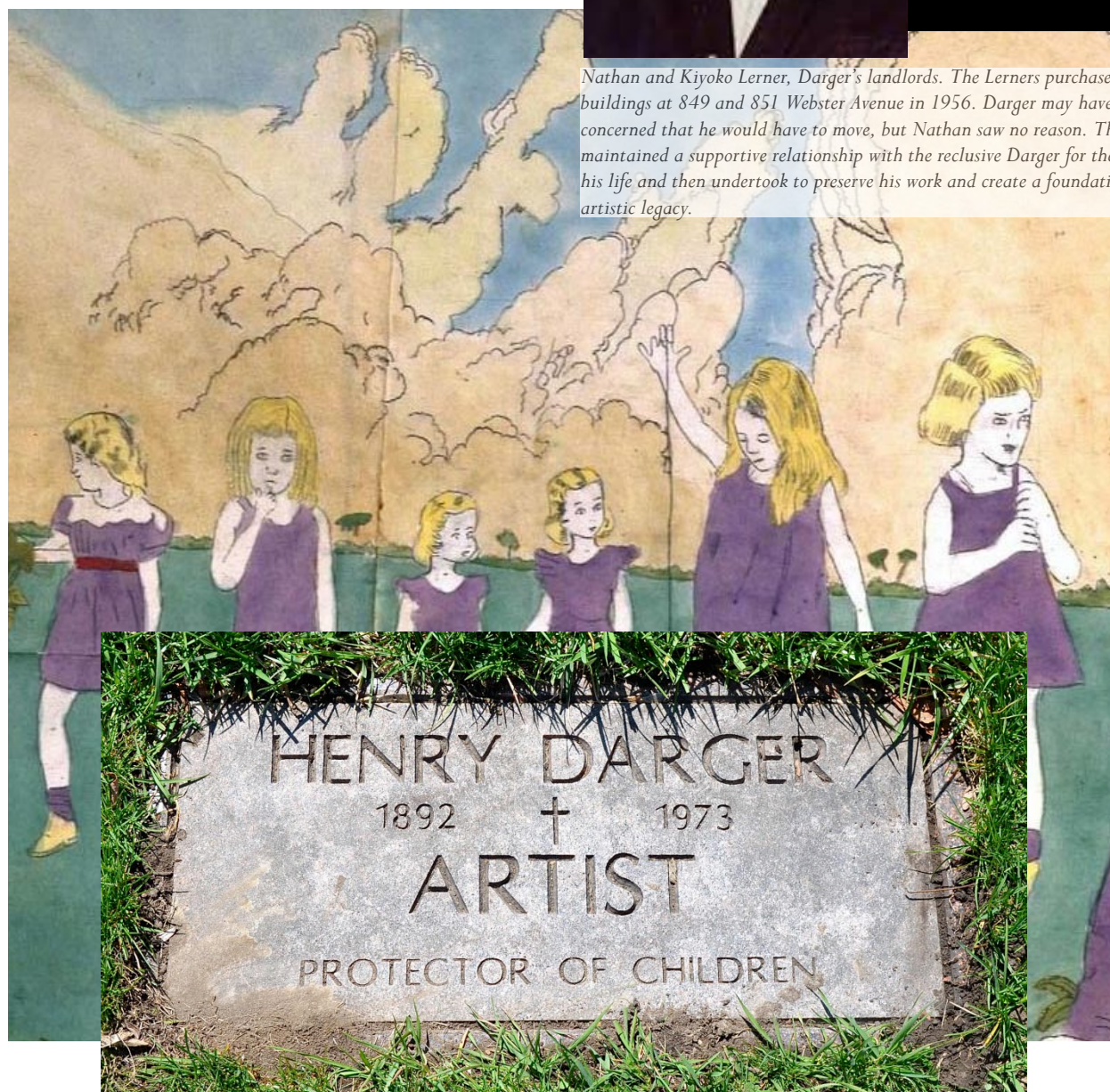
Minutes, concluded

60 years. Though he wrote with a sense of achievement and satisfaction, he wrote only for himself. If it had not been for two caring landlords, one of whom was an accomplished artist himself, it is very likely we would have never known Henry's name.

Just as the Little Sisters of the Poor had cared for Henry's father decades before and as they had taken care of him in the last year of his life, they gave him a final resting place. They buried him with a headstone inscribed 'Artist' and 'Protector of Children'.



Nathan and Kiyoko Lerner, Darger's landlords. The Lerner's purchased the buildings at 849 and 851 Webster Avenue in 1956. Darger may have been concerned that he would have to move, but Nathan saw no reason. The Lerner's maintained a supportive relationship with the reclusive Darger for the rest of his life and then undertook to preserve his work and create a foundation for his artistic legacy.



A Valentine to Our Readers



*In these blue forget-me-nots, In these fragrant roses too,
Read the message fond and true: From my faithful heart to you.*

Romance of the Paper Honeycomb

The ubiquitous pop-up paper honeycomb was invented over 100 years ago, but it still provides a bit of magic to paper decorations and greeting cards.

The valentine on the previous page combines chromolithographic printing, die-cutting, and paper honeycomb to produce just such a magical greeting card. When the card is opened, it holds an additional surprise: the honeycomb renders a transparent sphere as Cupid peers at the recipient from within a gazing globe on a pedestal. The globe is surrounded by the sun, the moon, and the stars and supported by classical columns. Cupid holds a quill made from a shortened arrow for use in writing messages of love.

Hans Heilbrun, a principal in the “luxury paper” manufacturing firm of Heilbrun and Pinner, invented the first commercial process for making paper honeycomb from crepe paper in Halle, Germany, in 1901, with this type of decorative use in mind. Crepe paper had only been developed a few years before and was widely regarded as an excellent substitute for fabric in many uses (the paper takes its name from the fabric, developed in England in the early 1800s).

The cards and decorations became very popular and were marketed widely.

In the early 1900s, Martin Luther Beistle observed these decorations while visiting Heidelberg, Germany, and brought the idea to the U.S. In 1900, Beistle was 24 and a salesperson for the Pittsburgh Art Calendar Company. Complaints he overheard from clients about the constant watering needed by plants in hotel lobbies gave him the idea to use the printing and die-cutting technologies common for calendars to make artificial plants from paper. In that year, he founded the Beistle Company in the basement of his home near Pittsburgh.

Beistle’s business soon outgrew the basement, and a series of moves brought the business to



Shippensburg, Pa. In the meantime, Beistle, always on the lookout for new product ideas, branched out into holiday decorations, especially Halloween decorations. Paper honeycomb was a natural addition to this product line and a popular one. The Beistle Company continued to expand its offerings and is still a vibrant and active manufacturer.

Hans Heilbrun and partner Samuel Pinner were also quite successful. They outgrew Halle and built offices in Berlin and then in London, Paris, and New York. The crepe-paper honeycomb was copied in heavier paper where, once expanded, it could be sandwiched between sheets of heavy paper to provide a strong lightweight material for packaging and construction. The same technology would be copied in metal for use in construction and aeronautical applications.

Heilbrun and Pinner and their Jewish families were forced to leave Germany in 1938. They came to the U.S. In an interesting twist, Pinner’s granddaughter, Megan Cotts, a contemporary artist, has created artwork based on the honeycomb that her grandfather helped to invent and develop.

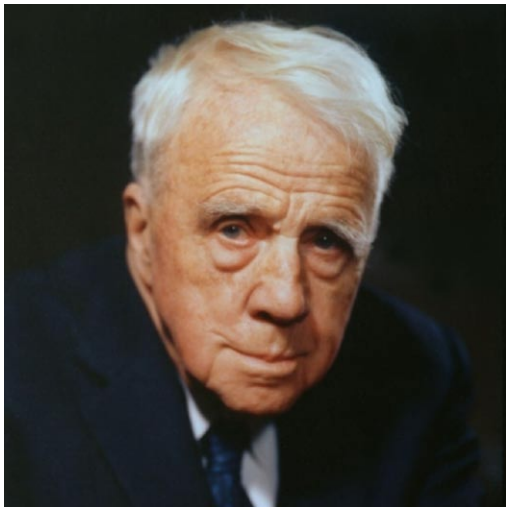
Martin Beistle died of a heart attack in 1935 at age 59. At the time, the Beistle factory was the largest of its kind in the U.S., employing 150 people on site and another 850 working at home. He donated his library of 2,500 books to the Shippensburg Public Library.



Collecting Inaugural Poems

On January 20, 2021, Joseph R. Biden was sworn in as the 46th President of the United States. It was the 59th inauguration in the 243-year history of the U.S. Constitution, and the sixth inaugural poem was delivered.

The first inauguration to feature a poem was John F. Kennedy's on January 20, 1961. While the poem read at Biden's inauguration was only the sixth such poem, it was a 50th anniversary of a sort for such poems.

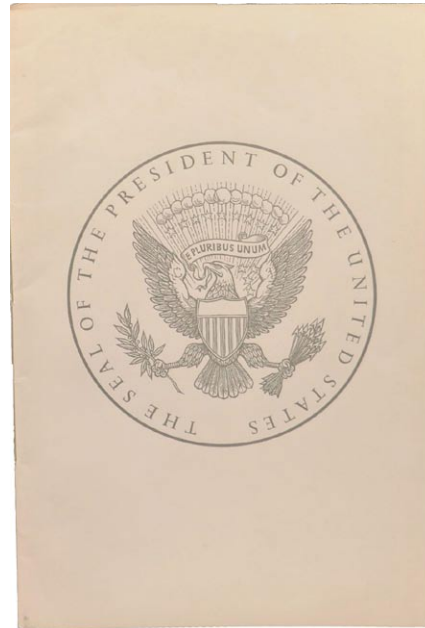


1961 – “The Gift Outright”: Robert Frost for the Inauguration of John F. Kennedy

In 1960, John F. Kennedy won a squeaker of an election against Richard M. Nixon. As Kennedy prepared for office, he tapped Arizona congressman Stuart Udall for his Secretary of the Interior. In planning for the inauguration, Udall suggested inviting Robert Frost, then America's preeminent poet, to read at the inauguration. Udall had befriended Frost in the mid-1950s and promoted the poet through both official and unofficial activities.

Kennedy liked the idea, and Frost accepted the invitation. In its history, the U.S. had already had poets of Frost's stature, and yet Frost was the first to be asked to participate in an inauguration.

Kennedy wanted Frost to read “The Gift Outright,” a poem regarded as one Frost's best shorter poems and among the best “patriotic” poems – poems extolling



Robert Frost's poem “The Gift Outright” and John F. Kennedy's inaugural address were published in a special edition by the Spiral Press in March 1961 in boards and in April 1961 in paper (shown here).

the dream and promise of America. Frost had written the poem in the late 1930s in response to the Depression and the democracy-threatening storms in East Asia and in Europe.

Frost, 86, wrote a special poem for the occasion, “Dedication,” to read before “The Gift Outright.” On the morning of the inauguration, Washington was blanketed in snow, giving the Capitol a sparkling and picturesque setting. Unfortunately, at the time of Frost's reading, the bright glare of the sun and the brisk wind made it difficult for Frost, whose eyesight was diminished, to follow the lines of the prepared script. The Vice President Elect, Lyndon Johnson, stepped in to offer and assist by shielding the page with his top hat. Frost took control of the hat to the amusement of the audience, but it was no real help. Frost apologized and moved on to “The Gift Outright,” which he knew from memory.

Frost may have written the 16-line poem as early as 1936, but it was not public until its first recitation on December 5, 1941, two days before the Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor that pulled the U.S.

Sources: *The Guardian*; *New York Times*; NPR; Poetry Foundation; Poets.org; Wikipedia

Inaugural Poems, continued

into World War II. The poem was first published in the *Virginia Quarterly Review* in Spring 1942, and its first publication in a volume of Frost's verse was in *A Witness Tree* in 1943.

After the reading in January 1961, the poem was published in March in a special edition by Spiral Press, with whom Frost had a long association in publishing. The 20-page book included the poem and Kennedy's inaugural address. Overall size is almost 12 inches tall and 8 inches wide. It was bound in boards covered in gray paper. The cover is illustrated with the presidential seal printed from a woodcut executed by well-known illustrator Fritz Kredel. Type is credited to Joseph Blumenthal, the founder of Spiral Press. The edition was 500.

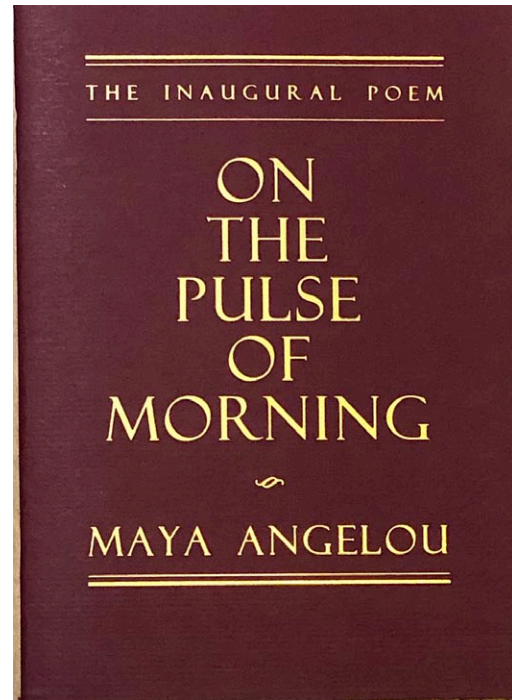
A further edition of 800, called the Pamphlet Edition, was printed in April 1961 as a keepsake for guests at a dinner given by Kennedy's cabinet honoring Frost. It is the same size and description as the edition of 500, but it is covered in paper, not boards. Both editions are highly collectible.

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1993 – “On the Pulse of Morning”: Maya Angelou for the First Inauguration of William J. Clinton

Thirty years after Robert Frost read the first inaugural poem for John F. Kennedy, a second inaugural poet was invited to read at the first



The first edition of On the Pulse of Morning

inauguration of William J. Clinton. Clinton had met Kennedy when he was about to enter his senior year in high school. Like many Americans, Clinton considered Kennedy an inspirational figure.

In 1963, Clinton was selected as one of two Arkansas teens chosen by the American Legion to travel to Washington, D.C., for its Boys' Nation program which brought the "best and the brightest" to the nation's capital for an intensive, week-long seminar during which the students met with elected officials and government leaders. The 98 students were able to draft legislation that was voted on by the U.S. Congress. It was an impressive opportunity.

As part of the agenda, the boys gathered on July 24 in the Rose Garden to listen to President Kennedy. He spoke about the importance of public service, and after speaking, greeted the boys, during which time Clinton had the chance to shake Kennedy's hand and say a few words. Friends reported that on the long bus ride back to Arkansas, Clinton could talk about little else. For Clinton, it was a decisive moment. He decided to pursue a life of public service, with the hope that one day he would be president.

When that dream materialized in 1992, Clinton looked back to the Kennedy administration. Harry Thomason, the organizer of the inauguration,

Inaugural Poems, continued

contacted Maya Angelou, already a well-known poet and author, and invited her to read at the inauguration. Angelou remembers being overwhelmed by the invitation which she believed had come from President elect Clinton. As she often did, she sequestered herself in a hotel and spent a day writing down the elements of her poem.

“On the Pulse of Morning” spoke both to its moment and back to Frost’s poem to show the evolution of America’s self-concept and its continuing resolve to work for a brighter future. One critic observed that Angelou’s poem was built on one of her recurring themes: we are all more alike than different. The poem was widely praised and brought Angelou more popular attention. Interest in Angelou’s work and sales of her books skyrocketed. Random House said that more of her books were sold in January 1993 than in all of 1992.

Angelou’s publisher, Random House, published the poem in a 16-page saddle-stitched booklet that became an immediate bestseller. The first edition (marked “FIRST EDITION” on the copyright page) was a small volume, 4.75 x 6.5 inches, bound in heavy paper wraps and saddle stitched. It contains only the text of the poem.

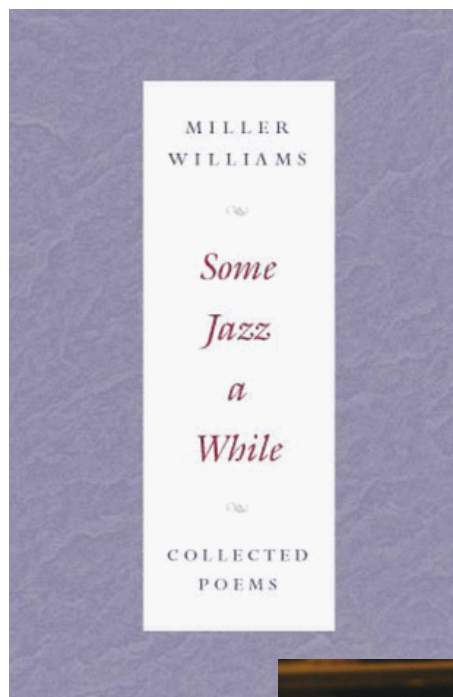
There were other early editions, in maroon, blue, or ivory paper and a hardbound ivory with dust jacket. First editions may be found that are signed by Maya Angelou or Bill Clinton.

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1997 – “Of History and Hope”: Miller Williams for the Second Inauguration of William J. Clinton

For Clinton’s second inauguration, he chose a longtime friend and fellow Arkansan, Miller Williams, to read. Williams was a poet and professor at the University of Arkansas and published 37 books of poetry and prose, winning several awards for his poetry. He championed common language in poetry and was admired for his plain-spoken style.

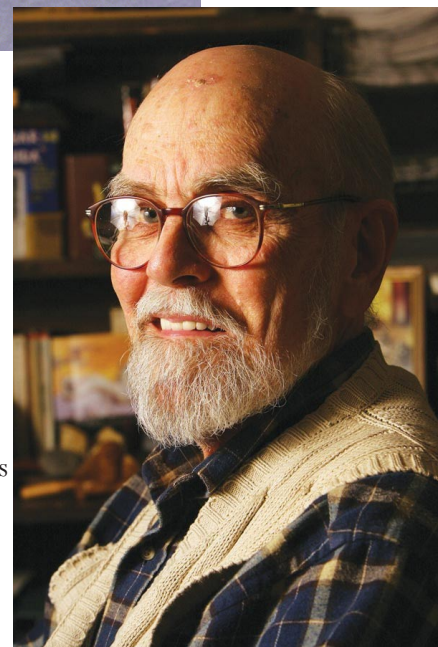
Miller taught English and foreign languages at the



University of Arkansas at Fayetteville for over 30 years. In 1980, he helped found the University of Arkansas Press, which he directed for many years. The Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin holds Williams’s papers.

For the inauguration, Williams wrote “Of History and Hope.”

The title contains a reference to Hope, Arkansas, where Clinton was born, but more importantly, it contains the elements of where we have been and where we are going. Both preceding and succeeding inaugural poems are built on these elements. What we believe our history and goals are is central to our national identity. In an interview with *Oxford American* magazine, Williams said, “I knew that the poem would be listened to by a great many people, reprinted around the country, and discussed in a lot of classrooms, so I wanted it to be true, understandable, and agreeable...”



Inaugural Poems, continued

Despite Williams's prominence as a poet, the response to his inaugural poem was muted. It was not published in book form until 1999 when it was included in the collection of Williams's poems *Some Jazz a While*, a 264-page paperback book published by the Illinois University Press.

Some Jazz a While is highly praised as one of Williams's most profound collections.

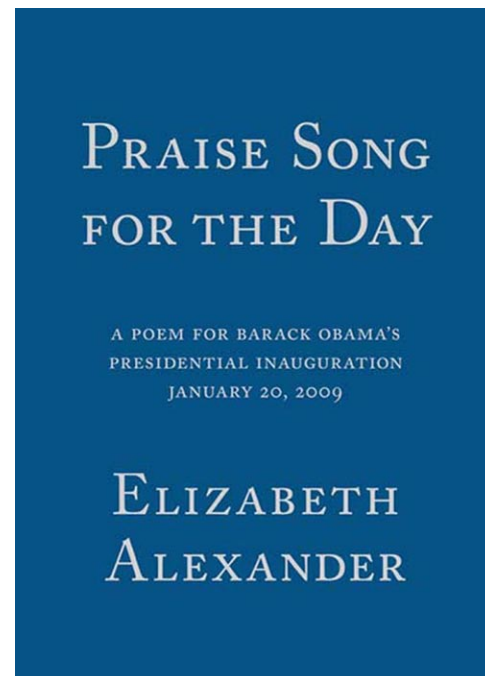
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2009 – “Praise Song for the Day”: Elizabeth Alexander for the First Inauguration of Barack H. Obama

Like many poets, Elizabeth Alexander may not be a familiar name, but she is a highly accomplished academic and poet. She was a professor of poetry and African American Studies (which she also chaired) for 15 years before joining Columbia University as Wun Tsun Tam Mellon Professor in the Humanities in the Department of English and Comparative Literature. Her poems, stories, and other writing have been widely published, and her 2005 volume of poetry, *American Sublime*, was one of three finalists for the Pulitzer Prize.

Alexander met Barack Obama at the University of Chicago. She joined the university as an assistant professor of English in 1991. In that same year,



Obama also joined the university, first as visiting fellow and then as lecturer in constitutional law until 2004. Obama was elected to the Illinois Senate in 1996.

For her inaugural poem, Alexander chose the praise song, a traditional African form often used to extol an individual. However, the individual is not mentioned in the poem. She described this as a very conscious decision to reflect Obama's approach to leadership and its emphasis on “us” – to paraphrase: the community of Americans, not a single person or elite group of people. Thus the title: this song extols a day that symbolizes so much of what America is and hopes to be.

The result, “Praise Song for the Day,” captured the range of “us” in many small details. Laying a foundation of our commonality, the poem works toward the principle of love, limitless possibility, and taking the next step into our own future. It's a quiet poem, perhaps more like a prayer, giving its message without rhetorical flourish.

Like Maya Angelou's poem, “Praise Song for the Day” was published in a small format, roughly 4.5 by 7 inches. The first edition was released by Graywolf Press in February 2009: 28 pages in a cover of heavy blue paper with silver print. The first printing was 100,000 copies.

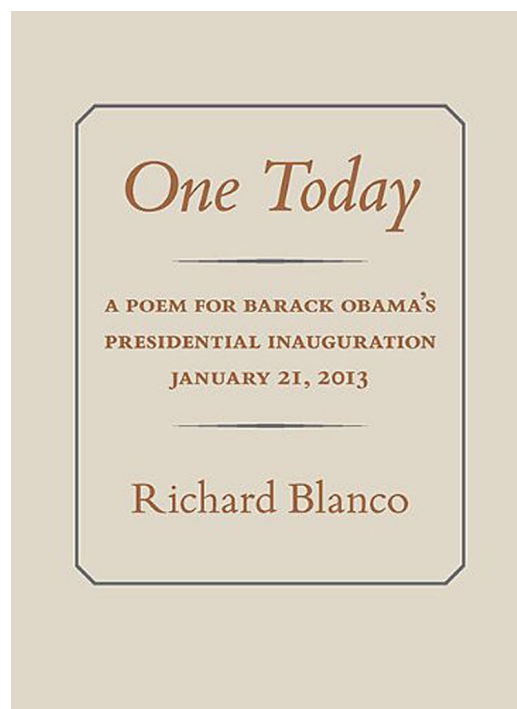
Inaugural Poems, continued**2013 – “One Today”: Richard Blanco for the Second Inauguration of Barack H. Obama**

Richard Blanco was asked to write not one, but three poems, for the second inauguration of Barack Obama in 2013. From these three, one would be selected for reading at the inauguration.

President Obama said, “It is an honor to have Richard Blanco in our second inauguration. His contributions to the fields of poetry and art have paved the way for future generations of writers. Richard’s work is well-suited for an opening that will celebrate the strength and diversity of our great country.”

Blanco was born in Madrid, Spain, while his family was traveling from Cuba to the U.S. His mother was seven months pregnant when they arrived in Spain. She gave birth to Richard and about six weeks later continued to New York. The family settled in Miami, where Richard was raised. He earned a degree from Florida International University in civil engineering in 1991 and worked for a while as a consulting engineer, but it wasn’t long before the poet in him emerged. He returned to FIU for an MFA in poetry.

Blanco bridges many communities. At the time of his selection, Blanco was the first immigrant, the first Latino, the first openly gay person, and the youngest person to be the U.S. inaugural poet. He is



a civil engineer who became a poet. When he lived in Washington, D.C., he taught at Georgetown, American University, and the Arlington County Detention Facility. He has lived in several U.S. cities and spent two years traveling in Europe. He is an academic and well respected in poetry circles, but he also sees poetry as something that all of us can create and should be empowered to create.

In response to the invitation, Blanco wrote “One Today,” “What We Know of Country,” and “Mother Country.” He said that he wanted each poem to represent a different facet of his writing and for each one to express some of his experiences as well as “how we can live in our country and be part of the union.”

“One Today” was selected by the inauguration committee, and it was well received. It was praised as an excellent example of public poetry. Despite the many political issues that Blanco’s biography touches on, he said that he chose to write a poem that would reach beyond politics. He wanted to “show the people.”

“One Today” was published in May 2013 by the University of Pittsburgh Press, highly regarded for its poetry publications. It was published as a small booklet, a “chapbook,” of 28 pages.



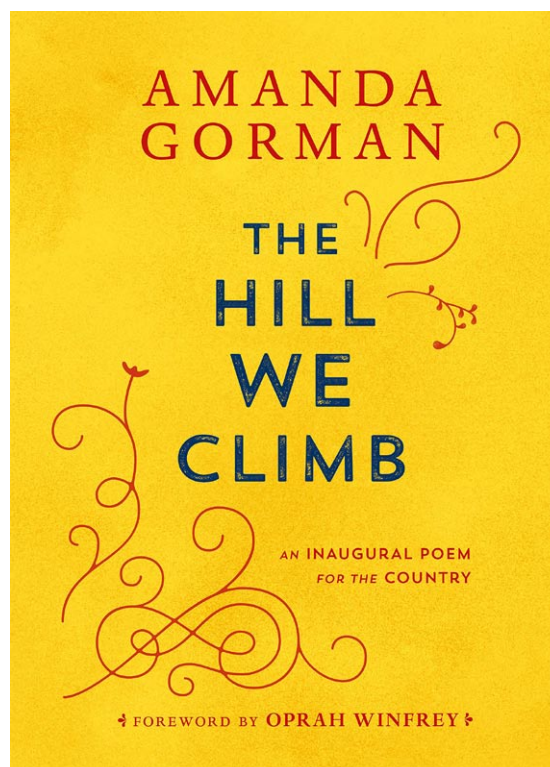
Inaugural Poems, concluded

2021 – “The Hill We Climb”: Amanda Gorman for the Inauguration of Joseph R. Biden

Poet Amanda Gorman had the honor of becoming the sixth inaugural poet and now the youngest. Even at her tender age of 22, she has already published three books and gathered honors. In 2014, she was selected as Youth Poet Laureate for Los Angeles, and in 2017 she was selected from five finalists to serve as the first National Youth Poet Laureate, a program established in 2016 that requires an extensive application process, followed by vetting that produces finalists, one of whom is chosen at the Library of Congress by a panel of distinguished poets.

Also for someone of her age, Gorman has already developed a record in service and activism. She has served as a youth delegate at the United Nations and founded the nonprofit organization One Pen One Page, a youth writing and leadership program. She was recommended for the task of inaugural poet by Jill Biden, herself a Ph.D. educator with a focus on America's youth. Biden had heard Gorman at one of her readings at the Library of Congress.

In an interview with *Washington Post* book critic Ron Charles, she said, “My hope is that my poem will represent a moment of unity for our country” and “with my words, I’ll be able to speak to a new chapter and era for our nation.”



She told Anthony Mason on *CBS This Morning*, “One of the preparations that I do always whenever I perform is I say a mantra to myself, which is ‘I’m the daughter of black writers. We’re descended from freedom fighters who broke through chains and changed the world. They call me.’ And that is the way in which I prepare myself for the duty that needs to get done.”

When asked about the challenge in another interview, she said, “I had this huge thing, probably one of the most important things I’ll ever do in my career. It was like, if I try to climb this mountain all at once, I’m just going to pass out.”

“The Hill We Climb” generally received enthusiastic reviews, often with the observation that Gorman’s poem truly spoke to this moment in American history. The poem will be published by Viking Youth as a 32-page hardback gift edition in March 2021, with an introduction by Oprah Winfrey.

Two further books by Gorman will be released in September. A collection of her poems, also titled *The Hill We Climb* and a children’s book, *Change Sings: A Children’s Anthem*, will be released in September. All three books are expected to have an initial printing of one million copies.

The Hill We Climb

by Amanda Gorman

When day comes we ask ourselves,
 where can we find light in this never-ending shade?
 The loss we carry,
 a sea we must wade.
 We've braved the belly of the beast,
 We've learned that quiet isn't always peace,
 and the norms and notions
 of what just is
 isn't always just-ice.
 And yet the dawn is ours
 before we knew it.
 Somehow we do it.
 Somehow we've weathered and witnessed
 a nation that isn't broken,
 but simply unfinished.
 We the successors of a country and a time
 where a skinny Black girl
 descended from slaves and raised by a single mother
 can dream of becoming president
 only to find herself reciting for one.
 And yes we are far from polished.
 Far from pristine.
 But that doesn't mean we are
 striving to form a union that is perfect.
 We are striving to forge a union with purpose,
 to compose a country committed to all cultures, colors,
 characters and conditions of man.
 And so we lift our gazes not to what stands between us,
 but what stands before us.
 We close the divide because we know, to put our future
 first,
 we must first put our differences aside.
 We lay down our arms
 so we can reach out our arms
 to one another.
 We seek harm to none and harmony for all.
 Let the globe, if nothing else, say this is true,
 that even as we grieved, we grew,
 that even as we hurt, we hoped,
 that even as we tired, we tried,
 that we'll forever be tied together, victorious.
 Not because we will never again know defeat,
 but because we will never again sow division.
 Scripture tells us to envision
 that everyone shall sit under their own vine and fig tree
 and no one shall make them afraid.
 If we're to live up to our own time,
 then victory won't lie in the blade.
 But in all the bridges we've made,
 that is the promise to glade,
 the hill we climb.
 If only we dare.
 It's because being American is more than a pride we
 inherit,
 it's the past we step into
 and how we repair it.
 We've seen a force that would shatter our nation

rather than share it.
 Would destroy our country if it meant delaying
 democracy.
 And this effort very nearly succeeded.
 But while democracy can be periodically delayed,
 it can never be permanently defeated.
 In this truth,
 in this faith we trust.
 For while we have our eyes on the future,
 history has its eyes on us.
 This is the era of just redemption
 we feared at its inception.
 We did not feel prepared to be the heirs
 of such a terrifying hour
 but within it we found the power
 to author a new chapter.
 To offer hope and laughter to ourselves.
 So while once we asked,
 how could we possibly prevail over catastrophe?
 Now we assert,
 How could catastrophe possibly prevail over us?
 We will not march back to what was,
 but move to what shall be.
 A country that is bruised but whole,
 benevolent but bold,
 fierce and free.
 We will not be turned around
 or interrupted by intimidation,
 because we know our inaction and inertia
 will be the inheritance of the next generation.
 Our blunders become their burdens.
 But one thing is certain,
 If we merge mercy with might,
 and might with right,
 then love becomes our legacy,
 and change our children's birthright.
 So let us leave behind a country
 better than the one we were left with.
 Every breath from my bronze-pounded chest,
 we will raise this wounded world into a wondrous one.
 We will rise from the gold-limbed hills of the west.
 We will rise from the windswept northeast,
 where our forefathers first realized revolution.
 We will rise from the lake-rimmed cities of the
 midwestern states.
 We will rise from the sunbaked south.
 We will rebuild, reconcile and recover.
 And every known nook of our nation and
 every corner called our country,
 our people diverse and beautiful will emerge,
 battered and beautiful.
 When day comes we step out of the shade,
 aflame and unafraid,
 the new dawn blooms as we free it.
 For there is always light,
 if only we're brave enough to see it.
 If only we're brave enough to be it.



A Library of the Greek Renaissance

Konstantinos Staikos is a Greek architect and book historian. His professional practice has centered on interior architecture and design since the 1960s, and in that capacity, he was commissioned to redesign and reorganize two historic libraries of the Christian world: the library of the Monastery of St. John on Patmos (founded 1089), completed in 1989, and the library of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the Phanar, Constantinople (founded 353, soon after the city's official inauguration as the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire), completed in 1993.

These projects are only one aspect of Staikos's engagement with books. Beginning in the early 1970s, he took a serious interest in the history of Greek books during the period 1453 to about 1830. The first date marks the Fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks, and the latter date, the end of the ten-year Greek war for independence from the Ottomans that resulted in the establishment of the modern Greek state. Between these two events, many Greeks left their home country in what is known as the Greek diaspora, and they contributed to the cultures of many others, including helping to spark the Renaissance.

Greeks began migrating west in the early 1200s after the Crusaders sacked Constantinople, and emigration increased with the fall of the city in 1453. Greek scholars brought to Italy and other western European nations a knowledge of the Greek and Roman classics

that had largely died out in those countries. A revival of interest in the classics began the process by which the Middle Ages evolved into the Renaissance with its emphasis on humanism and science that laid the foundation for the modern world. The 15th century also saw the invention of the printing press and the emergence of print culture which fueled the scholarship of the Renaissance.



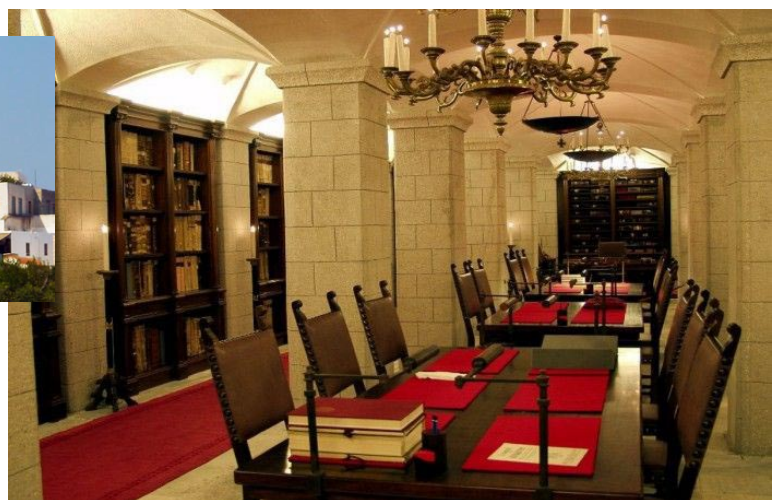
Konstantinos Staikos

A digression: An interesting twist in this tale is that many Greeks created communities in North African cities beginning in the 7th and 8th centuries where they were overtaken by Islamic conquests. These Greek communities became sources of translators who converted the ancient Greek and Roman classics into Arabic. The Arabic editions spread through the Islamic world, notably into Spain and the Islamic scholarly institutions there. Muslim scholars made their own important contributions to this body of knowledge, especially during the 13th and 14th centuries. At points of contact between Christian Europe and Islamic countries – for example, Spain – the ancient Greek works and the more recent Islamic works on science, engineering, philosophy,



Above: [The Monastery of St. John the Theologian on Patmos](#). The monastery was founded in 1088 on the island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea. It was heavily fortified to protect against marauding pirates and Turks.

Right: The monastery has two libraries. This one is the most secure and houses several hundred rare and valuable books, including some of the oldest fragments of the book of Mark. It was redesigned by Staikos in the 1970s.



Hellenic Library, continued

The Hellenic Library at the Onassis Foundation in Athens. The library houses the collection of Konstantinos Staikos, who also designed it.

medicine, and more were being translated into Latin and filtering into European centers of learning. Though areas of Spain changed hands throughout the period, Spanish on both sides took a tolerant attitude that brought Islamic scholars into Christian courts and vice versa. This transfer of knowledge is preserved in many words borrowed from Arabic at this time, such as *alchemy*, *algebra*, and *algorithm* as well as *sugar*, *cotton*, and *coffee*.

In the 1970s, Staikos began to take a serious interest in the history of Greek books produced during the diaspora. Considering the almost four centuries, the many countries, and the explosion of culture and publication during this period, this led Staikos in many directions. But in the 1980s, he expanded the scope of his interest even further. He undertook a systematic study of the history of libraries in the countries of the Mediterranean Basin and the Near East, from earliest antiquity (around 3000 BC) to the

Renaissance. As part of his study, he traveled to many important monastic and secular libraries in Europe. To learn about their history and operations, Staikos consulted the ancient Greek and Latin sources about how books were distributed, sold, and collected. As an architect, he naturally included in his study how library architecture had changed over those years.

In the course of pursuing this intensive hobby, Staikos authored a series of books, all published by Oak Knoll Press (the last one appears in the Books in Brief section of this newsletter):

- *The Great Libraries: From the Antiquities to the Renaissance* (2000)
- *The History of the Library in Western Civilization*, translated by Timothy Cullen (Six vols., 2004–2013)
- *Books and Ideas: The Library of Plato and the Academy* (2013)
- *Testimonies of Platonic Tradition. From the 4th*

Hellenic Library, continued

Century BCE to the 16th Century (2015)

- *The Mouseion and the Library of the Ptolemies in Alexandria: Alexander the Great's Vision of a Universal Intellectual Centre* (2021)

In addition to the books Staikos wrote, he also collected extensively. Staikos gathered books on every aspect of Greek intellectual life during the diaspora, including Greek printing and publishing activities and participation in international politics and religious matters. Staikos described it thus:

The library had become a fundamental tool for my systematic search for every printed book able to cast light on the printing and publishing course taken by Greeks from the years of the Italian Renaissance onward, without any geographic differentiation.

In addition to supporting Staikos's work, the collection became the basis of a series of exhibitions in Florence, Athens, Geneva, Strasburg, and elsewhere, each accompanied by a detailed catalogue, intended to increase awareness of the extensive contributions of diaspora Greeks to world culture.

The collection comprises approximately 2,000 books representing 1,400 individual titles, including many rare books. The books are classified in five categories:

- Renaissance—Humanism – Ancient Greek authors, Humanist works, grammars, encyclopaedias, dictionaries, philosophical treatises and literary essays
- Neo-Hellenic Literature – Literary works, poetry and folklore, historical treatises, literary essays, grammar-dictionaries, and school text books
- Liturgical Books – gospels, books of months (menaia), psalters, books of hours, pentekostaria, prayer books et al.
- Treatises of Theology – Patristic works by Greek Church Fathers, the schism between the two churches, history of the Orthodox Church, Orthodox dogma, and the Pope's infallibility

- Neo-Hellenic Enlightenment – Original works, Greek translations of works of prose of the world and poetry, European Enlightenment, and the French Revolution.

In 2010, the Staikos collection was acquired by the Onassis Foundation “to be preserved as perpetual property of the Greek Nation.” The books are housed in the Foundation's building in Athens:

A neoclassical building in the Acropolis neighborhood, adorned with art by the most important Greek artists along with objects from Aristotle Onassis' Monte Carlo office and his yacht *Christina*, is now home to the dynamic Onassis Library.

The Onassis Library is open to the public and to researchers (when Covid restrictions do not otherwise mandate). The foundation also houses two other significant collections:


- Archives of Greek poet C. P. Cavafy: manuscripts of poems, hand-compiled printed editions, prose literary works, articles, studies and notes by the poet
- The Travel Accounts Collection: 2,500 books written by European travelers describing the Mediterranean area and Southeast Europe from the 16th to the 20th century.

The Onassis Foundation's goal is to make these materials available as widely as possible, and to that end, they have established an extensive and growing digital archive which is freely available through the Foundation's website. The entire Hellenic Library was digitized in 2016. Many books can be viewed directly on the [Library's website](#).

For two projects, an “innovative app” was designed by the Onassis Library team that allows users to get a closer look. One app includes a 1542 Venetian edition of Homer's *Odyssey* in Latin and Greek. The other presents a timeline of Greek printing in the form of a board game, one of the Onassis Foundation's many educational initiatives.

ARGUMENTVM
PRIMI LIBRI HOMER-
ici Iliadis.



 **RYSES** Apollinis sacerdos venit ad castra Græcorum, ut filiam Chryseidē redimat. Supplicat ea de re Agamemnoni, sed repulsam passus contumeliosè ab eo comminante dimittitur: itaq; deum precatur, ut suas ulciscatur iniurias. Ergo subinde graui pestilentia, magna vis hominū interit. Cogit ergo Achilles conciliū: & Calchantē inuitū causam eius rei compellit indicare: ea cognita Agamemnon iratus grauisimā habet altercationē cum Achille: Briseidē deniq; pellicem ei adimit, pro Chryseidē, quā ipse patri remiserat. Inde Thetys mater lacrymās & contumeliā filii miserata, cōelū ascendit: ibi supplicat: sua in eū merita cōmémorat: imperat deniq; ab eo, ut filii cohonestati gratiā tantisper Troianis faueat dū Græcos, & imperatōrē ipsum pōniteat hui⁹ contumeliæ. Hac re cōperta, luno rixatur cū Iouis: fed rixæ Vulcani interuētū sedatur. Illi autē reliquō diei epulati, ad somnū se cōferūt.

Aliud argumentum: vel inscriptio.

Pestis & ira.

Aliud.

A, preces Chryſæ, peſtem exercitus, inimicitias regum.




RAM cane Dea Pelide A-
chillis
Perniciosam, quæ infinitos Achiuis
dolores fecit, v. imposuit.
Multas autem fortes animas Orco
ante tempus demisit

*Heroum ipsos autem laniamenta fecit canibus
Anibusq; omnibus: (Iouis aut perpiciebatur cōsiliū.)
Ex quo sanè primū disjuncti sunt litigantes,
Stridesq; rex virorum & diuus Achilles.*

ΥΠΟΘΕΣΙΣ ΤΗΣ
ΑΛΦΑ ΡΑΦΩΔΙΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΟΜΗ.
ρου *Ιλιάδης*.



 ΡΥΣΗΣ ἰερους τοῦ Ἀπολων· παρορνιττω ἐπὶ τ' ναυ-
σταμον· Ἐλκιδον, βαλοιδον· λυτρωσιδς τῶν ἡμετέ-
ων τοῦ Χρυσιδων· σὺν δουπασων·, ἀλλὰ Ἐ μεθ Ἀπολων·
δουπασων· ἐς ναῦ Ἀραμειδων·, ἡυστατο τοῦ Ἀπολων·
Ἐ Ἐλκιδων· λοικου· ὃ ἡρομειν, κὺ παλων, ὡς ἀφες, ἀφ-
φειρομειν, σκαλισιων Ἀχιλεις σινιραγε. Καλχηων· ὃ ἀφασα-
φῆσιν· τῶν ἀλλῶν ἀπάν, Ἐ κελιωνων· Ἀχιλεις ἐξιλῆσιν·
πὶν φειν, Ἀ· καμειν· ὀρνησις διωλῆχῃ σφες τὸν Ἀχιλεις, Ἐ αὐτὸν τοῦ
ῥεος· ἀπάν ατε τῶν Βεσσιδων·, ὃ ὀρνησιττω ὅτι Ἐλκιδων·, ὅτις δὲ τοῦ
ἡου δειφέντ· ἐς ἄλμυρον κελήσους, ἡήσιν τοῦ παρὰ τοῦ Διὸς ὅπως
Τρως ἐπικρατες· ἰερους τῶν Ἐλκιδων· πικισι· ἡεζ· ἡ γνοσι τοῦτο· διω-
λῆχῃ σφες τὸν Δία, ἡος ἀφῶς διέλουσι Ἡ· φας·, οἰνοχόους ἐν σκα-
πῶμα· χρυσιῶ·, οἱ ὃ, τοῖ λοιπὸν τῆς ἡμέρας εὐαχρηγτες, ἐς ὑπὸν
ῥεσιπιν·

Ἀλλ' ὑπόθεσις ἡ Ἰπυγραφή.

Δοιμὸς ἐ μύῳς.

Αλλ.

Αλφα λιταῖς Χρύσου, λοιμὸν σπασμῶ, ἔχθος ἀνὰ κλῶν.



HNIN αειδε θεα Πηληϊάδεω Α³-
χιλῆος
Οὐλομένην, ἥ μιν Εἰς Α' χαιοῖς ἄλ-
γε' ἔθηκε,
Πολλὰ δὲ ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς ἄϊδι
πεποισέν·

Ηρώων, αὐτὰρ δ' ἐλώερα πύχε κινέεσσι,
 ὦϊον οἷόν τε πᾶσι. (Διὸς δ' ἐπελέετο ² βαλὴ)
 Ἐξ ἔδῃ τὰ πρῶτα ³ Διαισῆτιν ἐρύσαντε
 Ἀτρεΐδης τε Αἰγας ἀνδρῶν κ' οἳ αὖτε Ἀχιλλεύς.

2^{ος}. Ἐκκλησία.
1^{ος}. Οἰκονομῶν
σι τε πᾶσι δ.
2^{ος}. Ἑκκλησία.
3^{ος}. Διὰ τῆς
ἐκκλ.

COMMENTARIVS.

Mūn' āndē Jēu) Ex quatuor quæstionibus, quæ nos ad rei investigationem dubitando deducunt, duæ in huius principij examinationem cadunt. Querimus enim primū, quid hoc sit: secundū, quare. De utroq; sic statuimus. Imprimis cum soleant scripto-

res initio op
pta sit scripi
ut est apud
Illud in prol
Poeta illud
rum Vatum
forte Musæ
dum. Secun
cto prætermi
certam esse
uideantur, cu
rapiunt, & ad
non extat, fus
ta Virgilius h
tamen ipsa m
plerit, eam m
minimè esse
tudinem fuisse
rictate futur
Hæc est Philo
tuisse dicit be

This page is the beginning of Homer's *Iliad* in an edition from 1583, edited and with commentary by the French poet Jean de Sponde, then living in Basel. The book was published in Basel by Eusebius Episcopus. The *Iliad* is here presented in Latin on the left and Greek on the right. The Commentarius (Commentary) by de Sponde is in Latin. Note the many sizes and styles of type, all set by hand – and this in only one of over 900 pages. Works like this fueled the Renaissance. [This edition](#) contains several other Greek texts, including the *Odyssey* and the Homeric hymns. Along with many other books in the Hellenic Library, it is available for download from the [Onassis Library website](#).

tembelli tantum Poeta conscribere uoluit. Sed cur ab ira Achilles potius incepit Poeta? Plutarchus respondet, quia antequam illa contingerent, *πρὶν τὴν ἰσθμίων πορῶν, ἐπ' αὐτῇ τὸν Ἰσθμὸν μάχεσθαι, ἐδὲ ἐπ' αὐτῇ μάχῃ.* Siquidem quandiu Achilles Græcis συνιμάχετο, ἐδὲ ποτε

ifce-
 Jeda
 rus.
 tem
 quo-
 nifi
 nen-
 s o-
 etis
 fiffe
 rem
 uod
 oe-
 quia
 fcri
 um
 ni-
 ia-
 uit.
 fti-
 ar-



The First Lunar Bible(s)

Mystery is a requisite of any religious artifact – or at least a bonus. The artifact and this bonus were auctioned at Bonhams last November in the form of the First Lunar Bible.

The story begins in the 1960s with John Stout, a NASA chaplain and his good friend, Edward White, an astronaut and the first American to walk in space. White was deeply religious, and when he took the first American walk in space on June 3, 1965 (Gemini 4), he carried with him in a pocket a Star of David, a St. Christopher medal, and a gold crucifix, hoping to represent many of the country's faithful.

Planning for the first moonflights was already underway, and White hoped to make that trip and to take a Bible with him to the surface of the moon. Sadly, he was killed in 1967 when fire broke out in the Apollo 1 capsule during a routine test. White, Gus Grissom, and Roger Chaffee, all household names at the time, were killed.

In that same year, John Stout responded to this tragedy and the death of a brother by forming the Apollo Prayer League, based on a suggestion of his wife Helen, who was already involved in a prayer group of NASA wives. A larger group could encompass other NASA employees, she thought. Indeed, the nondenominational group grew rapidly. One of its most important goals was to fulfill the dream of Edward White and land a Bible on the moon.

Weight restrictions on a space capsule prevented a conventional Bible from making the trip, a fact that Stout well understood. Instead, he arranged for the Bible to be miniaturized as a microform, a photographic reduction of the pages of the Bible that could put every page of the entire Bible in a one-inch square. The book was produced by the National Cash Register Company, which had made the first microform Bibles in 1964, imaging the World

Publishing Company's Bible No. 711, a King James Version, as a demonstration of a new microform technology for the New York World's Fair.

According to the Apollo Prayer League website, one such Bible was produced in 1969 and traveled aboard Apollo 12, the sixth Apollo mission and the second to include a moon landing. Unfortunately, due to a clerical error, the Bible was stowed on the main spacecraft rather than the lander. It orbited the moon, but did not land.

The Apollo Prayer League began planning for the 1970 Apollo 12 mission, which would also include a moon

landing. This time, the Prayer League commissioned a roll of microfilm to be shot that would include 512 miniature Bibles. This roll of film was placed aboard the Apollo 12 landing module, ready for its trip to the moon's surface. Unfortunately, a fire aboard the Apollo 12 prevented the moon landing. It circled the moon and returned to earth. The harrowing, life-threatening journey is the subject of the 1996 film *Apollo 12*.



The First Lunar Bible auctioned by Bonhams in November 2020. The Bible is the small square at the middle of the badge, a post-space-ride addition.

Lunar Bible, concluded

Now the story gets a little complicated.

According to Stout, the 512 Bibles that flew on Apollo 12 were retained by the crew, and the Apollo Prayer League ordered a third edition of 1,500 Bibles. To honor Apollo 12, 512 of these Bibles were prepared to travel with Apollo 13 in 1971 in three groups:

- 100 Bibles were stored in the Apollo 14 lunar module, including a single Bible in a special edition
- 200 Bibles were stored in the Apollo 14 command module
- 212 Bibles formed a second cache of Bibles “secretly” stored on the Apollo 14 command module by astronaut Harold Hill, a board member of the Apollo Prayer League and the mission microbiologist.

Apollo 14 pilot Edgar Mitchell had agreed to carry the Bibles on the mission, but he requested that one Bible be prepared in a unique fashion so that it would be the First Lunar Bible. For this unique specimen, Stout prepared a single copy of the Revised Standard Version (RSV) of the Bible, Edward White’s preferred version. Thus, it would be different from all the other Lunar Bibles, which were the King James Version.

The Apollo 14 flight was accomplished without incident, and the 100 Bibles on the lunar module landed on the moon. When the Apollo 14 Bibles returned to earth, each of the 100 Lunar Bibles was

engraved with a five-digit code based on its sequence and placement in the Apollo 14 lunar module or command module. These 512 Bibles are the “First Lunar Bibles.” The codes were intended to prevent counterfeiting. Each code is recorded with its recipient. Lunar Bibles without a recipient were retained by the Apollo Prayer League. Nevertheless, a few Lunar Bibles have reached the market,

including the one auctioned by Bonhams, coded “14c18.”

The Lunar Bibles were included in presentation packets that included a number of other documents. A number of these packets were presented to “those closest to the project and to museums and dignitaries, such as George H. W. Bush and President Richard Nixon.” A packet was also given to Preston Kirk, the UPI reporter who broke the Lunar Bible story.

The Apollo Prayer League retained all other copies. However, a few Lunar Bibles have reached the market, including the one auctioned by Bonhams.

A small, unknown number of Lunar Bibles were divided by Stout into 50-page and two-page fragments. The fragments also appear occasionally on the market. A reel of several hundred unused microfilm Bibles in the APL archives is unaccounted for.

While the original glass master of the unique RSV version of the First Lunar Bible remains intact, the whereabouts of the microfilm Bible made from it remain a mystery.



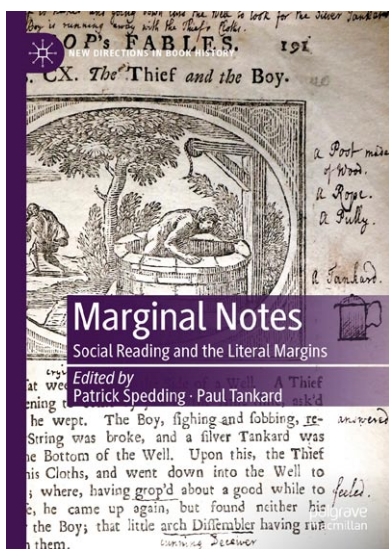
This 50-page fragment of a Lunar Bible was sold by Bonhams in 2015. The reliquary is in the form and style of a Fabergé egg — “decorated with gilt bows and swags with three agate cabochons embedded in the base, surmounted with an amethyst finial” — and is accompanied by a blue velvet presentation box marked “Fabergé.” According to the Bonhams website, the fragment came with a provenance document signed by James Stout (John’s brother) and astronaut Edgar Mitchell. The Apollo Prayer League website states that James Stout has no authority in its organization.



Books in Brief

Marginal Notes: Social Reading and the Literal Margins

Patrick Spedding; Paul Tankard
Palgrave Macmillan
294 pp., February 2021



Marginal Notes: Social Reading and the Literal Margins offers an account of literary marginalia based on original research from a range of unique archival sources, from mid-16th-century France to early 20th-century Tasmania.

Chapters examine marginal commentary from 17th-century China,

18th-century Britain, and 19th-century America, investigating the reputations, as reflected by attentive readers, of He Zhou, Pierre Bayle, Samuel Johnson, Thomas Warton, and Sir Walter Scott. The marginal writers include Jacques Gohory, Mary Astell, Hester Thrale, Herman Melville, the young daughters of the Broome family in Gloucestershire, and the patrons of the library of the Huon Mechanics' Institute, Tasmania. Though marginalia is often proscribed and frequently hidden or overlooked, the collection reveals the enduring power of marginalia, concluding with studies of the ethics of annotation and the resurrected life of marginalia in digital environments.

Patrick Spedding is Head of Literary Studies at Monash University, Australia, and Associate Director of the Centre for the Book. He is the author of *A Bibliography of Eliza Haywood* (2004), and the editor of many historical literary texts.

Paul Tankard teaches and researches in English at the University of Otago, New Zealand. His chief interests are Samuel Johnson and James Boswell, the Inklings, paratextuality, and the future of literacy. Sources: Palgrave Macmillan

What a Library Means to a Woman: Edith Wharton and the Will to Collect Books

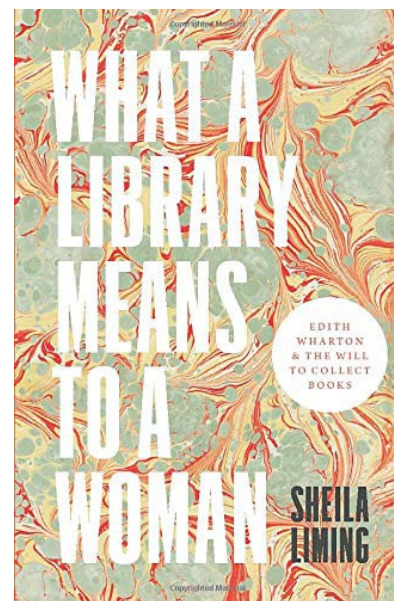
Sheila Liming
Univ. of Minnesota Press
272 pp., April 2020

When writer Edith Wharton died in 1937, without any children, her library of more than five thousand volumes was divided and subsequently sold.

Decades later, it was reassembled and returned to The Mount, her historic Massachusetts estate. *What a Library Means to a Woman* examines personal libraries as technologies of self-creation in modern America, focusing on Wharton and her remarkable collection of books.

Liming explores the connection between libraries and self-making in late 19th- and early 20th-century American culture. Liming's study blends literary and historical analysis while engaging with modern discussions about gender, inheritance, and hoarding. It offers a review of the many meanings of a library collection, while reading one specific collection in light of its owner's literary celebrity. This book grew out of Liming's ongoing work digitizing the Wharton library collection.

Sheila Liming is Associate Professor at Champlain College, where she teaches in the Professional Writing program. She has contributed to *The Atlantic*, the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, *McSweeney's*, and the *Chronicle Review*, among other publications.

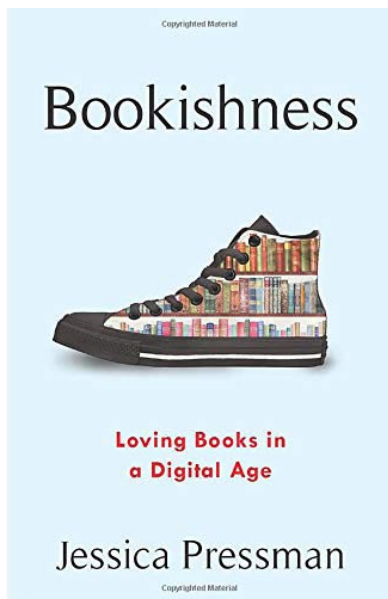


Source: Univ. of Minnesota Press; Amazon



*Books in Brief, continued***Bookishness: Loving Books in a Digital Age**

Jessica Pressman
Columbia Univ. Press
216 pp., December 2020



Twenty-first-century culture is obsessed with books.

In a time when many voices have joined to predict the death of print, books continue to resurface in new and unexpected ways. From the proliferation of “shelfies” to Jane Austen-themed leggings and from decorative pillows printed with beloved book covers to bookwork sculptures exhibited in prestigious

collections, books are everywhere and are not just for reading. Writers have caught up with this trend: many contemporary novels depict books as central characters or fetishize paper and print thematically and formally.

In *Bookishness*, Pressman examines the new status of the book as object and symbol. She explores the rise of “bookishness” as an identity and an aesthetic strategy found in store-window décor to experimental writing. Examining the works of writers such as Foer, Egan, Danielewski, and Shapton, Pressman illuminates the status of the book as a fetish object and its significance for understanding contemporary fakery.

Jessica Pressman is associate professor of English and comparative literature at San Diego State University, where she cofounded the Digital Humanities Initiative.

**Dark Archives: A Librarian’s Investigation into the Science and History of Books Bound in Human Skin**

Megan Rosenbloom
Farrar, Straus, & Giroux
288 pp., October 2020

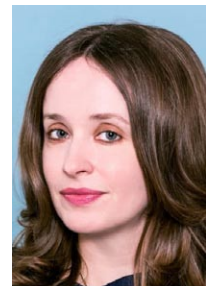
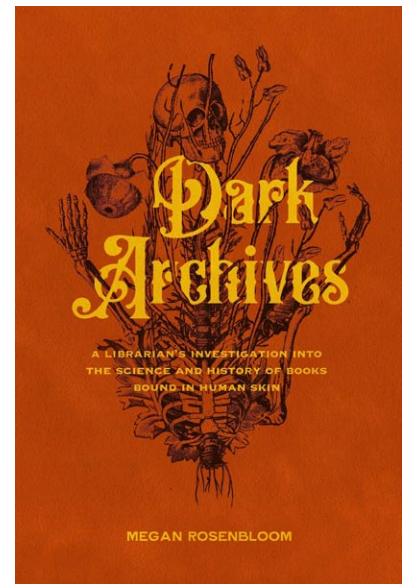
When Megan Rosenbloom was a young librarian in the Mütter Museum’s collection of medical oddities, she first encountered books bound in human skin.

In *Dark Archives*, Rosenbloom pursues the curiosity that was born in that encounter and seeks out the historic and scientific truths behind the practice of binding books in human skin.

Dozens of such books live on in the world’s most famous libraries and museums. *Dark Archives* examines their origins and brings to life the doctors, murderers, innocents, and indigents whose lives are brought together in this disquieting genre. Along the way, Rosenbloom tells the story of how her team of scientists, curators, and librarians test rumored anthropodermic books, untangling the myths around their creation and reckoning with the ethics of their custodianship.

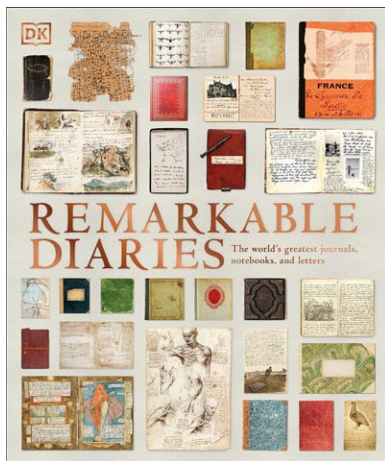
Megan Rosenbloom is a librarian with a research interest in the history of medicine and rare books. She is now the collection strategies librarian at UCLA Library in Los Angeles. She was previously a medical librarian and before that a journalist.

See page 30 for a podcast interview with Megan Rosenbloom.



*Books in Brief, concluded***Remarkable Diaries: The World's Greatest Journals, Notebooks, and Letters**

R. G. Grant, Andrew Humphreys, Esther Ripley,
and Iain Zaczek, contributors
Dorling Kindersley
256 pp., September 2020



"The diary is the most democratic form of writing." Thus begins the introduction to *Remarkable Diaries*, which ranges across the ages to present literary diaries, artists' sketchbooks, explorers' journals, and scientists' notebooks, providing an intimate insight

into the lives and thoughts of some of the most interesting people of the last two thousand years.

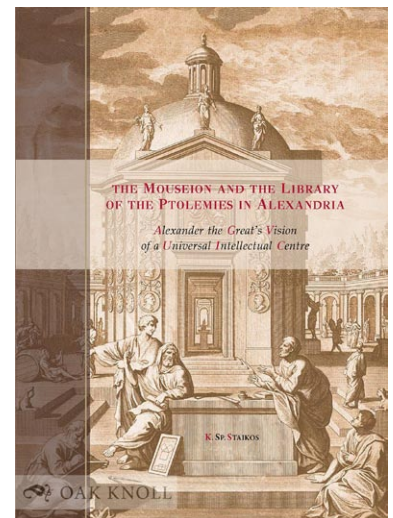
Beginning with a page from the diary of Merer, an Egyptian official involved in the building of the Great Pyramid at Giza – the document was only discovered in 2013 – and continuing chronologically, *Remarkable Diaries* takes you into the pages of the world's greatest diaries, notebooks, and letters, including those of Samuel Pepys, Henry David Thoreau, the Goncourt brothers, Virginia Woolf, and Anne Frank. Stunning reproductions of the original notebooks and manuscripts are complemented by extracts and quotations, and illustrated features set the diaries in their cultural and historical context.

Essential reading for everyone who is passionate about history and literature, *Remarkable Diaries* provides a fascinating insight into the everyday lives, thoughts, and feelings of men and women through the centuries.

The Mouseion and the Library of the Ptolemies in Alexandria: Alexander the Great's Vision of a Universal Intellectual Centre

Konstantinos Staikos
Oak Knoll Press
568 pp., February 2021

Many ancient empires created libraries, but the most famous is the Great Library at Alexandria. The library was part of a larger museum complex, the Mouseion, now treated in a new book from architect and book historian Konstantinos Staikos.

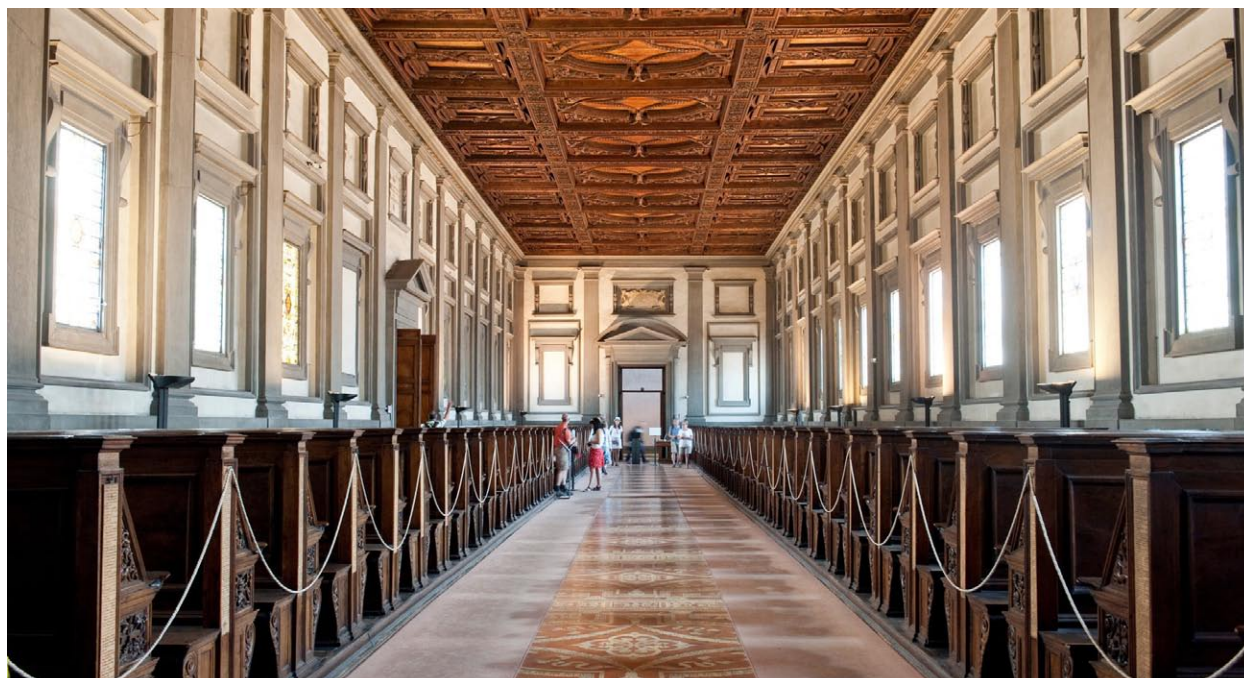


The Mouseion and the Library of the Ptolemies in Alexandria begins with a look at relations between the Greeks and the peoples of the East, mainly the Egyptians and Persians, through the end of the classical period. Alexander's campaign of conquest to the East is summarized and his personality is brought to the fore.

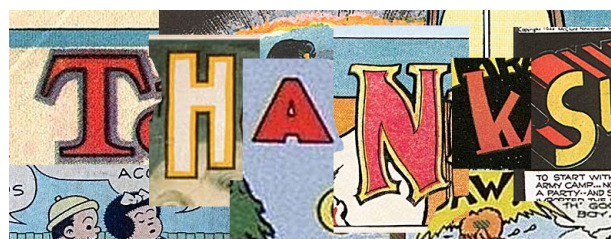
The book proceeds into its main subject: the organization and function of the Mouseion and the Library of Alexandria during the Hellenistic period, down to the institution's history in Roman and Byzantine times and the Arab conquest of Alexandria. The book concludes with the Mouseion's architecture, the principles of its creation, and its construction from Greek philosophical and rhetorical schools.

Konstantinos Staikos is an architect and book historian whose works include the five-volume *History of the Library in Western Civilization* (Oak Knoll Press, 2001–2013). Staikos's collection of books related to Greek intellectual, printing, and publishing was purchased by the Onassis Foundation.






The reading room of the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana in Florence.



This Month's Writers and Contributors

Many thanks to those who contributed words,
pictures, and ideas to this month's newsletter!

David Hall
Jerry Morris
Linda Morris
Maureen E. Mulvihill
Carl Mario Nudi
Gary Simons
Ben Wiley


Have an idea for an article for *The Florida Bibliophile*?
Contact Charles Brown, cmbrown@atlantic.net, to
submit or for assistance in preparing your article. 

Join FBS!

If you love books, take your interest to the
next level by joining a group of dedicated
book lovers (i.e., bibliophiles). You will
meet serious collectors, dealers, scholars,
and readers, and you will discover a lively,
enjoyable group. You will find contact emails on the
last page of this newsletter.




Membership is \$50 per year. You can find a
membership form on our website. It will give you
the address to which to send your filled-out form and
payment.

Joining FBS also makes you a member of our national
organization, the Fellowship of American Bibliophilic
Societies. 

Write for Your Newsletter!



Your input and content are needed. FBS is about
participation, about discoveries, about passionate
interests, and sometimes the deliciously obscure.
Why not write about it!? 

Upcoming Events

February 2021



Rebecca Rego Barry: Carolyn Wells in the Library

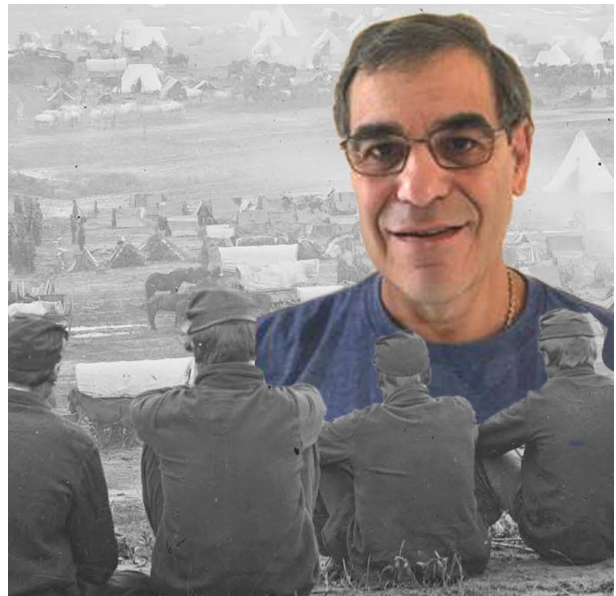
Virtual Meeting

February 21, 2021, 1:30 pm

Carolyn Wells (1862–1842) is a name well known to mystery lovers. Wells wrote in a variety of genres, but after hearing a reading of *Affair Next Door* (1897) by Anna Katharine Green, she devoted herself to mystery.

Beginning in the early 1900s, Wells wrote over 80 mysteries, including *A Chain of Evidence* (1912), *The Mark of Cain* (1917), *The Furthest Fury* (1924), *The Crime in the Crypt* (1928), and *The Importance of Being Murdered* (1939). Wells was trained as a librarian and was also an avid book collector with an intimate knowledge of the world of rare books – she put this knowledge to use in her 1936 novel *Murder in the Bookshop*. Her significant collection of Walt Whitman poetry, noted for its “completeness and rarity,” was bequeathed to the Library of Congress.

March 2021



Eric Steckler: The Jews in the American Civil War

Virtual Meeting

March 21, 2021, 1:30 pm

Dr. Eric Steckler is a retired medical doctor and Jewish history scholar. In his presentation, Eric will discuss the fascinating role of Jews in the Civil War, their views on slavery and their divided loyalty between the Union and the Confederacy.

In 1861, 150,000 Jews were living in the U.S., mostly immigrants and mostly in the Union, with about 25,000 Jews in the Confederacy. Before the war, Jews were generally reserved on the question of slavery, but the Civil War compelled many Jews to take a position. As many as 10,000 Jews fought in the Civil War, some rising to significant positions, such as Judah P. Benjamin who served the Confederacy as attorney general, secretary of state, and secretary of war. Noncombatant Jews were as engaged as other Americans in supporting their forces through gifts, contributions, medical aid, clothing, and more.



Book Events, Podcasts, and More

Know of any events of interest to book lovers? Send corrections and additions to Charles Brown, cmbrown@atlantic.net.

Florida Book Events – February 2021

Normally held in February, the Book Festivals at Amelia Island and Savannah are planning a series of virtual events with well-known authors. Visit their websites for more details.

Amelia Island Book Festival

Amelia Island, FL (www.ameliaislandbookfestival.org/)
No events scheduled for February.

Savannah Book Festival

Savannah, GA (www.savannahbookfestival.org/)
Events scheduled: Briet Bennet (Feb. 3); Larry Loftis (Feb. 9)

February 18–20, Virtual

Coastal Magic Convention

Daytona Beach, FL (coastalmagicconvention.com/)

January 30, available through June 30

Sunshine State Book Festival

Santa Fe College, Gainesville, FL
(www.sunshinestatebookfestival.com)

This online festival features 100 Florida authors, each with a video presentation, link to bio and website, and a selection of books with pop-up links to Amazon for more information without leaving the festival site.

Behind the Bookshelves, the AbeBooks Podcast

[Behind the Bookshelves](#) offers interviews with authors, collectors, and booksellers covering a wide range of topics. Recent episodes include:

Jan. 13 – *Takaya Lone Wolf*: Cheryl Alexander, a Victoria, BC, conservation photographer describes the remarkable life of a wolf that lived on islands off the coast of Victoria.

Jan. 19 – *Scoff: A History of Food and Class in Britain*: Pen Vogler investigates British food traditions from humble fish and chips to posh dinner parties.

Jan. 27 – *The Mystery of Mrs. Christie*: In 1926, Agatha Christie disappeared for 11 days. In her book, Marie Benedict imagines the disappearance and the events leading up to it.

Rare Book Cafe, with Steven and Edie Eisenstein

Florida book dealers and FBS members Steve and Edie Eisenstein started “Rare Book Cafe” several years ago to cover all aspects of books in “the only live-streamed program about antiquarian books, ephemera, and more....” Episodes are available to view on the [Rare Book Cafe website \(on Facebook\)](#).

Thorne Donnelly hosted the opening show of the sixth season of Rare Book Cafe on January 23 with a 90-minute show featuring Sarah Smith on the cancellation of the 2021 Florida Antiquarian Book Fair (2:31), Edie Eisenstein on miniature books (5:31), Sophia Bogle on books about binding and book repair (11:40), Cafe Table Segment with Thorne Donnelly, Steve Eisenstein, and Barbara Loe, and Tider the Cat on past pandemics and disappearing ephemera (35:10), Matt Mina joins to discuss “book jacking” on Amazon (76:50) and Gigi Best on Zora Neale Hurston (89:30).

The BiblioFile, with Nigel Beale

[THE BIBLIOFILE](#) is one of the world’s leading podcasts about “the book” and the wider world of book culture. Hosted by Nigel Beale, it features wide-ranging conversations with authors, poets, publishers, booksellers, editors, collectors, book makers, scholars, critics, designers, publicists, literary agents, and others who just plain love books. The website provides podcasts going back to 2006, lists of reading, links, etc.

Recent episodes:

Jan. 4 – Bianca Gillam on the role of a Special Sales Assistant at Simon & Schuster

Jan. 13 – Doug Minett on Canada’s most Innovative Bookstore

Jan. 17 – Martin Latham on *The Bookseller’s Tale*

Jan. 24 – Book Collector Miriam Borden on rescuing the Yiddish language

Jan. 27 – Jonathan A. Hill on the importance of bookseller catalogues

*Events, Podcasts, and More, concluded***American Antiquarian Society
Virtual Book Talks**

Founded in 1812 by Isaiah Thomas, a Revolutionary War patriot and printer, the American Antiquarian Society is the oldest history society in the U.S. It limits its interests to the period before 1876 and holds the “largest and most accessible collection of books, pamphlets, broadsides, newspapers, periodicals, music, and graphic arts material” printed up to that date.

The AAS’s Program in the History of the Book in American Culture (PHBAC) was established in 1983, responding to and promoting the then emerging field of book history. PHBAC sponsors **Virtual Book Talk**, which showcases “authors of recently published scholarly monographs, digital-equivalents, and creative works broadly related to book history and print culture.” Virtual Book Talk is free, but advance registration is required. Past talks are archived on the PHBAC website.

From January:

Jan. 12, 2021 – Craig Dworkin on his newest book *Radium of the Word: A Poetics of Materiality*. Approx. 45 minutes. Dworkin examines the forms of words rather than their denotations to trace hidden networks across the surface of texts, examining how typography, and even individual letters and marks of punctuation, can reveal patterns that are significant without being symbolic and revealing otherwise unseen meanings.

Coming in February:

Feb. 25, 2021, 2 p.m. – Megan Rosenbloom: [A Librarian’s Investigation into the Science and History of Books Bound in Human Skin](#). *Dark Archives* seeks the historic and scientific truths behind the practice of binding books in human skin. Rosenbloom inquires into the books’ origins and those who contributed to this disquieting genre. She also tells how her team of scientists, curators, and librarians test these books, untangling the myths and reckoning with the ethics of their custodianship.

The Book Collector Podcast

In 1952, James Bond author Ian Fleming created *The Book Collector*, a “unique periodical for bibliophiles,” which has featured a wide range of articles pertaining to book collecting, modern first editions, typography, national libraries, and numerous other matters of interest to book collectors and enthusiasts. Fleming died in 1964, as did the journal’s editor John Hayward. After a brief hiatus, the journal started up again in the hands of its new owner and editor, Nicolas Barker. In 2016, Fleming’s nephews, James and Fergus Fleming, assumed leadership of the journal, and in 2020 they created a podcast, which features readings from the journal’s archives. There are now 30 podcasts, including

- The Library of the Count de Fortsas, 1840, by William Blades (June 1952)
- Contemporary Collectors VI: The Hyde Collection (Aug. 1955)

University of Oxford Podcasts

Hundreds of podcasts are available in many series of interest to bibliophiles. Here are a few selections to get started:

[History of the Book](#) – Interactions between the history of the book and other areas of research.

[Fantasy Literature](#) – The roots of fantasy, the main writers and themes, and how to approach these texts.

Friends of Goddard Library, Clark University

The Friends of Goddard Library (FGL) volunteers support the library and work with staff to plan programming, including Karen Sanchez-Eppler’s November 2020 talk “[‘Barbarous, Cruel Inhuman’: Nineteenth-Century Child Readers and Images of ‘Indians’](#).”



Florida Bibliophile Society 2020–2021 Season



David Hall

Until further notice, all FBS meetings will be virtual via Zoom.

September 20 • FBS Members – Introduction to Zoom and Members' Show and Tell: Meeting attendees connected to our virtual meeting through Zoom. We learned about some helpful features of this software, shared about some special summer acquisitions, and had a generally good chat.

October 18 • Nigel Beale – How to Talk to a Bibliophile. Nigel hosts and produces *The BiblioFile* podcast. He has interviewed over 400 novelists, poets, publishers, and critics. Nigel shared about starting *The BiblioFile*, the many interviews he's conducted, and his own book interests. His presentation was followed by a lively Q&A with attendees.

November 15 • Mark Samuels Lasner – British Literature in the Mark Samuels Lasner Collection. Mark created an important collection of late 19th century British authors and donated the entire collection to the University of Delaware in 2016 – over 9,000 books, works of art, and ephemera. Mark talked about how he began collecting and the authors and important works in the collection.

December 20 • Happy Bibliophile Holiday Self-Gifting Party. A holiday party and gift exchange for the Covid era. Members were invited to buy themselves a special book and share it with the group. Delicious refreshments were self-served.

January 17 • Charles Brown – Henry Darger, Author and Artist. Charles presented the work of Henry Darger. When Darger died, writings and artworks amounting to thousands of pages were found in his small Chicago apartment, including Darger's

15,000-page novel, illustrated with watercolors, tracings, and collage.

February 21 • Rebecca Rego Barry – Carolyn Wells in the Library. Wells (1862–1942) wrote over 170 books, mostly mysteries. Rebecca will discuss Wells's work and show some of the books. Rebecca is author of *Rare Books Uncovered: True Stories of Fantastic Finds in Unlikely Places*. She is editor of *Fine Books & Collections*.

March 21 • Eric Steckler – The Jews in the American Civil War. Dr. Eric Steckler is a retired medical doctor and Jewish history scholar. Eric will discuss the fascinating role of Jews in the Civil War, their views on slavery and their divided loyalty between the Union and the Confederacy.

April 18 • Lola Haskins – A Reading of Selected Poems. Lola's presentations to FBS have been warmly received. She was scheduled to present from her newest collection *Asylum* in April 2020. The meeting was cancelled, but poems from *Asylum* appeared in *The Florida Bibliophile*. We immediately invited her back for Poetry Month 2021.

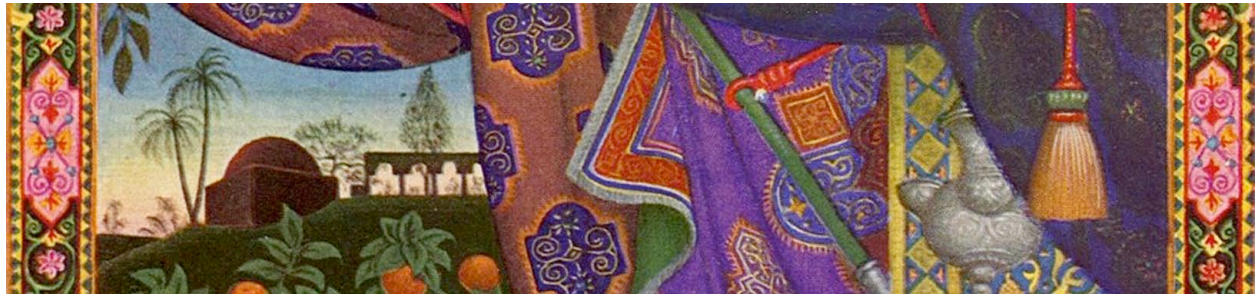
April 23–26 • Florida Antiquarian Book Fair. Sadly, the 2021 Florida Antiquarian Book Fair has been cancelled, but planning is underway for 2022. More time to save pennies!

May 16 • Annual FBS Banquet. Assuming that all pandemics are under control, we will be having our Annual Banquet on this date.

All meetings are held at 1:30 p.m. on Sunday afternoons unless otherwise announced.



Endpaper • Hidden Treasures



I'm not surprised that few people know about Henry Darger, and I was pleased to have the opportunity to increase the number of people that do.

Preparing for that presentation gave me a chance to pursue my interest in Darger more intensively – it helped me straighten out a few things for myself and brought the controversies over his personality, art, writing, and even biography into sharper focus. In that sense, the presentation was the culmination of one process and the beginning of another one as I've begun to read more of Darger's writings and appreciate the creative mind behind them.

Just as Darger is largely unknown, so too the poets invited to speak at inaugurations – with the exception of Robert Frost, who until about 1959 was probably better known than John F. Kennedy, and Maya Angelou, who had become somewhat known through her prose work. In writing about the inaugural poets, I was impressed with their amazing

resumes and impressive poetry as well as their joy and their hope. These poets deserve to be better known, and yet like much art in America, even the most respected practitioners are often known only in specialist circles.

Similarly, discovering Konstantinos Staikos and his work that led to so many interesting books and the Hellenic Library... Darger, the poets, Staikos... so many of us quietly laboring, producing fascinating and sometimes important work. Even the Lunar Bible is the product of a strange and obsessive dream brought to fruition.

What is that spark that keeps us on tracks that few know about and maybe few really understand? This describes so many of our bibliophiles who research, write, and otherwise create. Maybe this is what really brings us together.

Stay safe. Support your local bookstore!

— Charles

The Florida Bibliophile Society

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The Florida Bibliophile is the newsletter of the Florida Bibliophile Society, established 1983. It is published monthly from September to May. Correspondence regarding the newsletter and submissions should be sent to: Charles Brown, cmbrown@atlantic.net. www.floridabibliophilesociety.org © 2021 Florida Bibliophile Society

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