

# The Florida Bibliophile

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*Join FBS! See p. 21*

*February newsletter deadline: January 31, 2023 (see p. 21)*

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 2022 FABS Journal [here](#).



*The Florida  
Bibliophile Society  
wishes you a healthy  
and prosperous  
2023!*



Florida Bibliophile Society  
A community of book lovers



# FBS Holiday Party Photo Album



The Stage Is Set!

Photos by Ben Wiley

Find the Partridge!



A table! A table!



Thanks to our hosts:

Joyce and Ben Wiley





*Time for Dinner!*

*Yum!*



*Before!*



*Save Room!*



*After!*

*Frida's Fruit Torte  
compliments of Maureen*



*Jeannie • Gary • Carol • Wes*



*Jude • Sean • DJ • Allison • Charles*



*Irene • Sue • Joyce • David • Lunne • Roxanne*



*Swapping Stories and Gifts!*





## Top 2022 Auction Prices for Books and Works on Paper

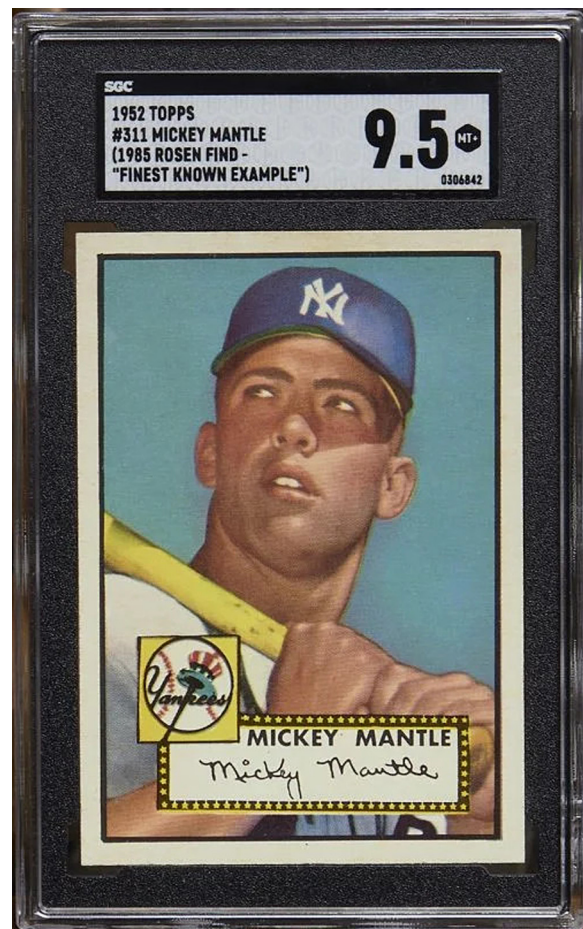
**R**are Book Hub was founded in 2002 by San Francisco book dealer Bruce McKinney to address his need for an efficient resource for auction records. In the 20 years since, [Rare Book Hub](#) has grown into the premier resource for auction records of books and works on paper. What started as a personal project now contains well over 12 million auction records.

Each year, Rare Book Hub reports the top 500 auction records. In a recent article, McKinney explained what the 2022 list includes:

The most popular categories of paper outside of books and manuscripts are collectible cards, with 102 entries, and comics with 82. Comics have flattened out some while collectible cards slipped over 20%. Prints would be more dominant but we only include prints of historical or geographic significance as prints of artwork would overwhelm other categories. The same is true of photography. Andy Warhol alone would have taken 61 spaces.

The Top 10 for 2022 are:

1. The 1952 Topps Mickey Mantle rookie baseball card, the “finest known example.” \$12,600,000.
2. “Rustam recovers Rakhsh from Afrasiyab’s herd,” illustrated folio image from *The Shahnameh of Shah Tahmasp*, commissioned by the Safavid (Persian) emperor, attributed to Mirza ‘Ali, circa 1525–1535. \$10,157,742.
3. Original artwork by Mike Zeck and others from *Secret Wars #8* (Marvel Comics; 1984), page 25, introducing Spider-Man’s black Venom costume. \$3,360,000.
4. *Action Comics #1* (DC Comics; 1938), which introduced the first superhero, Superman. \$3,180,000.
5. *Captain America Comics #1* (Marvel Comics; 1941). \$3,120,000.
6. Manuscript document of the proceedings of the Virginia Ratification Convention which ratified



This Mickey Mantle rookie card drew the highest price paid at auction in 2022 for a book or work on paper: 12.6 million dollars.

DOGOnews, a leading K–12 online news site, reports:

[Heritage Auctions] credits the card’s astronomical price to its pristine condition and its well-documented history. The rare Mantle card was part of a series released by trading card manufacturer Topps in the summer of 1952. Unfortunately, the cards did not sell as well as the company had anticipated. In 1960, Topps owner Sy Berger needed extra storage space and decided to dump the unsold cards into the Hudson River.

As it turned out, not all the cards ended up underwater. In 1986, famed sports card dealer Alan “Mr. Mint” Rosen got a call from a Boston resident claiming to possess a case of the 1952 Topps baseball cards. His deceased father, a delivery driver, had saved a box and stored it in the basement for 30 years.

Rosen purchased the historical collection and sold it almost instantly. The recently-auctioned Mickey Mantle card sold for \$1,000. Six years later, Rosen repurchased the card for \$40,000 and sold it to New Jersey waste management executive Anthony Giordano for what was then a record price of \$50,000! Giordano held on to the card for thirty years before deciding to put it up for auction. The rest, as they say, is history!



## Top 10, continued

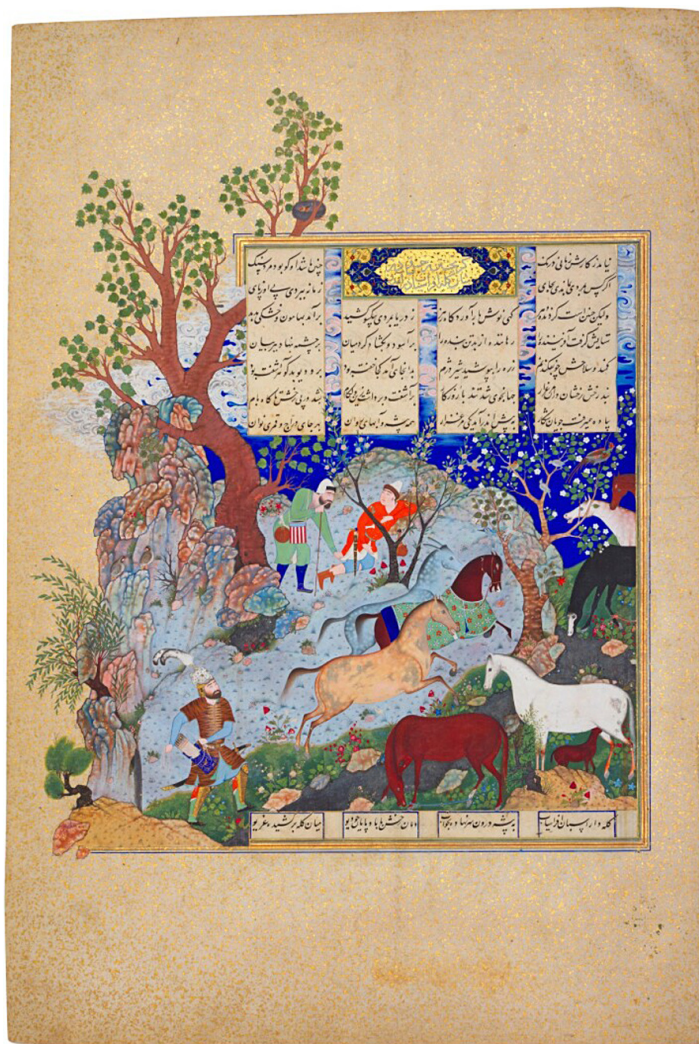
- the U.S. Constitution in 1788. \$3,075,000.
7. *William Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies*, better known as the First Folio. The first edition of the most important work by the greatest writer of the Western world was published by friends after his death. It preserved several plays, including *Macbeth*, that otherwise would have been lost. \$2,470,000.
  8. George Washington letter to Thomas Jefferson, then serving in France as U.S. Minister, September 18, 1787. \$2,389,500.
  9. The official Massachusetts printing of the *Declaration of Independence*, July 17, 1776. \$2,228,000.
  10. Contemporary broadside printing of the *Declaration of Independence*, circa July 14–16, 1776. Printed in Salem, Massachusetts, by John Rodgers at Ezekiel Russell's printing office. \$2,100,000.

## Little Cards, Big Business

The Mickey Mantle rookie card shattered records for sports memorabilia. Cards for other legendary baseball players, such as Ty Cobb and Babe Ruth, also appeared on the list, but drew much less. In fact, a dozen other Mickey Mantle cards are also listed in 2022's 500 and drew values ranging from \$100,000 to \$1.5 million.

Why did this Mickey Mantle card draw so much? Several reasons have been given, including the timing of Mantle's career during the Boomer generation. Perhaps a better explanation of the dollar amount is the increasing "real" value of this type of item, i.e., sports memorabilia at this level hold their value and appreciate, making them true investment properties.

Michael Osacky, speaking to the *New York Times*, said that before 2020, there was little interest in sports memorabilia among managers of hedge funds or private equity, but in the past two years, he has been "swamped with inquiries from people who see the collectibles as an investment." This type of



**Number 2.** This illustration of a scene from the *Shahnameh*, the national epic of Iran, dated early 1500s. \$10,157,742.

The illustration shows the epic's hero, Rostam, recovering the horse Rakhsh from the herd of the fictional king Afrasiyab, the main antagonist of the epic. This folio comes from a famous copy of the *Shahnameh*, commissioned by Shah Isma'il I, who reigned from 1502 to 1524. Isma'il was the first ruler in the Safavid Dynasty, the thirtieth dynasty of Iran, which dates its founding to 671 BCE.

Isma'il's conquests allowed him to bring together artisans from different traditions, which resulted in a new jewel-like style for Persian miniatures, like those prepared for this copy of the *Shahnameh*. The work was not finished at Isma'il's death in 1524, but it was completed under his son, Shah Tahmasp I, who reigned from 1524 to 1576.

Tahmasp made a gift of the folio to the Ottoman emperor Selim II. The folio reappeared in the early 1900s in the collection of Baron Edmund de Rothschild (Paris). Upon the baron's death in 1934, it passed to his son, Baron Maurice de Rothschild. It was purchased from this baron's estate in 1959 by Arthur A. Houghton, Jr. (1906–1990; U.S.A.), benefactor of Harvard's Houghton Library. It was sold by Christie's London in October 1988 to a private European collector, where it has remained until the recent sale.



## Top 10, continued

interest can seriously inflate the market for any item. Osacky is the lead appraiser for Professional Sports Authenticator, the largest third-party grader of sports collectibles.

Another reason for the high price paid for this particular Mickey Mantle card was its very high quality. Heritage Auctions had the card graded by Sportscard Guaranty Corporation (SGC), which also sealed the card in a plastic container with a label documenting the grade at 9.5 out of 10, or Mint+.

In a video presenting the card, Heritage Auctions highlights the quality of the printing, the centering of the image, and – remarkable for any 70-year-old piece of cardboard – its crisp, undamaged corners.

Coincidentally, the company that produced the Mantle card, Topps Company, Inc., was forced in early 2020 to sell its trading card operation to Fanatics, Inc., “a multibillion-dollar, 10-year-old company whose licensing business was built on sports fandom, technology and networking.” The move was compelled when Topps lost its licensing agreement with Major League Baseball and the Major League Baseball Players Association to Fanatics.

The table on the following page shows that sports memorabilia represent 18% of the items on the list, almost one out of every five items. Comics items are equally represented. These two categories are only exceeded by Printed Books, which take up 30 % – almost one third – of the list, including a Shakespeare First Folio (#7) and two Second Folios (#146 and #246).

ESPN estimated that there are 750,000 different baseball trading cards. Only about 50 have achieved a value of \$100,000 or more. In addition to the baseball stars already mentioned and a dozen others, cards for stars from other sports are also featured in the Top 500, for example Wayne Gretzky (hockey), LeBron James (basketball), Tom Brady (American football), Cristiano Ronaldo (soccer), and Serena Williams (tennis).

An interesting category is Game Trading Cards, all eight of which are Pokémon cards. Pokémon is a game introduced in 1996. The game cards show

unusual creatures – which currently number over 1,000 – with various powers. Players use their cards to play a game and to win championships.

The colorful and interesting characters featured on the cards have equally intriguing names – Arcanine, Bulbasaur, Eevee, Dragonite, Squirtle, etc. The characters appear on the cards, in cartoons, in video games, as toys, and on every type of merchandise imaginable.

Pokémon has been very popular for many years, but it is interesting to see the cards already selling for \$150,000 and up. In 2020, a rare Pokémon card sold for \$420,000.

Ross Holder, writing for [screenrant.com](https://www.screenrant.com), explains the value of one of these cards:

One of the most popular and sought-after cards, the First Edition 1999 Shadowless Holographic Charizard, is one of the most expensive Pokémon cards ever sold. Charizard is a fan favorite anyway, but this particular card has recently fetched \$420,000 at an auction in 2020. What makes this particular Charizard so rare is that there is no shadow underneath the dragon, which was a printing error back in 1999. The publishers quickly corrected this mistake, but a few had already made it to production. Now, the shadowless Charizard is one of the rarest cards on the market.

PWCC, a global leader in trading cards and related collectibles that offered the Charizard card, explained that out of an edition of 3,000, only 121 are known to be in Grade 10 condition. Further, they said:

This historic piece of art designed by celebrated artist Mitsuhiro Arita is easily the most recognizable Pokémon card ever made...



*This Pokémon card featuring the dragonlike Charizard character sold for \$420,000 in 2020. Similarly rare Pokémon game cards are selling for \$150,000 and up.*



## Top 10, continued

## Breakdown of the Rare Book Hub Top 500 by Category

For each category, the table shows the number of items, their total value, and the average value of items in that category. Category definitions may cause counts to differ slightly from McKinney's.

Category	Number of items in category	Total value of items in category	Average value of item
<b>Art</b> <i>(drawn, printed, and portfolios)</i>	37 (7.3%)	7,359,502 (3.5%)	198,905
<b>Collections</b> <i>(containing miscellaneous items)</i>	2 (0.4%)	1,918,750 (<1%)	959,375
<b>Autograph manuscripts</b> <i>(usually for printed works)</i>	18 (3.5%)	6,355,967 (3.0%)	353,109
<b>Printed books</b>	152 (30%)	64,575,991 (32%)	424,842
<b>Comics</b> <i>(books, strips, graphic novels, and original art for these)</i>	89 (18%)	32,961,176 (17%)	370,350
<b>Film-related</b>	1 (0.2%)	114,000 (<1%)	114,000
<b>Game trading cards</b>	8 (1.6%)	1,836,000 (<1%)	229,500
<b>Historical documents</b> <i>(documents of state, communications between state officials)</i>	27 (5.4%)	17,687,384 (8.8%)	655,088
<b>Signed letters</b> <i>(signature more important than content)</i>	22 (4.4%)	5,953,544 (3.0%)	270,615
<b>Maps and Atlases</b>	18 (3.6%)	6,862,647 (3.4%)	381,258
<b>Manuscript books</b>	23 (4.5%)	15,693,468 (7.8%)	679,976
<b>Music-related</b> <i>(scores, letters, posters)</i>	13 (2.6%)	3,529,881 (1.8%)	271,529
<b>Photography</b>	7 (1.4%)	1,464,200 (<1%)	209,171
<b>Sports memorabilia</b> <i>(mostly trading cards)</i>	90 (18%)	42,238,411 (21%) 29,638,411 (15%)*	469,315 333,015*
<b>Total</b>	507	208,550,921	----

\*Excluding Mantle trading card



## Top 10, continued

## Numbers 3–10

**Number 3: The original artwork for page 25 of Marvel Comics' *Secret Wars* #8 (1984) that introduced Spider-Man's black "Venom" costume. \$3,360,000.**

This is a pivotal moment in the evolution of the character, just as the twelve-issue *Secret Wars* series was pivotal for Marvel Comics and for the comics industry. *Secret Wars* (12 issues) was the first time that all Marvel's major characters appeared in a "crossover" story. It was not a critical favorite, but it outsold any other comic of the previous 25 years. It pointed Marvel and several of its characters in new directions.

Spider-Man was introduced in 1962 by artist Stan Lee and writer Steve Ditko.



**Number 4: *Action Comics* #1, the "Rocket Copy" (DC, 1938). \$3,180,000.**

This is the comic that introduced Superman. Copies of this issue are among the most desirable of all comics – even graded 6.0, as this one is. This particular issue is known to fans as the Rocket Copy, because the 13-year-old boy who first bought it (cover price 10¢) used a rubber stamp to place an image of a rocket on the cover to the right of the title. According to bleedingcool.com, at \$3.18 million, this is the third-highest price ever paid for any copy of this issue, the fourth-highest price ever paid for any comic book, and the fourth comic book to pass the \$3 million barrier.

Superman was created by writer Jerry Siegel and artist Joe Shuster.





## Top 10, continued

**Number 5: Captain America Comics #1, San Francisco Pedigree (Timely, 1941), graded 9.4, \$3,120,000.**

The 1941 brainchild of Joe Simon and Jack Kirby, Captain America was an instant success. Writer and artist Jim Steranko described Captain America's impact on readers and on the industry:

[He was] "the classic heroic figure – comics had found a reason to exist... Captain America was an unprecedented success. The first issue sold out. The superhero business became the comic publishers' Holy Grail."

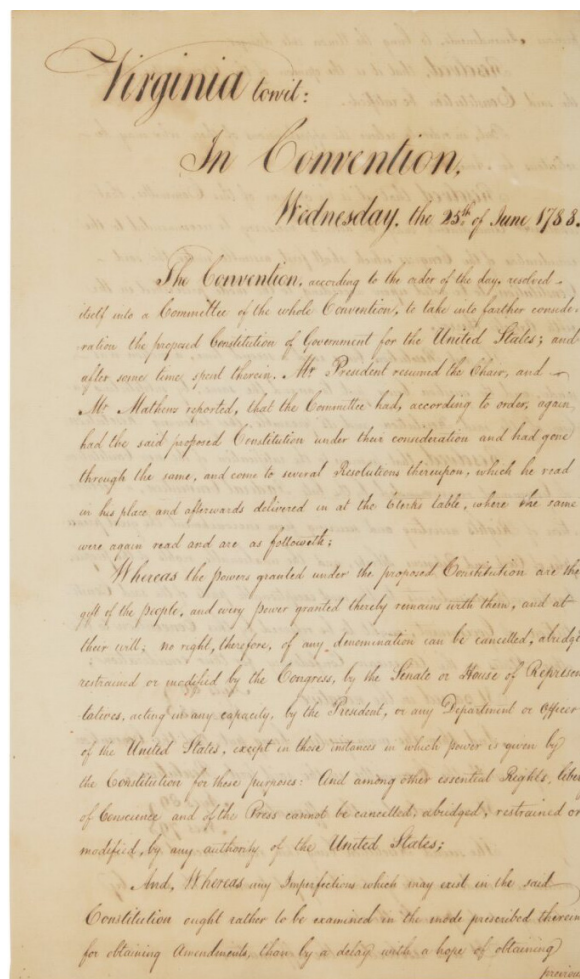
Pedigree comics come from exceptional collections acquired by a single owner. The San Francisco pedigree refers to the comics collected by Tom Reilly from 1939 to 1945. After he was drafted, his parents continued to add to his collection until his death in 1945. Perhaps 5,000 comics remained in his room for 30 years. All are stamped "Tom Reilly" on the back. Their pristine quality makes this the second highest pedigree in the business.



**Number 6: The United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights | An official record of Virginia's ratification, containing the nucleus of the Bill of Rights. \$3,075,000.**

On May 23, 1788, South Carolina became the eighth state to ratify the Constitution. The Philadelphia convention that had drafted the Constitution had set nine states as the number needed for adoption. With its vote to ratify on June 2, Virginia became the ninth state.

It was a close thing, with leading lights of the new republic taking positions on either side: James Madison was pro-ratification, and Patrick Henry led those who preferred to retain the Articles of Confederation. The auctioned document is one of three that remain of twelve sets that were sent to the other states and to the Confederation Congress.



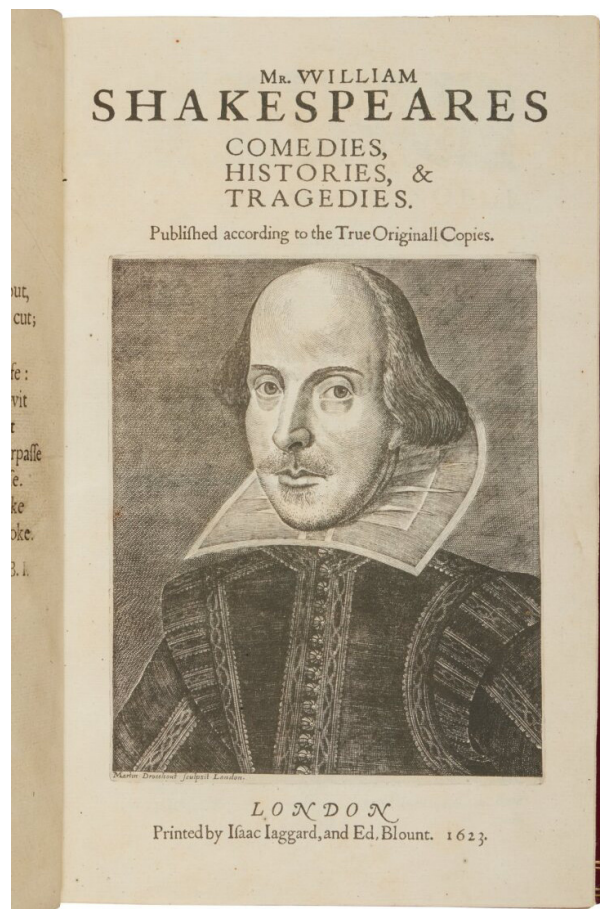


## Top 10, continued

**Number 7: Mr. William Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories & Tragedies (1623), known as the First Folio. \$2,470,000.**

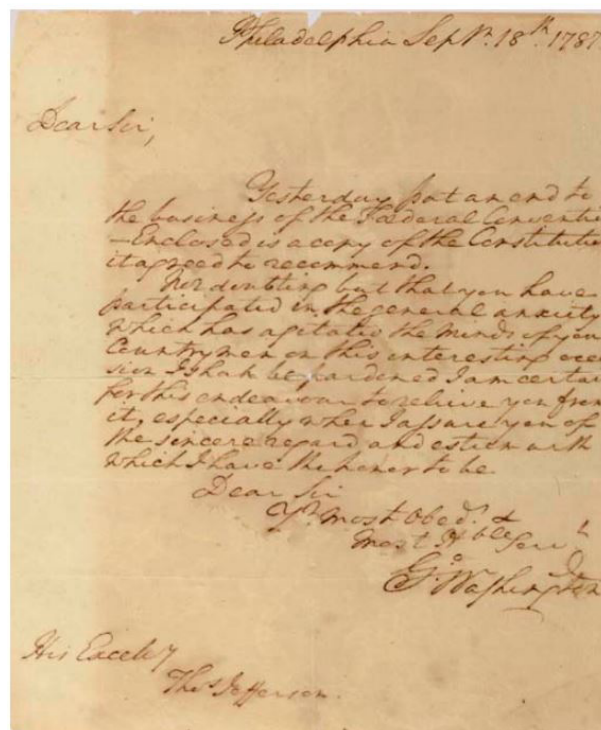
The First Folio contains 36 plays – almost all of the plays known to have been written by him. Half of these had never been printed before. Plays such as *Macbeth*, *The Tempest*, and *Twelfth Night* might never have come down to us without it. Often called the most important book in English literature, it is rare and important. About 235 copies of the First Folio are known to exist, but the copy at auction was one of only 20 remaining in private hands. It has a lengthy, interesting, and well-documented provenance.

The highest price ever paid for a First Folio is about \$10 million in 2020. For more on this and the First Folio in general, see *The Florida Bibliophile* for November 2020.

**Number 8: Autograph letter signed by George Washington to Thomas Jefferson, Philadelphia, September 18, 1787. \$2,389,500.**

While George Washington was serving as President of the Federal Constitutional Convention, Thomas Jefferson was far away, serving as the United States' Minister to France, a position he held from August 1784 to September 1789. In September 1787, Washington wrote Jefferson to report the results of the convention's deliberations and forward a copy of the Constitution:

Dear Sir, Yesterday put an end to the business of the Federal Convention. Enclosed [not present] is a copy of the Constitution it agreed to recommend. Not doubting but that you have participated in the general anxiety which has agitated the minds of our Countrymen on this interesting occasion. I shall be pardoned I am certain for this endeavour to relieve you from it, especially when I assure you of the sincere regard and esteem with which I have the honor to be, Dear Sir, Yr most obedient & most Hble Servt.



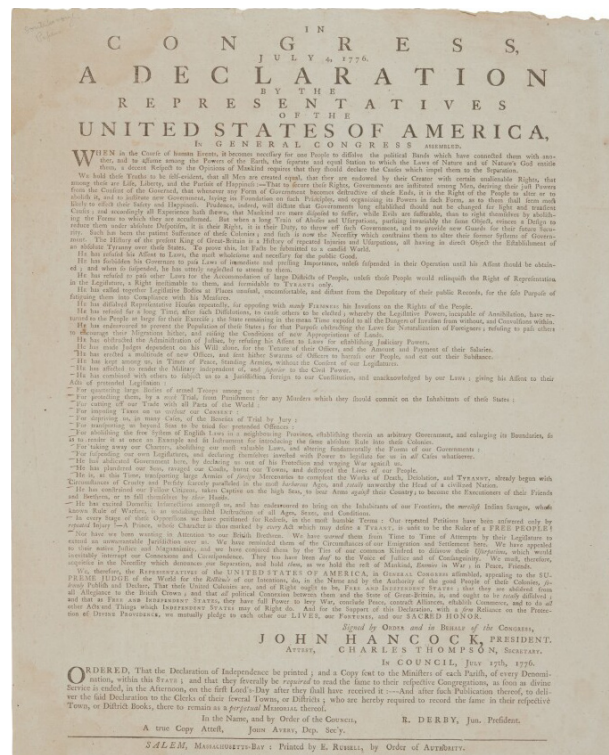


## Top 10, concluded

## Number 9: A Previously Unrecorded Copy of the Official Massachusetts printing of the Declaration of Independence | “these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, Free and Independent States.” \$2,228,000.

If we seem to be living in a time of uncertain information, imagine a time when one of the most important statements toward the formation of the new republic had to be distributed throughout the states. This document is the copy of the Declaration of Independence authorized by the Massachusetts Bay Colony's Council of the Commonwealth. It carries the names of R. Derby and John Avery (president and secretary of the council, respectively), and it is dated July 17, 1776. This copy was sent to the Reverend Nathan Stone of Southborough so that he could read it to his congregation.

Copies of the Declaration were distributed to the states as quickly as possible. Each state in turn tasked printers to make copies quickly and distribute them throughout the state to inform the citizens.



## Number 10: A Rare, Contemporary Broadside Edition of the Declaration of Independence. \$2,100,000.

This is one of six copies known of the first printing of the Declaration of Independence in Massachusetts, and one of the two held in private collections. The Declaration was printed and distributed as quickly as possible throughout the 13 colonies. According to Christie's, who offered this broadside at auction, subtle variations in the various copies of the Declaration that were printed indicate that two manuscripts were approved by the Continental Congress.

Because of the need for speed in printing and distributing the Declaration, it is likely that its manuscripts were cut into pieces so that more than one typesetter could work on the document. It is also likely that these manuscript fragments – far from being prized – were discarded after use.



SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS: Printed by R. BEAL, by Order of Authority.





## Never Can Say Good-bye – How to (Not) Get Rid of Old Books

A recent article in the *Washington Post*, “We’re Drowning in Old Books. But Getting Rid of Them is Heartbreaking,” explored an emotional topic that booklovers around the world share: it just isn’t easy to let a book go.

### The Flood

One imagines a bookish rewrite of Genesis 6 in which Sumerian Bibliophile Society member Noah is commanded to build a massive boat onto which he may take one of every book...

Times are good for those who “prefer the look and feel of physical books, the weight in their hands, the pleasure of turning a page.” Writer Karen Weller reports that despite all the e-readers, tablets, and audio books, more print books are flooding onto the market than ever before:

Three-quarters of trade book revenue last year derived from hardcover and paperback sales, according to the Association of American Publishers. A boom in self- and hybrid publishing has allowed more people to call themselves an “author,” with a juggernaut of titles published annually in print, around 395,000 in 2021, **a 15 percent increase in a decade**, according to Bowker, which assigns

ISBN numbers and bar codes to books. [*my emphasis – Ed.*]

That’s the story for new books, but the story for old books is just as encouraging ... or discouraging, depending which side of the issue one takes.

Weller reports the story of Chuck Roberts, owner of Wonder Book, a remarkable used book operation that maintains a Maryland warehouse with three acres of floor space housing six million books, many of which are available for purchase online or through Wonder Book’s three brick-and-mortar stores.

Roberts describes his book-dealing practice as “nose-to-tail bookselling”: in contrast to the highly selective book acquisition of most booksellers, Roberts buys everything and finds a home for everything, knowing that otherwise, most books would face “oblivion.” Often the sellers could not find anyone else to buy their books. The result is a reported influx of 300,000 books every month to the Wonder Books warehouse.

For book buyers, the picture could not be rosier. In addition to traditional products like highly textual hardback and paperback fiction and nonfiction, there are creative formats, illustrated books, mechanical books, and pop-ups. Fine press and letterpress are experiencing a renaissance.



*A view in the Wonder Book warehouse in Frederick, Maryland — three acres of floor space that houses several million books.*

*Additional source: Fine Books & Collections*



**Good-bye? continued****The Plot Thickens**

A booming book market and the global pandemic combined to create a wave of book buying. Many book lovers are now feeling the crunch.

Michael Powell is owner of Powell Books, the Portland, Oregon, bookstore which operates in a group of buildings that occupy an entire city block and have as many as five levels. This “City of Books” contains over 68,000 square feet, with about 1.6 acres of retail floor space. Powell’s operates a number of smaller stores in the Portland area.

Powell says, “Nobody likes to throw a book away. Nobody likes to see it go into a bin,” and “Books represent a significant investment of time and intellectual effort in our lives. They’re more like friends than objects. You’ve had a lot of conversations with the book. You want to remember the experience. They’re echoes of what you’ve read.”

Powell’s sentiments are reflected by others quoted in Weller’s article:

Deborah Tannen, author and Georgetown linguistics professor : “We don’t want them to die. I love them. They’re a part of me.”

Topher Lundell, a manager at Second Story Books in Washington, D.C.: “The vast majority of books I own are unread by me. In some ways, books are symbolic of how we want to feel about ourselves. They’re comforting. I have read these books. These are accomplishments.”

Fran Leibowitz, humorist and social critic, owner of 12,000 books, kept in her New York apartment: “Constitutionally, I am unable to throw a book away. To me, it’s like seeing a baby thrown in a trash can,” she says. “I am a glutton for print. I love books in every way. I love them more than most human beings.”

**A Love Letter to Books**

by Viktoria Urbanek, “Viki,” writer of the *Chronic Wanderlust* blog:

Dear glued together, printed sheets of paper,

You’ve been my constant companion all my life. I cannot recall a time when I wasn’t at least reading two books at a time or have had someone read them to me.

Especially now in those times where only uncertainty is certain, I turn to you to take me away. You’ve always taken me in like my granny used to do, hug me, give me advice, comfort me and make me forget about everything for a while.

When I turn the first page, the lines of reality and fiction start to blur and won’t let me go, long after the last page is read.

I love how you make me believe in magic, castles, fairytales, myths and hope. How you are able to turn a seemingly dull train ride into an adventure that I wish never ended? How do you hold so much power over me, especially way after midnight?

In these past six weeks, you’ve proven yourself worthy again and have made my days brighter. You’ve put smiles on my face and tears as well – but in a controlled way, not like reality keeps doing this week.

When someone asks me about my perfect Sunday, I either think of travelling, scuba diving or you, dear books. Sitting in my wing chair in front of my bookshelf that I could look at for hours, with a pot of tea and a book to show me parts of the world I long to see.

One thing, dear books, you have to explain: Why are your last pages always flying by like cars on the highway? Is it just me that slows down her reading pace at the end of a good book to spend more time reading and enjoying it?

Thank you for the letters that form words that form sentences that form paragraphs that form chapters that form books. That form stories. Thank you for your company and love, keep sending the good ones to me, take good care,

Viki



## Good-bye? continued

### The Predicament

Weller's colleague Michael Dirda once wrote a small book entitled *Caring for Your Books* (1990), with this blurb:

How to design and locate bookcases, how to arrange books, clean them, or rescue them when the basement floods. How to store, how to shelve and handle books properly, how to inspect them and when. How to deal with mold and mildew.

In a 2020 article in the *Washington Post* entitled "All the books in my 300 boxes sparked joy. The lockdown made me rethink why I was keeping them," Dirda opened up about how far he had come in 30 years:

When my wife calculated that there were 300 boxes of books stacked precariously in our basement, I was sure she exaggerated. To my eyes, the stacks weren't really that precarious. The overall book situation, however, was much worse than her estimate: The basement only accounts for half of my, ahem, collection. Bookcases line three walls of my living room. The attic holds a small library of late Victorian and early modern popular fiction. For years I even rented a storage unit until a kindly neighbor agreed to let me transfer its contents – all books – to a disused greenhouse in her backyard. I doubt the author of "Caring for Your Books" – a small paperback I wrote years ago – would approve of keeping first editions in a greenhouse.

Dirda developed a simple plan. He ordered a portable storage unit for the driveway. All the basement books would be transferred to the storage unit. The basement would be cleaned and painted. Only the better books would be returned to the basement and all placed on shelves. The attic and greenhouse? That was for later.

The logistics of getting rid of books is the easy part. Many people have drafted such plans and even begun them while browsing Zillow late at night in case Plan B is needed.

Every time I think I've had enough  
I start heading for the door  
There's a very strange vibration  
Piercin' me right to the core  
It says, "Turn around, you fool,  
You know you love me more and more"



The hard part is the books themselves.

Each one must be handled, examined, remembered, thumbled through, a bit of reading here and there... Oops! Time for dinner, work, the opera, etc.  
Number of books inspected = 1.

But Dirda developed a formula that worked for him:

First, almost all biographies and author criticism (but not works of intellectual history). Second, all ex-library hardcovers wrapped in ugly cellophane jackets and decorated with stamps and labels. Third, most paperbacks, saving only vintage titles from the 1940s and '50s. These I love for the cover art.

Among the 2,400 comments – about 100,000 words altogether – received in response to Weller's 500-word article in the few days before comments were closed was a book management formula from boomerscoutofamerica:

I will continue to resist "thinning." Sometimes unsuccessfully. Here are some random thoughts and action items:

1) Our condo has three donated bookcases in the basement. You can donate and take away. Luckily we have a curator who is heartless but does what has to be done to make sure people do not stack but shelve their donations. Anything stacked, goes.

## Good-bye? concluded

2) I go with Marie [Kondo]. If a book gives me/has given me pleasure, I keep it. I have some high school text books, math, Latin, especially, and some language learning books (Italian, French, Cantonese) which are still precious to me. They stay.

3) I try to take one book off my shelves per diem and just hold it, page through it, reminisce. I try. I also try to practice the piano every day, sometimes equally unsuccessfully.

4) If I haven't read a book, it is in danger of being donated. Sorry.

5) If a book is in a teeny, tiny font, sorry.

6) I've got some nifty books including a book on gold prospecting published in the 1930's. Very limited edition. Very detailed. Possibly very precious info should inflation soar.

7) I've got some comic books from the '50's that got me started as a reader. I've shared them with grandkids who loved them. They will be treasured when I pass them on.

Do these formulas provide inspiration?

## Help for the Gently Overwhelmed

Many comments reflected the sentiments of Michael Powell, Deborah Tannen, and others shared above.

Many shared memories about their books, including children's books, comic books, science fiction, and other books encountered earlier in life that started them on a life of reading and loving books.

IllinoisWhig shared:

My books are a diary of my life. I have dated each volume acquired and noted the place of purchase since the late 1960s. Thus, I can open a book and find that I bought it on such and such date at Charing Cross or the Imperial War Museum or Blackwell's in Oxford or Colonial Williamsburg or Fort Ticonderoga or Salem, MA or Dublin or Gettysburg or Shiloh or Independence Hall or Glencoe or Thiepval or Little Moreton Hall. And each time I revisit my books, I revisit a cherished travel memory

as well as a revisit to the language of the book itself. Let my executor do what he will, my library will survive me intact....at least for awhile.

For many, overcoming a reflexive attachment to their books was a matter of knowing they were going to good homes. Many commenters had local programs interested in specific types of books, for example, a facility for seniors that was interested in coffee table books. However, with so many books out there these days, many outlets have all the books they can use.

Another commenter suggested book donations to prisons, a habit developed when a friend was sent to prison for a couple of years. The books received were shared with other inmates, and a number of them wrote letters of thanks to the donor. After the friend was released from prison, the donor continued to send books to the prison. The American Library Association hosts a [webpage](#) with resources that can help with this type of donation.

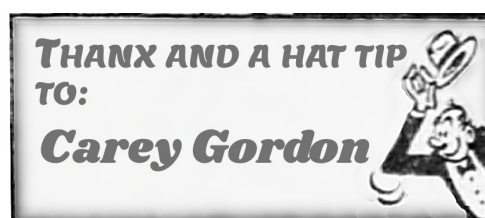
Legacy issue? Some worry about leaving the burden of a library to others who may not wish to deal with it, but often, even a large library can be managed with a few phone calls.

Managing a collection has many benefits (such as making room for more books!), including giving one more enjoyment of the books that are kept. Whether one is a delicate pruner or making a transition to minimalism, there is much advice on the Internet about managing a book collection that is a little out of control.

Many will also share Lebowitz's final comment:

There are millions of books in the world.  
Twelve thousand is nothing. It's like having a pound of salt from the ocean.

She's planning to keep them all.





## Calling All Wild Things!



**I**f these wild characters look familiar, it is because they were created by one of the most well-known illustrators of the last 100 years: Maurice Sendak. The characters come from two of Sendak's most well-known and beloved works: on the left is Moishe from *The Wild Things*, and on the right is the Nutcracker from Sendak's illustrations for that book and stage play that used his designs.

The ornaments were made for Sendak's neighbors in Connecticut: mother and son Betty and Andrew. Sendak befriended them shortly after moving to Connecticut in 1972 with his longtime partner, Eugene Glynn. Andrew first encountered Sendak when the latter was walking one of his dogs (Sendak owned many dogs during his life, some of whom appear in his books). Soon, it became a regular activity. It was the beginning of a 40-year friendship that would include Andrew and his family, as well

as Betty and Andrew's brother, Michael.

Sendak joined the family on long walks and hikes, chatting about general life events, opera, and books. Sendak often invited Andrew and the others to his studio to share work in progress. Betty was an avid reader and collector, and she and Sendak would stay up late having long talks about books. Sendak's advice helped Betty build her collection of children's books.

Sendak frequently bartered for autographs — such as an inscribed drawing for a cake. Over the years, the many gifts and exchanges, including inscribed drawings, first editions, signed books, limited edition books, and other valuable items, grew into one of the country's premier Sendak collections.

The ornaments are offered by Bauman's Rare Books in its 2022 Holiday Catalog for \$35,000.

## Books in Brief

### Unpacking the Personal Library: The Public and Private Life of Books

Jason Camlot and J. A. Weingarten (eds.)  
Wilfrid Laurier University Press  
288 pp., July 2022



**The Covid pandemic “forced the wholesale migration of the academic world online, and an urgent re-think of how teaching, learning and research are conducted.”** The essays in *Unpacking the Personal Library* join this rethinking about both public and private book collections, their interactions, and their responses to recent challenges.

Contributors explore libraries at particular moments in their history across a wide range of cases, including Alberto Manguel’s account of the Library of Alexandria as well as chapters on library collecting in the Middle Ages, the libraries of prime ministers and foreign embassies, protest libraries and the slow transformation of university libraries, and the stories of the personal libraries of Virginia Woolf, Robert Duncan, Sheila Watson, Al Purdy and others. The book shows how the history of the library is really a history of collection, consolidation, migration, dispersal, and integration, where each story negotiates private and public spaces.

**Jason Camlot** is Professor of English and Research Chair in Literature and Sound Studies at Concordia University. Recent books include *Phonopoeitics* and *Vlarf*.

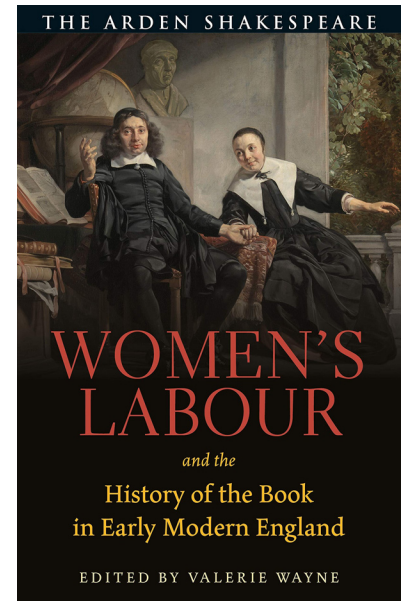
**J. A. Weingarten** is a Professor in the School of Language and Liberal Studies at Fanshawe College. He is also the author of *Sharing the Past*.

Source: Wilfrid Laurier University Press

### Women’s Labour and the History of the Book in Early Modern England (Annotated Edition)

Valerie Wayne, ed.  
The Arden Shakespeare  
336 pp., May 2020

**This collection reveals the valuable work done by women in publishing, printing, writing and reading early modern English books,** from those who worked in the book trade to those who composed, selected, collected, and annotated books. Women gathered rags for paper production, invested in books and oversaw the presses that printed them. Their writing and reading had an impact on their contemporaries and the developing literary canon. A focus on women’s work enables these essays to recognize the various forms of labour – textual and social as well as material and commercial – that women of different social classes engaged in. Those considered include the very poor, the middling sort who were active in the book trade, and the elite women authors and readers who participated in literary communities. Taken together, these essays convey the impressive work that women accomplished and their frequent collaborations with others in the making, marking, and marketing of early modern English books.



**Valerie Wayne** is Professor Emerita of English at the University of Hawaii, Honolulu. She edits for the Arden Shakespeare series and has written several books on Renaissance literature and culture.

Source: Amazon

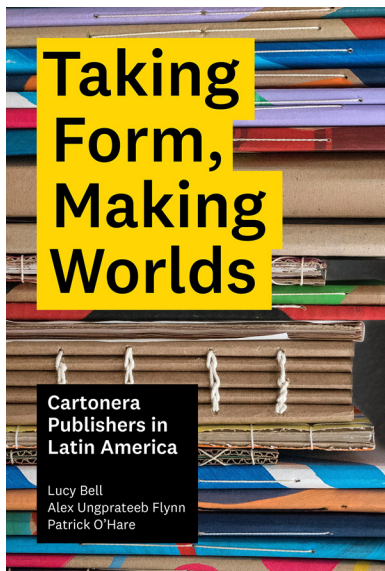




## Books in Brief, continued

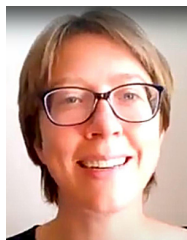
### Taking Form, Making Worlds: Cartonera Publishers in Latin America

Lucy Bell, Alex Ungprateeb Flynn,  
and Patrick O'Hare  
University of Texas Press  
360 pp., June 2022



*Taking Form, Making Worlds* is the first comprehensive study of cartonera – colorful, low-cost books covered with cardboard salvaged from the street. Born in the wake of Argentina's 2001 economic crisis, hundreds of publishers across Latin America and Europe are producing cartonera. Through research conducted in Mexico, Brazil, and

Argentina, the authors show how this hands-on practice has fostered a politically engaged network of writers, artists, and readers. More than a social movement, cartonera uses texts, workshops, encounters, and exhibitions to foster community and engagement through open-ended forms that are at once artistic and social. For waste-pickers, indigenous communities, rural children, and imprisoned women, cartonera provides a platform for unique stories and sparks collaborations.



**Lucy Bell** (left) is a senior lecturer in Spanish and translation studies at the University of Surrey.



**Alexander Flynn** (center) is an assistant professor of anthropology and contemporary art at UCLA.



**Patrick O'Hare** (right) is a UKRI Future Leaders Fellow at the University of St. Andrews.

Source: University of Texas Press

### The Rob Roy Kelly American Wood Type Collection: A History and Catalog

David Shields  
University of Texas Press  
408 pp., July 2022

The Rob Roy Kelly collection of wood type is a comprehensive collection of wood type manufactured and used for printing in nineteenth-century America.

Comprising nearly 150 typefaces of various sizes and styles, it was amassed by noted design educator and historian Rob

Roy Kelly starting in 1957 and is now held by the University of Texas. Kelly himself published a 1969 book on wood type and 19<sup>th</sup>-century typographic history, but little has been written about the creation of the wood type forms, the collection, or Kelly.

In this book, David Shields updates and expands upon Kelly's historical information about the types, clarifying the collection's composition and elucidating the stylistic development of wood type forms during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Using period materials, Shields provides a stunning visual context that complements the history of each typeface. He highlights previously unexamined nontypographic material in the collection: borders, rules, ornaments, etc. Lavishly illustrated, this written history and catalog is bound to spark renewed interest in the collection and its broader typographic period.

**David Shields** is an associate professor and former chair of the Department of Graphic Design at Virginia Commonwealth University, former head of the design program at the University of Texas at Austin and was custodian for the Rob Roy Kelly American Wood Type Collection.

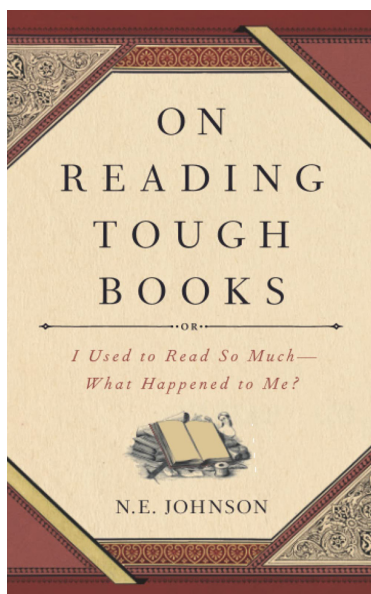
Source: University of Texas Press



## Books in Brief, concluded

**On Reading Tough Books: or, I Used to Read So Much – What Happened to Me?**

N. E. Johnson  
(self-published)  
198 pp., October 2022



N. E. Johnson has given us a cathartic examination of a love for literature that flourished despite the best efforts of the school system.

Time pressures? Too much required reading for school or work? Whether you are a student struggling with assigned reading or an adult looking back and wondering how to read for joy again this book will have something for you.

Learn how to:

- Make a habit of reading regularly
- Approach different types of books to get the most out of them
- Take notes that are useful, and apply those notes afterward
- Understand literary criticism and how to make it work for you.

Do you love books, but not the ones you've been reading lately? Do you love books, but wish you could get more out of them? In *On Reading Tough Books*, a recovering avid reader shares the coping mechanisms they've developed over decades to choose the most

impactful books, get the most out of them, and keep the joy of reading alive.

N. E. Johnson spent five years homeless and ten years as an engineer until circumstance forced him into doing the one thing he always wanted to do: actually finish a book.



Source: Amazon

[Bookish fiction]

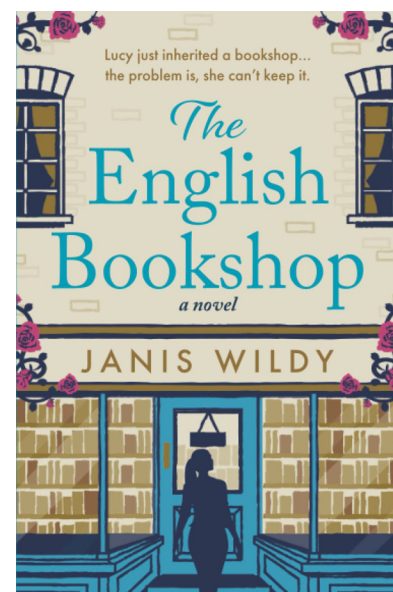
**The English Bookshop**

Janis Wildy  
Blakeley Press  
340 pp., March 2022

Step into the warm English village of Wakeby and enjoy a savory breakfast at Hollyhock B&B, take a romantic walk in the luscious summer gardens, and find yourself among new friends at *The English Bookshop*.

Lucy isn't ready for a life-changing journey when it comes knocking; she just wants to keep everything the same as the day her stepfather died. Unfortunately, expenses have overtaken her small family business, forcing her to do something quickly to keep it afloat.

When Lucy finds out she has inherited a bookshop in England, she travels to see it, intent on selling the property as soon as possible. But once there, she meets a wonderfully kind group of villagers, including a handsome bookseller, who challenge her decision to make a quick sale. What begins as a way to make money for her business in Seattle becomes an experience that uncovers family secrets and reveals the kindness of strangers. In England, Lucy just might rewrite her past in order to follow her heart.



Janis Wildy is an author, an Anglophile, and a lover of books that take her to beautiful settings. She loves planners, peonies and Pimm's Cup. A dram of whisky or a cup of tea is always welcome.

Source: Blakeley Press







Ugarit tablet h6 presents an ancient Hurrian hymn together with the oldest musical notation known.

In 1928, a Syrian farmer was plowing fields when he struck a buried object. It was a stone covering a tomb filled with ceramics. Word spread quickly, and within a year, a French archaeological team led by Claude Schaeffer was excavating a northern Syrian site near Ras Shamra. They discovered a vast and important city of the ancient Middle East — Ugarit — that had been undisturbed for almost 3,000 years. Among palaces, temples, courtyards, and dwellings they discovered thousands of documents inscribed on clay tablets, including financial, legal, diplomatic, religious, and literary texts. The oldest notated musical hymn in the world was found at Ugarit. Documents were written in eight languages, including the previously unknown “Ugaritic,” which used one of the earliest known alphabets. The libraries of Ugarit shed new light on this Middle Eastern region during 1500–1200 BCE and vastly expanded knowledge of a complex and rich society, its beliefs, and its interactions with other major cultures.



## This Month's Writers and Contributors

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

Carey Gordon  
David Hall  
Maureen E. Mulvihill  
Carl Mario Nudi  
Irene Pavese  
Gary Simons  
Ben Wiley

Have an idea for an article for *The Florida Bibliophile*? Contact Charles Brown, [cbrown@atlantic.net](mailto:cbrown@atlantic.net), to submit or for assistance in preparing your article.

## Join FBS!

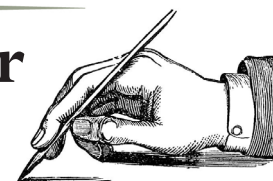
If you love books, take your interest to the next level by joining a group of dedicated book lovers (i.e., bibliophiles). You will meet serious collectors, dealers, scholars, and readers, and you will discover a lively, enjoyable group.



It's easy to join — just send an email with your name, mailing address, and phone number to [Floridabibliophiles@gmail.com](mailto:Floridabibliophiles@gmail.com). Use Paypal to send your \$50 annual dues to that same address, or mail a check to Florida Bibliophile Society, P.O. Box 530682, St. Petersburg FL 33747.

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

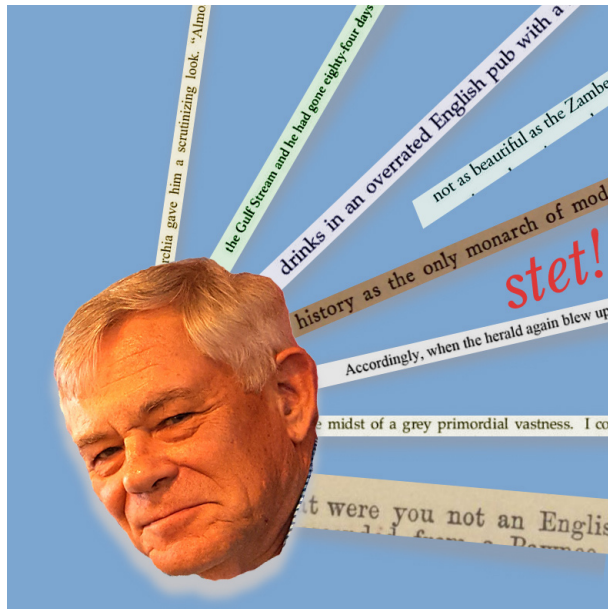
## Write for Your Newsletter!



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

### January 2023



#### David Hall: Aspects of Book Publishing, 1971–1985

Seminole Community Library  
9200 113<sup>th</sup> St. N., Seminole, FL  
(and Zoom)

January 15, 2023, 1:30 p.m.

Constantly shifting alliances, technological upheavals, uncertain finances – not the 21<sup>st</sup> century but the 1970s and 1980s in New York book publishing.

**David Hall**, a staffer for Crown Publishers and Charles Scribner's Sons in this period, will share stories and insights about the industry in those heady days. How did an obscure Australian mystery writer come to change the methods of U.S. crime fiction? When can an insistence of verisimilitude prove counterproductive in fiction? And a literal glimpse into the past: what was to be seen when the building behind Scribners in Midtown came down? Join us for an enlightening and entertaining presentation.

### February 2023



#### Irene Pavese – The Evolution of Margaret Armstrong: Botanist, Illustrator, Book Designer

Macdonald-Kelce Library  
401 W. Kennedy Blvd., Tampa, FL  
(and Zoom)

February 19, 2023, 1:30 p.m.

Former FBS president and current treasurer Irene Pavese is a former bookseller. One of the stars of her extensive collection is Margaret Armstrong (1867–1944) whose illustrations for books were inspired by her botanical background. Her botanical travels in the early 1900s led her to the bottom of the Grand Canyon – one of the first women to do so – where she discovered and drew many previously unknown species. Her fusion of Art Nouveau and rhythmic motifs made her work distinctive, recognizable, and beautiful. Over 300 of Armstrong's book designs have been identified, and Irene is working to add to the list. Irene will describe these efforts and give us some biographical background on this fascinating artist.





## Book Events and Podcasts

Know of any events of interest to book lovers? Send corrections and additions to Charles Brown, [cmbrown@atlantic.net](mailto:cmbrown@atlantic.net).

### Florida Book Events

---- 23 January 12-15 ----

**Annual Key West Literary Seminar: “Singing America: A Celebration of Black Literature”**  
Key West, FL ([www.kwls.org/](http://www.kwls.org/))

---- 23 January 7-27 ----

**Zora 2023: Spirituality via an Afrofuturism Lens**  
Eatonville, FL ([www.zorafestival.org](http://www.zorafestival.org))

---- 23 January 7-8 ----

**St. Pete Comic Con**  
St. Petersburg Coliseum  
([stpete.floridacomicons.com/](http://stpete.floridacomicons.com/))

---- 23 January 1-8 ----

**Writers in Paradise (Eckerd College Writers Conference)**  
St. Petersburg, FL  
([writersinparadise.eckerd.edu](http://writersinparadise.eckerd.edu))

---- 23 January 26-29 ----

**Florida Storytelling Festival**  
(sponsored by The Florida Story Association)  
Mount Dora, FL ([flstory.com/festival/](http://flstory.com/festival/))

---- 23 January 27-28 ----

**Sunshine State Book Festival**  
Gainesville, FL  
([www.sunshinestatebookfestival.com/](http://www.sunshinestatebookfestival.com/))

---- February 16-19 ----

**Savannah Book Festival**  
Savannah, GA ([www.savannahbookfestival.org/](http://www.savannahbookfestival.org/))

---- February 18 ----

**Amelia Island Book Festival -- Author Expo & Readers' Extravaganza**  
Fernandina Beach Middle School, Fernandina, FL  
([www.ameliaislandbookfestival.org/](http://www.ameliaislandbookfestival.org/))

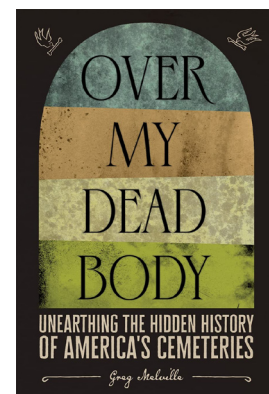
### Behind the Bookshelves, the AbeBooks Podcast

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

*Recent episodes:*

**October 25 – Greg Melville: *Over My Dead Body: Unearthing the Hidden History of America's Cemeteries***

Our Halloween episode. We're joined by Greg Melville, who is the author of a new book called *Over My Dead Body: Unearthing the Hidden History of America's Cemeteries*. Greg has toured the United States, visiting notable historic cemeteries from Burial Hill in Plymouth, Massachusetts, to Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia and Boothill in Tombstone, Arizona. We discuss colonial sites, graveyards from the slavery era, celebrity graves, architecture, and nature, and never once mention ghosts.



**September 9 – Ariana Valderrama: *Collecting Toni Morrison, the Editor***

We spoke to Ariana Valderrama who has just won the inaugural David Ruggles Prize, which is a new book collecting contest designed to encourage and support young collectors of color. Ariana decided to focus on Toni Morrison but not her rather expensive first editions. Instead Ariana collects books that Morrison edited and books where she provided a blurb. We learn how Ariana started collecting during the pandemic and hear about the books in her award-winning collection.



## Book Events and Podcasts, continued

## The Biblio File, with Nigel Beale

**THE BIBLIO FILE** is one of the world's leading podcasts about "the book" and book culture.

Host Nigel Beale fosters wide-ranging conversations with authors, poets, publishers, booksellers, editors, collectors, book makers, scholars, critics, designers, publicists, literary agents, and others who just love books. The website provides podcasts back to 2006, lists of reading, links, etc.

## Recent episodes:

**Dec. 24 – Michael Torosian (Part II) on How to Interview an Artist for a Book**

Part II of Nigel's conversation with Michael Torosian continues the focus on Torosian's soon-to-be-released memoir/bibliography *Lumiere Press: Printer Savant and Other Stories*. This episode gets to the essence of Torosian's book writing/publishing practice: the interview. We discuss a list of guidelines that Torosian has developed based on his experience interviewing some of the greatest 20<sup>th</sup>-century photographers. It can be found in *Savant* in a chapter entitled "Residual Landscapes, The Photographs of Edward Burtynsky."

**Dec. 19 – Michael Torosian on Photography and Making Fine Press Photography Books**

Michael Torosian has spent his life taking photographs, interviewing great photographers, and making fine press photography books. He's in the process of making another, entitled *Lumiere Press, Printer Savant and Other Stories*, to commemorate the establishment of the Lumiere Press Archive at the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library in Toronto. It's full of life lessons and back-stories illuminating each of the twenty-two books he's published over the past four decades.

**Dec. 10 – John Metcalf on a lifetime of editing and publishing short stories**

John Metcalf is angry that after working in Canada as a "storyteller, editor, novelist, essayist, and critic" for more than 50 years his books still only sell about 500 copies each. Regardless of this, in a body of work known for its satire, intense emotion and imagery, he's made a significant contribution to Canadian literature through his editing, teaching, critiquing, compiling of anthologies, publishing, and promotion generally of Canadian writers and the short story form.

**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.**

AAS focuses on pre-1876 events and holds the "largest and most accessible collection" of related print materials. The AAS's Program in the History of the Book in American Culture (PHBAC) was established in 1983. PHBAC sponsors **Virtual Book Talk**, showcasing "authors of recently published scholarly monographs, digital-equivalents, and creative works broadly related to book history and print culture." Free, but advance registration is required.

## Recent episodes:

**November 17, 2 p.m. – Marcy J. Dinius: *The Textual Effects of David Walker's "Appeal" Print-Based Activism Against Slavery, Racism, and Discrimination, 1829–1851***

David Walker's *Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World* (1829–1830) is recognized as one of the most politically radical and consequential antislavery texts ever published, yet its impact on North American 19<sup>th</sup>-century print-based activism has gone under-examined. Dinius offers the first in-depth analysis of Walker's radical pamphlet and its influence on black and indigenous activist authors.

**December 1, 2 p.m. – Jeffrey Makala: *Publishing Plates: Stereotyping and Electrotyping in 19th-Century U.S. Print Culture***

Stereotyping – casting solid printing plates from movable type – transformed printing and publishing. Makala traces the spread of stereotyping through New England as artisan-based printing gave way to industrialized publishing, changing notions of authorship, copyright, and language and affecting writers and literary circles, with examples from Melville, S. Truth, Poe, Thoreau, and Whitman.



## Book Events and Podcasts, concluded

**The Book Collector Podcast**

In 1952, James Bond author Ian Fleming created *The Book Collector*, a “unique periodical for bibliophiles,” with articles on book collecting, modern first editions, typography, national libraries, etc. Fleming and the journal editor John Hayward died in 1964, but the journal was revived by new owner-editor, Nicolas Barker. In 2016, Fleming’s nephews, James and Fergus Fleming, took over, and in 2020, created a podcast, featuring readings from the journal’s archives. There are now [63 podcasts](#) on SoundCloud, with recent additions:

**Surprises and Anomalies in Sales of Trollope, by John Saumarez Smith**

Anthony Trollope (1815–1882) was a widely read and respected author of his time. Authors such as William Thackeray, George Eliot, and Wilkie Collins admired and befriended Trollope. Smith asks why such a popular and well-established author like Trollope should have such poor sales in the 50 years after his death.

**Dashiell Hammett (Some Uncollected Authors XXXI), by Roger E. Stoddard**

From our view in the 2020s, “uncollected” seems an odd label for Dashiell Hammett. In his 1961 obituary in *The New York Times*, Hammett was described as “the dean of the ‘hard-boiled’ school of detective fiction.” This article takes us back in time and gives an interesting perspective on the rise and fall of an author’s reputation.

***Elling Eide Library Events, Sarasota***

**Feb. 9, 11 a.m. – Calling in Sick: An Anecdotal History of Medical Excuses in Early China, Dr. J. Michael Farmer**

Calling in sick to get out of work is a time-honored practice and something of an art form. Early and medieval Chinese texts are full of individuals claiming illness to excuse themselves from current positions or avoid appointments to office. Farmer will focus men who “called in sick” to reject government appointments to understand their historical significance, how people used illness to avoid service under a particular ruler, and what underlying messages we might gain from these stories.

**Grolier Club of New York Videos**

The Grolier Club of New York has posted [many book-related videos on Vimeo](#), including virtual exhibition openings, tours, talks, and show-and-tell episodes. Recent episodes include:

**November 15 – Special Functions Lecture: “Jenny Robb and Walter Evans on Black Cartoonist Oliver “Ollie” Harrington (1912-1995).”** Harrington was an acclaimed, versatile contributor to numerous publications as well as an antiracism activist. Georgia-based physician Walter Evans, a philanthropist and collector of historical and contemporary African American art and literature, discusses Harrington’s legacy with Jenny Robb, Head Curator of Comics and Cartoon Art at Ohio State University’s Billy Ireland Cartoon Library & Museum.

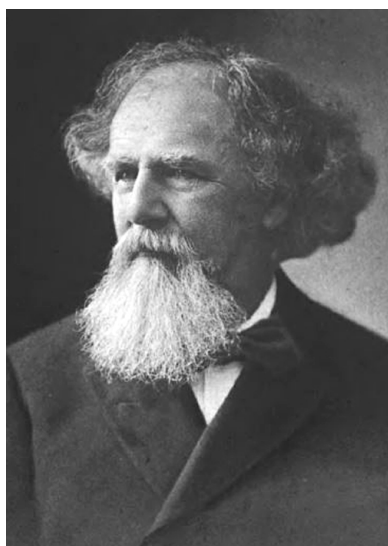
**October 24 – Special Functions Lecture: Leonard Marcus on “The Modernist in the Nursery: How Author/Illustrator Dorothy Kunhardt Made the Picture Book New.”** Best known for *Pat the Bunny* (1940), Kunhardt turned the children’s publishing world on its ear as the creator of 40 innovative books whose jaunty gamelike narratives and faux-naïf art expressed her affinity for modernism and grasp of the latest theories of childhood development. Marcus will take a fresh look at this under-appreciated visionary’s legacy, which is also the subject of a new book he has coauthored, *Dorothy Kunhardt: Collected Works*, with ephemera, drawings, unpublished manuscripts, and more.

**October 8 – Special Functions Panel Discussion: “From Jikji to Gutenberg.”** An international scholarly collaboration, the “From Jikji to Gutenberg” project will culminate in publications and exhibitions related to the origins of printing from cast-metal type, commemorating the 650th anniversary of the Korean printed book *Jikji*. Speakers include Randy Silverman, Preservation Librarian, University of Utah Marriott Library; and Jonathan Thornton, Professor Emeritus, three-dimensional object conservation, SUNY Buffalo.

## ...and More

**Smyth-sewn** — If this term seems exotic, do not fear! Smyth-sewn refers to a very common form of binding and one which all book owners have encountered.

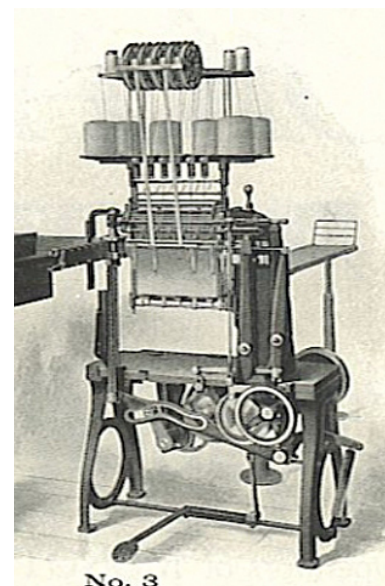
While the pages of many hardback books are around 8 in. × 5 in., these pages are usually printed on both sides of large sheets of paper, perhaps 16 pages per sheet. The sheets are cut so that there are two pages per small sheet. The smaller sheets are folded in half and nested. This group of pages is then



placed in a Smyth book-sewing machine so that holes are punched in the fold and threads sewn through the punches. This group of sewn pages is called a signature. Signatures are grouped together and sewn to cloth tapes that secure them to front and back covers to make a book. The book covers are then covered with cloth, and with a few other steps,

we have a finished book.

We can thank the inventor David McConnell Smyth (1833–1907) for the machine that relieved American bookmakers of the task of hand-punching and hand-sewing signatures. He patented his machine in 1868, one of his many inventions and one of many innovations that led to the development of the American publishing industry. According to the American Bookbinders Museum in San Francisco, one Smyth sewing machine could do the work of 15 hand-stitchers. This and other mechanizations in the book industry throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century helped publishers match the steady increase in demand for books among the American public.



*The Smyth book-sewing machine. The signature is placed on an inverted V-shaped saddle. Needles pierce the signature's fold and draw thread through the holes. The signature moves to a receiving tray at the back of the machine and the saddle comes forward, toward the worker, to receive another signature.*

Many people  
— myself among  
them — feel better  
at the mere sight  
of a book.

— Jane Smiley



## Florida Bibliophile Society 2022–2023 Season



David Hall

**FBS meetings will be held both in-person and via Zoom. Check the Upcoming Events page for details.**

**September 18 • FBS Members – September Show and Tell:** Members brought a fascinating selection of books from their collections – a portrait of their interests and experiences.

**October 16 • Art Adkins – From the Beat to the Book: A Policeman Writes Detective Novels:** Art was a Los Angeles police officer for many years before “retiring” to Micanopy, where he owns and operates the Antique City Mall. In his “spare” time, he writes detective novels. His second novel, *Power Grid*, was published in 2021.

**November 20 • Gareth and Griffeth Whitehurst – Field Trip to Whitehurst Gallery and Library, Tarpon Springs:** Gareth Whitehurst and his son Griffeth Whitehurst welcomed FBS to visit their remarkable library housed in a replica of the Jefferson Memorial.

**December 18 • FBS Holiday Party:** To coin a phrase: A good time was had by all! We were hosted again at the lovely home of Ben and Joyce Wiley. Thanks for their hospitality! As promised, it was an afternoon of food, fun, books, and laughter!

**January 15 • David Hall – Aspects of Book Publishing, 1971–1985:** David’s thirty-year career as an editor was spent in the intense world of New York publishing. He knows book publishing in a way that few do, and he will take us inside.

**February 19 • Irene Pavese – The Evolution of Margaret Armstrong: Botanist, Illustrator, Book Designer:** She collects the work of Margaret

Armstrong (1867–1944) whose illustrations for books, especially covers in the Art Nouveau style, are inspired by her botanical background.

**March 10–12 • Florida Antiquarian Book Fair** is one of the largest book fairs in the U.S. It will be held as usual at the St. Pete Coliseum. FBS will host a table at the entrance where we answer questions and hold parcels for visitors. We plan to have a booth dedicated to FBS where we can spend more time with guests. On Sunday, we usually offer free book evaluations.

**March 19 • Carey Gordon – From the Nile to the Silk Road: A Life in Books:** Carey’s career in the foreign service took him to many exotic locations. During his time in each, he learned local culture and collected books. Carey will share his experiences and selections from his remarkable library.

**April 16 • Greg Byrd – The Art and Architecture of Constructing the Poetry Book:** For National Poetry Month, we welcome Greg Byrd. Greg is a professor of English at St. Petersburg College where he teaches American Literature, Creative Writing, English Composition, and Literature. He is the author of two novels and several books of poetry,

**May 21, 1:30 p.m. • Banquet:** Watch this space. Planning for the 2023 FBS Banquet is underway.

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



## Endpaper • The “R” Word



In preparing the newsletter, I learned that in 2021, almost 400,000 new titles were published. If you're like me, you wonder what they all were. I'm not sure how to locate that list or what to do with it, but I would like to know that – at least – it is out there.

I imagine the ideal bibliophile as someone who crafts a fine collection of valuable, rare, and obscure books. Given limited time, money, and space, I seem to have focused on the obscure, which often includes the rare, but rarely the valuable – perhaps with time...

In general, like many bibliophiles I know, I'm just in it for the fun: the fun of discovery, the fun of the hunt, the fun of introducing others to topics, authors, ideas, etc. previously unknown to them. And the fun of hanging out with other people who also enjoy this.

What we seem to share beyond a love of books – reading, the importance of libraries, ideas, etc. – is

the joy of collecting, and I think that joy begins at a very early age.

I remember the Great Books appearing in my parents' home when I was quite young. There they were, in their tan leather bindings lettered in gold with the names of those (I believe all men) who had laid the foundation for Western civilization. It bespoke order and achievability. What other books would I ever need?

Well, as it has turned out, quite a few. May God bless Fran “12,000 is nothing” Leibowitz.

Well, not “nothing.” The number of books in my home has multiplied as interests and associations have branched out and defined an ever-widening scope of potential purchases...

The “R” word? I think it was going to be “restraint,” but I seem to have gotten lost somewhere.

See you at the bookstore! — Charles

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Unattributed material has been prepared by the editor, Charles Brown.

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