

# The Florida Bibliophile

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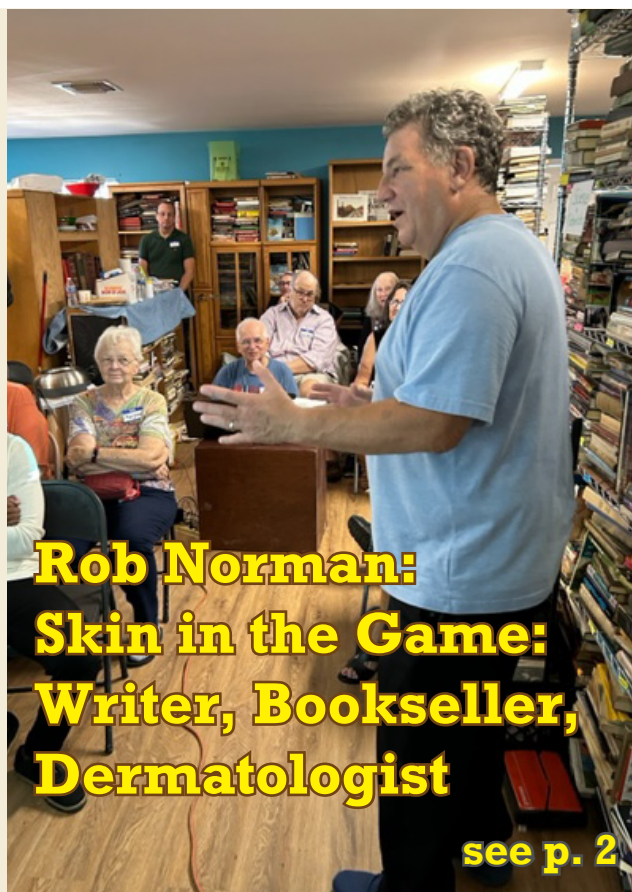
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Dermatologist**

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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 Spring 2023 FABS Journal [here](#).

**Florida Bibliophile Society**

**40**

**1983–2023**



**Florida Bibliophile Society**  
A community of book lovers

## Minutes of the October 2023 Meeting of the Florida Bibliophile Society

by Gary Simons, FBS Secretary

**O**ur October meeting was also a field trip as we met at Book Lovers Bookstore, located at 6205 S. Dale Mabry Hwy., Tampa, where we heard a presentation entitled “Skin in the Game: Author, Book Seller, Dermatologist” by our host and guest speaker, Dr. Rob Norman.

To our delight, the crowded store was truly full of books – stacks and rows of interesting books were everywhere. Because we were in a retail environment rather than a conference room, we had to scramble to set up the computer, projector, and viewing screen. Setting up seating with proper lines of sight for the fifteen or so attendees was also a bit of a chore; nevertheless, with the kind and efficient assistance of store manager, Diane Skripek, we were all soon comfortably and suitably placed and ready for the presentation to begin.

As Vice President Ben Wiley informed us during his introduction, Dr. Norman (he prefers to be called Dr. Rob, a preference that will be honored henceforth in these minutes) calls his bookstore site a “work in progress,” understandably so as he has absorbed the inventory from the defunct Old Tampa Book Company along with thousands of other books of all genres and is still trying to organize, categorize, cull, and display the massive collection. Dr. Rob is a man of many talents. Not only is he a board-certified dermatologist who has practiced for over 35 years but also a musician and nature photographer, a



FBS members Gary Simons, Irene Pavese, Carey Gordon, Lois Bradshaw, and Stephanie Montour prepare for Rob Norman's presentation to begin. Looks like Irene has already found a few books.

published author of both fiction and nonfiction, and now a bookstore owner too. His presentation was to be on his multifaceted career – medicine, writing and publishing, and now bookselling – and how one informs the other.

Dr. Rob has written and edited 70 books, including *The Blue Man and other Stories of the Skin* and *Discover Magazine's Vital Signs: True Tales of Medical Mysteries, Obscure Diseases, and Life-Saving Diagnoses*. His newest book is the *The Outer Brain*, which explores the connection between the brain and the skin. He has been the editor and contributing



Unassuming strip mall on South Dale Mabry or the beginning of a great book enterprise? With Rob in charge, it's surely the latter. Behind the last door on the right are several rooms with thousands of books, currently on shelves and in general order by topic. It was great fun to search these stacks and find a few book treasures. Rob is already on the lookout for a larger location that can contain the stock on the floor and the 60,000 books in storage.



*Minutes, continued*

*This selection of books by Rob Norman shows the range of his bookish interests as a writer. From left to right, Atlas of Geriatric Dermatology is one of many medical books Rob has authored or co-authored as part of his specialty, “his day job.” The Blue Man and Other Stories of the Skin is one of several books that are related to Rob’s medical specialty but collect stories of specific cases for a more general audience. Reading the Florida Landscape is one of several books on the natural world or history that Rob has published; he is a Master Naturalist, having completed the University of Florida’s Master Naturalist Program. Among several novels that Rob has written is Revenge, an eco-thriller and murder mystery featuring researcher and eco-superstar Dr. Jack Tolliver.*

writer for 39 medical books including eight books on geriatrics and geriatric dermatology, and he has published over 250 articles in various major media publications.

Our afternoon presentation was layered: we had the benefit of a handout which had previously been emailed to FBS members, a YouTube video presentation, and a PowerPoint slide presentation which Dr. Rob studded with little anecdotes of his bookish life.

We began by watching a high quality YouTube video which Dr. Rob had prepared regarding his experiences in the world of books. Readers are invited to see the video for themselves at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=GuVITwqECnA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GuVITwqECnA).

Dr. Rob’s video began by describing the role and significance of libraries and books in his own life and in our national culture. As he stated in a pre-meeting handout,

In the last eight years, I have spent a great amount of time looking at, rescuing, and figuring out what to do with almost 200,000 books. Along the way, I found myself

wondering about the modern state of the book, both as a commodity and a resource.

Next, Dr. Rob’s video presented a highly illustrated short summary of the history of books and reading, from clay tablets in ancient Mesopotamia, to papyrus scrolls in Egypt, to the introduction of parchment and the formation of the Library of Alexandria, to the development of paper in China and the movement from the scroll to the codex in the Western world. His video took us through the hand-copying of manuscript religious texts, the introduction of the printing press, and the more modern world of newspapers, typewriters, and e-books.

Turning to Dr. Rob’s view of the status and future of books and reading, as presented in his own words in the video summary handout:

While some consider this [the introduction of e-books and related technologies] the beginning of the end for books, that is quite far from the truth. A 2016 survey from Pew research describes the reading landscape as primarily physical, not electronic as e-book supporters and techies may believe. The

*Minutes, continued*

*Rob poses with two of his dermatology students who joined us for his presentation. Rob invites his students to earn a little extra money by spending time updating the bookstore inventory on the Amazon site.*

research says that 73% of Americans had read a book in the year leading up to the survey. Surprisingly, print remained king with 65% of those surveyed reading from a printed source and only 28% of readers picked up a Kindle or other electronic device to read an e-book.

Pew research had several other interesting finds, including that college graduates are four times as likely to read e-books and that e-book consumption is slowly increasing on tablets and smart phones while remaining stable on dedicated e-readers. But most importantly, this study found that since 2012, the number of Americans who have read a book in the last year hasn't drastically changed.

Presumably, the fact that book reading levels have increased is because reading is essential. . . . The importance of books and reading is ever-present. Reading has been scientifically proven to boost intelligence, lower stress, and create better personal relationships by strengthening bonds between parent and child. It can even make you a better person by increasing your empathy. All these traits were found as common ground amongst people who read on a daily basis.

In the video, Dr. Rob also mentioned *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens and *The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank as books that were particularly important to him.

Both in his handout and in his video, Dr. Rob described his entry into the roles of book rescuer, book distributor, and book seller:

Several years ago, I was asked by a close friend and medical administrator to go to a college library in Clearwater, Florida, to check out the book collection. The library was about to be torn down along with all the other buildings on the campus to make way for a new medical school project. An estimated 80,000 books were still on the shelves.

I gathered about 50 boxes of children's books and distributed them to various elementary schools. I enjoyed the looks on the teachers' faces, many of whom spent long hours in cubicles and complained they did not have enough books. That was the seed for a book donation and literacy program I founded and is still active today. Eventually, I was given a key to the library and could come and go when I wanted. I arranged for most of the books to be donated to programs that send books to Africa and donated the others to the Friends of the



*Rob purchased the remaining stock of the Old Tampa Book Store, a fixture in downtown Tampa for over 20 years. Tens of thousands of books had to be boxed and moved in short order.*



**Minutes, continued**

Library and other charitable groups.

. . . A couple years ago I found out the Old Tampa Book Company on Tampa Street was going out of business and I made arrangements to rescue the 55,000 books still inside the crumbling structure. After making a sizable charitable donation to Metropolitan Ministries to expedite the deal with the owner of the building at that time and hiring local homeless men and women to help move the books out, my friend Elliot stored the books in his warehouse until I found a home at my library near USF. I now hire pre-med students to run the Amazon bookstore and give them the profits to support their goals of medical school.

Looking around his store after the end of the video, Dr. Rob added that it was hard to find affordable help to staff a bookstore and that he was looking for potential partners to get involved with his business. He wants to move to a bigger space – in addition to all the books we saw around us, he had 60,000 books in storage that he would like to be displayed.

Then Dr. Rob turned to his PowerPoint presentation, which mainly consisted of pictures of people and books, the people he met and who supported his efforts as a bookseller and the various environments in which he stored his vast inventory of books. With



*When his grandson was born, Rob flew out to Texas to be the first person to take the child to the public library, such is Rob's affection for public libraries where he learned to love and respect books.*

the pictures came little stories and anecdotes, and we learned that along with his other accomplishments Dr. Rob was a gifted raconteur.

One story, about an owner of a nearby building whom Dr. Rob identified as “coming in with a skate board” and who had brought in dumpsters to dispose of tens of thousands of books that were in storage from the Old Tampa Bookstore, brought horrified gasps from the audience!

He told us about a library associated with a synagogue near the University of South Florida which he had provided with 4,000 old Jewish-related books.

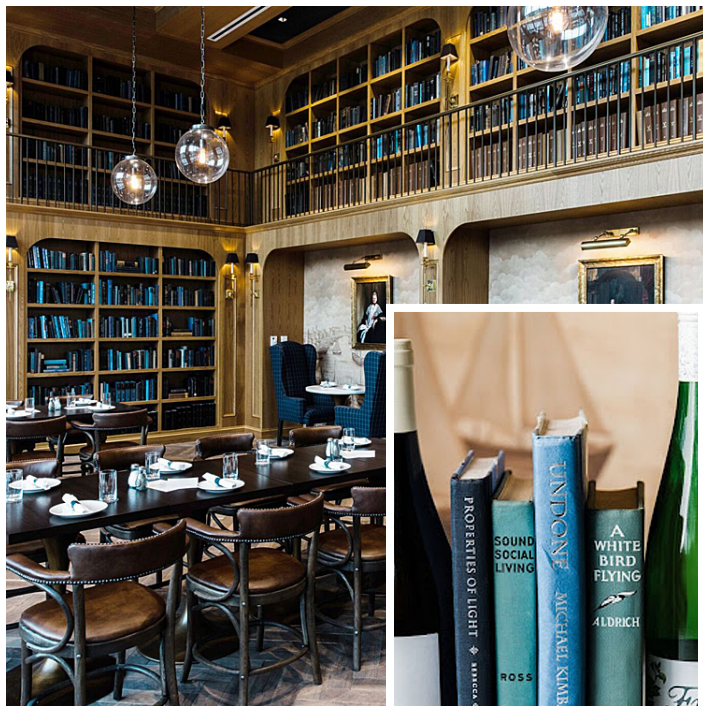
He told us about a woman in Pinellas County who had to find a home for a large collection of books as part of an estate sale. Mike Slicker had already selected those books that he wanted for his own inventory, and he urged Dr. Rob to take a look. Dr. Rob saw a number of books on the ground floor, but they didn't match Mike Slicker's description of an enormous collection. Dr. Rob's guide told him to “look up” – and, lo and behold, accessible via a spiral staircase, there were row after row of books extending to the top of the building, some 29,000 books in all!

One PowerPoint picture showed us Dr. Rob with his infant grandson on the steps of a public library: Dr. Rob had flown across the country in order to be the first one to take his grandson to a public library!



*Rob narrated a slide show for FBS members and guests. For this slide, Rob talks about a gift of old Judaica that he donated to a Tampa synagogue.*



*Minutes, concluded*

*The Library, a restaurant in St. Petersburg, asked Rob to supply thousands of books for its shelves. At the last minute, they told Rob that all the spines must be blue or black to match the decor. Rob and his helpers had to work quickly to replace non-blue-black spines with the correct color.*

Yet another story involved “The Library,” a restaurant located within Johns Hopkins All Children’s Hospital in St. Petersburg, Florida. In order to create the right look, the restaurant owners wanted books to fill wall shelves. They approached Dr. Rob and asked him for about 2,000 low-cost books, which he graciously agreed to supply. However, two weeks before the scheduled delivery, he was belatedly told that all the bindings had to be blue or black! It took quite a last-minute shuffle and switch-out to deliver the appropriate books on schedule.

Lastly, Dr. Rob, truly a Renaissance man, serenaded us with his harmonica, playing a tune of his own invention, “Book Seller’s Blues,” before we went off for a rather joyous and productive search through the bookstore’s shelves for treasures to take home. Several of us had our arms full before we left Dr. Rob’s store, and I don’t think anyone left empty handed.



*Happy Book Lover’s Bookstore shoppers: FBS members Jude Bagatti and Verna Peddi.*





## A Gentle Madness...and Mystery and Magic Too

by Ben Wiley, FBS Vice President

**FBS** recently held its October meeting at Rob Norman's Book Lover's Bookstore in Tampa where Dr. Rob and bookstore manager Dianne Skripek hosted our group with gracious hospitality and welcoming pastries and coffee.

While there, we bibliophiles had an opportunity to browse the overstuffed shelves and boxes filled with old books, new books, paperbacks and hardbound, popular best sellers, and antiquarian leather-bound tomes, maybe as many of 20,000 books piled floor to ceiling, all waiting for just the right eyes to make a discovery.

As the afternoon wore down and the crowd dispersed, some of us lingered just a little longer to see what might turn up. In a back room, in a dark and dusty corner, at the edge of a crammed shelf, behind a bunch of paperbacks, under mismatched books piled on top, I spied a book with its spine turned away and unreadable. A hint of gold lettering peered at me from behind the heavy-duty adjustable Gaylord book jacket cover. I shifted the precarious stack to retrieve and rescue it from the confines of its bookish midden, bringing to the surface Nicholas Basbanes' vividly anecdotal *A Gentle Madness: Bibliophiles, Bibliomaniacs, and the Eternal Passion for Books*.

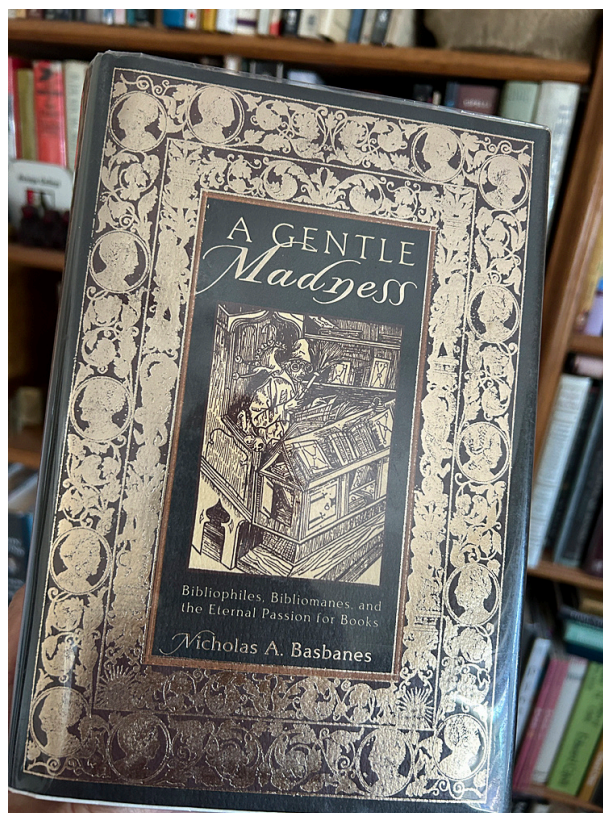
So what? We've all seen this book before, and likely even have it on our bookshelf at home as a central tome in our Books on Books collection. Been there, bought that.

First published in 1995, this was the 1996 Owl Book Edition published by Henry Holt. Nothing remarkable so far, though this edition was pristine and crisp with a clean dust jacket (protected by that heavy-duty plastic cover), immaculate presentation, fine condition, no foxing, no yellowing, no marks of any kind.

Except for one. On the half-title page there was a note in black fountain-pen ink from the author to the original buyer. The half-title page says *A Gentle Madness*, then this inscription:

A Gentle Madness  
For Caroline Everett -  
one of the author's  
favorite people - a librarian -  
on the occasion of a  
pleasant meeting in Tampa  
Nicholas A. Basbanes  
17 April 2001

Nicholas Basbanes's inscription to Caroline Everett on the half-title page of her copy of *A Gentle Madness*. See article for translation.



The copy of *A Gentle Madness: Bibliophiles, Bibliomaniacs, and the Eternal Passion for Books* by Nicholas Basbanes found by Ben Wiley in the stack at Book Lover's Bookstore.

**Basbanes, continued**

For Caroline Everett – One of the author's favorite people – a librarian – on the occasion of a pleasant meeting in Tampa. Nicholas A. Basbanes 17 April 2005

Aha, a copy signed by the author and inscribed to one unknown-to-me Caroline Everett. Who dat?

I consulted with Charles Brown and Sean Donnelly, both standing nearby as the mystery unfolded. Basbanes's penmanship was not easily deciphered (was that the thousandth book he had inscribed that day?) even though he had taken the time to personalize it to Caroline the Librarian and call it a pleasant meeting. But the last name, obvious now, was not immediately apparent. We were pretty clear on the "E", but what followed? EUMEH? EVUEH? EUMETL?

Google to the rescue. We searched these unlikely names in all the combinations of names and places we could imagine. As always, Google confirmed that there is much strangeness on the Internet, But with a re-examination of the handwriting and slightly wild guess, we struck gold. Everett!

We quickly discovered an obituary for Caroline Whitman Everett, 76, December 2, 2005, just months after her meeting and inscription with

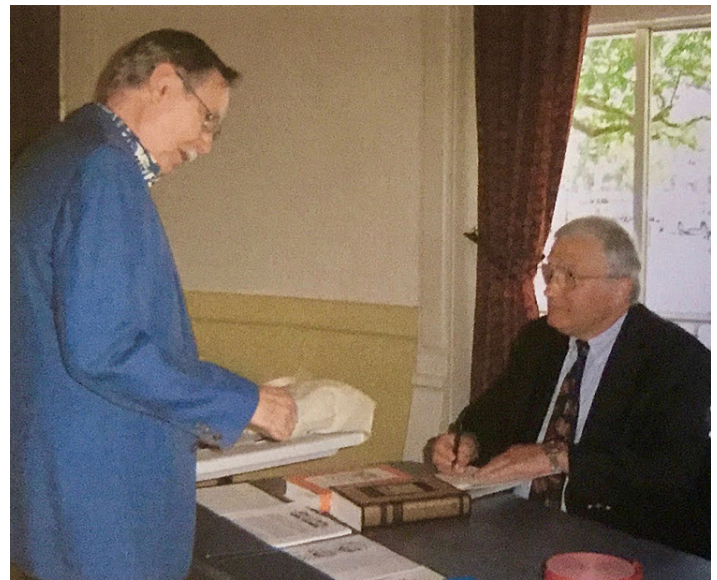


*Caroline Whitman Everett in an undated picture that accompanied her obituary on the Anderson McQueen Funeral Home website.*

Nicholas Basbanes. The obit says she was a retired librarian at the St. Petersburg Public Library, and *she was a member of the Florida Bibliophile Society!*

Really? So I texted Carl Nudi (remember, he's the FBS archivist so knows all the society history!) in Detroit

with a photo of the book and the inscription and asked if he knew Caroline Everett. Bingo. Of course he knew her, and of course they were friends, and



*Nicholas Basbanes signs books for FBS member Tom Harris after Basbanes's presentation at the April 2005 FBS meeting. Photo from Jerry Morris blog My Sentimental Library, "Tom and Jerry: Friends and Aiders," Saturday, November 25, 2017.*

of course he had often given her a ride to the FBS meetings. And he commented that Caroline Everett and Sue Tihansky, longtime FBS member and former Newsletter Editor, were good friends too!

The plot thickens. The obit mentioned that at the time, she was survived by her sister, Helen Everett Bohman. Helen Bohman was a professor at St. Petersburg Junior College and had a legendary collection of children's illustrated books, a vast collection donated to the University of South Florida on her death at 91 in 2020. Indeed, at Rob's bookstore, I came across a number of books that had been a part of Helen Bohman's personal collection with her name still penciled on the title pages. (The Bonham books were from her estate sale; see "Look up!" in the minutes.) Sisters Caroline and Helen both led lives filled with books and libraries. Their literacy legacies continue to this day.

And the plot gets thicker. The associations continue. As it turns out, both Sean Donnelly and Irene Pavese were at that 2005 Nicholas Basbanes presentation where Caroline got her book inscribed. It was held in the Music Room at Plant Hall on the University of Tampa campus. Once the music room for the grand Tampa Bay Hotel, it's a charming space for intimate performances and presentations.



**Basbanes, continued**

Imagine Nicholas Basbanes, Caroline Everett, Sean Donnelly, and Irene Pavese together in this venue.

Imagine Lee Harrer there too. Sean Donnelly tells the story of then FBS President Lee Harrer introducing Nicholas Basbanes and Lee's strange efforts to complicate Basbanes name when he introduced him. Lee and Nicholas were longtime acquaintances in the antiquarian book world and – perhaps knowing how many people struggle with Nicholas's last name – this was Lee's unique and personalized introduction of a friend.

Sean Donnelly shed more light on the event:

I thought it was pretty simple – pronounced Baz-bains – but Lee complicated it with several variations like Bash-bonays (a cross between Czech and French?). The guest of honor took it in good humor and it was endearing to see Lee, the usually precise ex-military man, get flustered.

As for the personalized inscriptions, Basbanes took the time to talk to each of us when we brought up our books to be signed. He asked what our special interests were and then worked that into the inscription. You felt

like an old friend had inscribed your book. I'll have to find my signed copy of *Among the Gently Mad*. As I recall he saluted me as a “collector of mysteries.”

It was a great occasion with one of the best popular writers of books about books from the past 50 years.

Indeed, book collecting is a Gentle Madness. Now we can say it's Mystery and Magic too. That afternoon in Dr. Rob's bookstore, we were all affected (infected?) by that gentle Madness of browsing the aisles, sampling the goods, fondling the books, sniffing the pages, and marveling at the physical object in our hands. Then comes the Mystery of the association copy and questioning just who is this Caroline Everett that Nicholas Basbanes was applauding as one of his favorite people. Then comes the Magic of discovery, right there in the bookstore, when Caroline's identity and FBS connection are revealed, and further FBS associations made with memories from Carl, Sean, Irene, and Lee.

Madness, Mystery, Magic – it's what bibliophilia is all about!



The Basbanes presentation in April 2005 was held in Music Room at Plant Hall on the University of Tampa campus.

Basbanes, concluded

## From Florida Bibliophile Society's *The Newsletter*, May 2005 —

### LAST MONTH'S GUEST SPEAKER

**Editor's note:** Continuing with the practice of reporting on our guest speaker in *The Newsletter*, this month's report was written by FBS President Carl Mario Nudi. Member Lee Harrer was responsible for arranging the presentation at the April 17, 2005, meeting.

Noted author Nicholas A. Basbanes traveled from his home in Massachusetts with his wife Connie to Tampa to address the Florida Bibliophile Society.

Basbanes has written several books on bibliophiles and bibliomanes and expressed the importance of preserving the concept of book collecting.

He said the difference between a bibliophile and a bibliomane is that the former is a master and the latter is a slave.

"You never really know when you cross the line," Basbanes said.

He said he may be on the verge of becoming a bibliomane and by virtue of attending his talk we are all gently mad. (Basbanes' third book is titled *Among the Gently Mad*.)

The former investigative reporter said he used those skills in researching and writing his books, of which *A Gentle Madness: Bibliophiles, Bibliomanes, and the Eternal Passion for Books* was his first.

Because of his writing background, all of his books are stories or narratives.

"Everything I do is a celebration of the book and the people connected to them," he said of his work.

That includes the collection, those that destroy them, those who have been killed because of them, and those that are killed by them.

As an example of the latter, Basbanes talked of the gentleman in New York who was

killed in his apartment when a shelf loaded with books fell on top of him.

One practice of some librarians Basbanes said he abhors is the culling of books from the collection.

He mentioned that the Harvard University Library never discards books and has more than 15 million in its collection.

Basbanes also related a story of when he was at the Worcester Art Center book sale and noticed under one table a bundle of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century literary magazine *The Dial*, which included works of Ralph Waldo Emerson.

He said he snapped them up at a nominal price and discovered there was a full set.

"Some of the books you treasure the most are found at discard sales," Basbanes said.

The author said he sees the collecting of old books as one would look at rescuing an animal.

One of his greatest book adventures was the chance to see and touch a 42-line Gutenberg bible.

"I was light headed," Basbanes told the audience of spellbound book lovers.

"You can't explain this feeling bibliophiles and bibliomanes have with books," he said.

Those who missed Basbanes' presentation can get a taste of his wit and wisdom by reading his books and going online to his website: <http://www.nicholasbasbanes.com>.

Basbanes' latest book is called *Every Book Its Reader: The Power of the Book to Stir the World*.





## New Technology Reveals The Secrets of Herculaneum's Scrolls

**T**he Greek historian Dionysius of Halicarnassus (60–c. 7 BCE) claimed that the town of Herculaneum in southern Italy was founded by Hercules. “Town” may not be accurate. The buildings revealed by archaeology indicate that this was a wealthy enclave that overlooked the Bay of Naples – until 79 CE.

In that year, the volcano Vesuvius, which lay between Pompeii and Herculaneum, erupted. First, an enormous column of volcanic ash and rocks exploded high into the sky before falling back down like rain. The wind was blowing to the southwest, raining pumice and ash primarily on Pompeii, pummeling the inhabitants or trapping them inside buildings. Some buildings collapsed under the weight, and the city was buried.

The blast that buried Pompeii did not affect Herculaneum; instead, it provided warning, and some may have escaped the city. Perhaps others felt that the worst had passed, but by time night arrived, the second phase of the eruption occurred.

Superheated flows of molten rock and surges of gas heated to over 700 degrees Fahrenheit flew down the slopes of Vesuvius at over 200 miles per hour. For Herculaneum, it was all over in two hours.

The flow of high-speed superheated gas and ash that struck Herculaneum was just the right temperature to turn all other organic matter to charcoal (called carbonization). Massive mudflows then sealed the city against air and the oxygen in it that can cause decay. Herculaneum was buried under 65 feet of ash and mud.

The cities were forgotten and unknown until 1738 when, in the process of digging a well, a worker ran into a structure. It was Herculaneum's theater, a moment usually taken as the beginning of modern archaeology. A flurry of activity ensued. Within two years, Pompeii was found, and in 1750, excavations began at a remarkable villa in Herculaneum, clearly the home of a wealthy Roman, possibly Julius Caesar's father-in-law.



*The Villa of the Papyri in a virtual reconstruction by the Museo Archeologico Virtuale di Ercolano. The main building is in the foreground. In the background is a colonnade surrounding a long reflecting pool.*



*The Villa of the Papyri as it appears today. These ruins no longer overlook the Bay of Naples. The vast amount of ash and mud produced by the eruption extended the coastline by many yards.*

Exploring the villa, which lay yards beneath the surface meant digging tunnels to understand the general layout. The main goal of the excavators at that time was to find artworks for a museum in the King of Naples's palace. They found plenty. The villa was decorated in the grand Roman style, full of sculptures, mosaics, and murals. The villa was entirely encased in solidified ash and mud. Along the way, the excavators discovered a chamber that held about 1,800 fragmentary scrolls. This remains the largest library from the ancient Greco-Roman world to survive into the modern era.

By the 1700s, interest in the Greek and Roman worlds was intense. It was clear that there were many works from ancient times that were lost, and

**New Technology, continued**

the possibility of discovering them was as thrilling then as it is now.

The remarkable villa became known as the Villa of the Papyri, and efforts to open and read the papyri began almost immediately. Many were simply sliced open, revealing layers that broke apart like pastry. It was possible to read and copy some writing from exposed surfaces, but much more was ruined. A few years later, Father Antonio Piaggio, curator of manuscripts at the Vatican, designed a 'papyrus unrolling machine,' a simple device that used silk threads attached to the edge of the papyrus. Again, there was some success but with much more damage to the scroll.

Various subsequent attempts in the following decades used various materials – rose water, liquid mercury, vegetable gas, sulfuric compounds, papyrus juice, a mixture of ethanol, glycerin, and warm water – to coax the scrolls open and make them readable, but they were too fragile and the carbon ink on the toasted papyrus was almost unreadable. Unfortunately, the ink was also highly vulnerable to light and began to fade almost immediately after exposure.

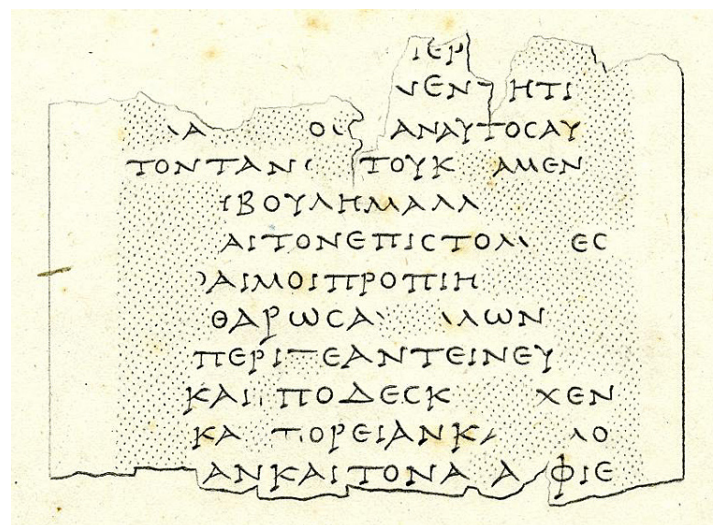
What was determined through these early efforts was that the papyri contain Greek philosophical texts. As many as 44 works identified were written by the 1<sup>st</sup>-century BCE Epicurean philosopher and poet Philodemus, a resident of Herculaneum, who possibly formed all or part of the library. It was common for a villa of this type, a country retreat, would contain books on many subjects and certainly some in Latin. This implies to some that there are more scrolls to be found, and it is believed that lower floors of the villa may hold them.

The series of disastrous efforts to unroll the papyri led a to halt on unrolling in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Almost all the scrolls remained in the hands of an extremely protective Office of Herculaneum Papyri in National Library of Naples.

In the late 1990s, advances in imaging allowed researchers at Brigham Young University to



Carbonized scrolls of papyrus from the Villa of the Papyri in Herculaneum. Their identifying labels read 804, 632, and 803.



A 19<sup>th</sup>-century transcription of Herculaneum scroll 986, part 9.



Herculaneum scroll 118 is in the Bodleian Library. It was given by the King of Naples to the King of England in 1810. In 1883, it was sent back to Italy to be unrolled using Antonio Piaggio's machine. It was returned in fragments which were reassembled as much as possible and mounted as shown above.



## New Technology, *continued*

examine some opened scrolls under special light sources, which revealed some text. This method, called multispectral imaging, has been used successfully on many texts to uncover texts which have been covered and written over or even texts which have been scraped away in order to reuse the material they were written on.

In the early 2000s, researchers began to consider how to read intact scrolls using x-rays or other means of scanning the scroll and reconstructing like a CAT scan. In the intervening 20 or so years, great advances have been made in these methods.

X-rays rely on differences in density, which is why bones are so clear on an x-ray and flesh is almost invisible. For the papyri, the carbonized papyrus and the carbonized ink used to write on it are virtually the same density.

Brent Seales, a researcher who has dedicated years to develop “virtual unrolling” realized that differences in density were not working. He wondered if, just as ink seems to leave a raised mark on paper, there might be a difference in texture. He explored this with the intact scrolls loaned by the Institut de France in Paris (Napoleon had also received a gift of six scrolls) and found that he could produce two-dimensional images of the scrolls. Unfortunately, they were difficult to read.

Seales decided to release the images to the public. To sweeten the pot, Seales announced the [Vesuvius Challenge](#), offering a series of awards for various levels of revealing text up a prize of \$700,000 for reading four or more passages from a rolled-up scroll. Shortly over 1,500 teams or individuals had formed around the world, eager to inspect the images.

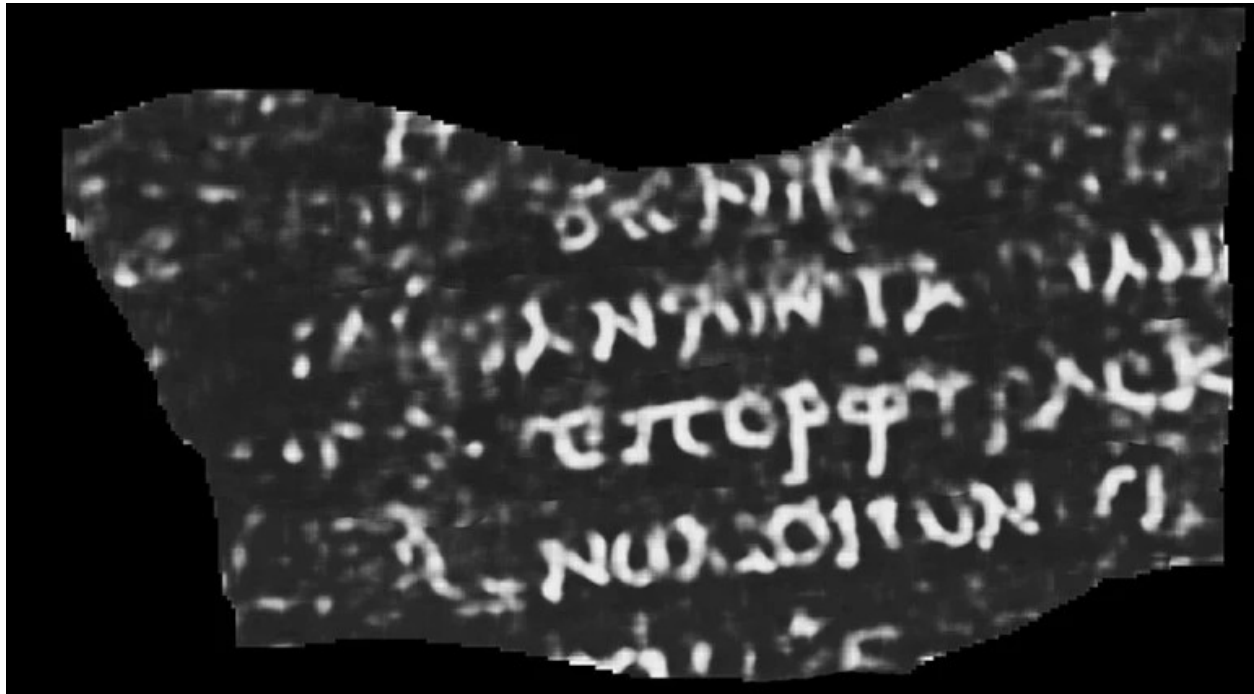
Luke Farritor, a student at the University of Nebraska—Lincoln, was on one of the individuals eager to take up the challenge. After examining many images, he began to notice a subtle change in the visual texture that he called “crackle” that seemed be associated with a letterform. He developed a computer program using a form of



*Brent Seales, a professor at the University of Kentucky, is Director of the Center for Visualization and Virtual Environments. Seales is the foremost expert in a field called digital restoration of antiquities. His many advances in imaging led to the the virtual unrolling of the Herculaneum scrolls. Now, with Silicon Valley backing, the Vesuvius Challenge is drawing talent to read the images.*



*Luke Farritor (left) accepts a check for \$40,000 from J. P. Posma, organizer of the Vesuvius Challenge. Farritor is a student in Engineering at the University of Nebraska—Lincoln. He describes himself as “an engineer with a focus in robotics, machine learning, embedded systems, and software engineering.”*

**New Technology, concluded**

*Software developed by Luke Farritor, a graduate student at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln was able to read a virtual fragment of a Herculaneum scroll. Though many letters are visible, not all have been read; however, one word stands out in the center πορφύρας, purple.*

artificial intelligence that could help locate and refine areas of crackle.

When a new fragment image was released by Seales's group, Farritor tried his software on the new fragment – on his phone.

Lo and behold, letters were revealed. In the center of the small fragment was the Greek word

πορφύρας (porphyras)

meaning 'purple.'

The organizer made the announcement on October 12, 2023. Farritor had won the "First Letters" prize or \$40,000 for reading more than 10 characters in a 4-square-centimetre area of papyrus. Another student, Youssef Nader, at the Free University of Berlin, was awarded \$10,000 for coming second.

The Vesuvius Challenge is part of a broader effort to use advance imaging and/or computing to

study ancient texts. Seales hopes these methods will open up an "invisible library" of text that are present but invisible to the naked eye, such as on parchment buried in medieval book bindings; palimpsests, in which later writing obscures a layer beneath; and cartonnage, in which scraps of old papyrus were used to make ancient Egyptian mummy cases and masks.

The Vesuvius Challenge continues and promises to open a new understanding of the ancient world and gaps are filled by texts that were once unreadable. For Herculaneum, the next steps must be imaging the many scrolls held in Naples, if it will be allowed, and for new excavations at the Villa of the Papyri that hold a tantalizing promise of rooms full of ancient books.

Purple. It's just one word, but it proves it is possible to recover the invisible library and may be the one word needed to help overcome the barriers to the next vital steps.



## Proust's Seventy-Five Folios

Marcel Proust published his master work *À la recherche du temps perdu* (*Remembrance of Things Past* or *In Search of Lost Time*) in seven volumes between 1913 and 1927.

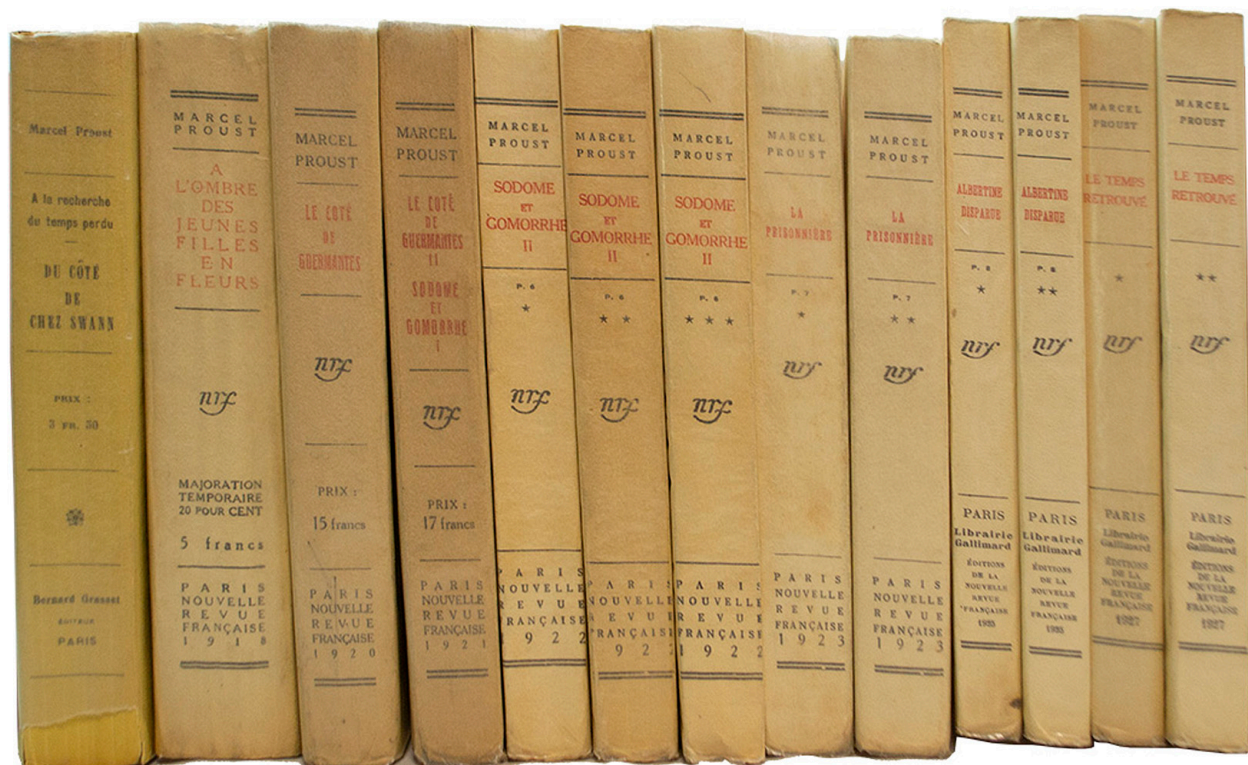
In these seven volumes and at roughly 3,000 pages, the narrator of *In Search of Lost Time* mulls over experiences from childhood into adulthood in late 19<sup>th</sup>-century and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century high-society France. Through the work's major themes of love, art, time, and memory, the narrator gently ponders the great questions "Who am I?" and "What is this life?" It has been praised as one of the greatest novels of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Brilliant and influential, it is considered by many to be the definitive modern novel. It has been adapted for stage, film, television, radio, and as a graphic novel. It was first published in English from 1922 to 1931. In the 1990s, Penguin undertook a new translation based on a critical French edition published in the 1980s.



Marcel Proust

The seven novels are:

- *Swann's Way*
- *In the Shadow of Young Girls in Flower*
- *The Guermantes Way*
- *Sodom and Gomorrah*
- *The Prisoner*
- *The Fugitive*
- *Time Regained*



A complete set of first editions of the novels in *In Search of Lost Time*. The set comprises seven novels, some published in more than one part. This set was recently offered on AbeBooks for \$35,000 with matching, custom decorative slipcases.

Sources: *The Guardian*; Harvard University Press; Euronews; *New York Journal of Books*

**Proust, concluded**

Proust began planning the novels before 1910. His notes show that the overall structure was conceived in the early year of the project, but as he worked through it, it evolved with additions and changes. When he died in 1922, the last three volumes were in draft form and show omissions and oversights. His brother Robert supervised the editing and publication of these last parts of the set.

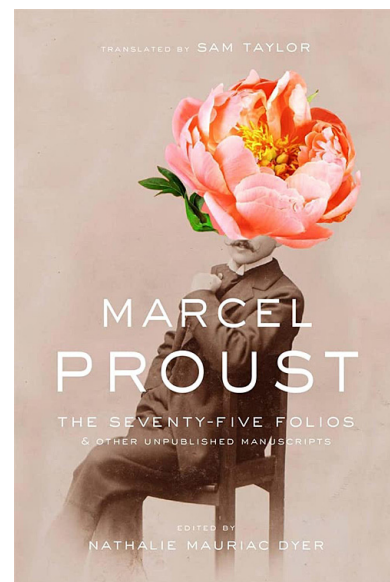
Because of its stature and grand conception, *In Search of Lost Time* has been the subject of much study. Of particular interest are any materials Proust used to plan and write. So when in 1954, the publisher Bernard de Fallois mentioned 75 pages that constituted a first draft of episodes in the first novel in the set, *Swann's Way*, Proustians took note. De Fallois described these pages as a “precious guide” to Proust’s great work. Even more interests was aroused when in 1962, these 75 pages were not among the manuscripts bequeathed to France’s Bibliothèque Nationale.

At once, the search was on. The 75 pages would be subject of speculation, desire, and even doubt. No one had ever seen them, and many thought that the pages were lost, if they ever existed.

However, in February 2021, publisher Gallimard announced that the 75 pages had been found among De Fallois’s archives, bequeathed to the Bibliothèque Nationale when he died in 2018. Gallimard called *The Seventy-Five Pages* the “Proustian Grail”, describing the rediscovery of the texts as a “thunderclap”.

Also found were two unpublished works that Proust’s niece, Suzy Mante-Proust, had given to De Fallois in 1949. One of these, translated as *The Mysterious Correspondent*, was published in 2019.

Harvard University Press has now published the 75 pages in *The Seventy-five Folios and Other Unpublished Manuscripts* (April 2023), edited by



*Proust’s “75 pages” are no available in English in The Seventy-five Folios and Other Unpublished Manuscripts, published by Harvard University Press in*

Nathalie Mauriac Dyer, a senior researcher at the Institute of Modern Texts and Manuscripts Division of the National Center for Scientific Research in France, where she leads the Proust team. She is the great-granddaughter of Robert Proust, Marcel’s brother.

“Can we read Proust’s epic today and not care to know how it came about? In these pages, hidden from public view for a whole century, we can almost feel how Proust spent a lifetime planning and writing his book, picking his way towards what would become his great contribution to humanity.” – André Aciman



*As soon as the 75 pages were received at the French National Library, they were scheduled for conservation. Conservators said that each page took from five to seven hours. Conservation was complete in time for the pages to be displayed in a 2022 exhibit commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Proust’s death.*





## How Printing Came to Florida – Part 1

*When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.*

**R**eaders will recall these words that begin the Declaration of Independence, signed at Philadelphia, in the Second Continental Congress on July 4, 1776.

By that date in 1776, relations between Great Britain and its American colonies had been deteriorating for over a decade as Parliament passed a series of measures aimed at extracting more revenue from the colonies. Actions like the Boston Tea Party of December 1773 only served to draw British retaliation. In June 1774, the British blockaded Boston Harbor, preventing trade of any kind. This was just one of a group of actions taken by Great Britain that became known as “The Intolerable Acts” in the American colonies.

Petitions to Parliament by individual colonies to suspend the Intolerable Acts were futile. In September 1774, the colonies agreed on coordinated effort and all except Georgia sent representatives to Philadelphia to convene the First Continental Congress. They met for a month and decided on a course short of declaring independence, organizing a boycott of British goods across all the colonies to commence in December 1774.

The First Continental Congress also scheduled the meeting of the Second Continental Congress for May 1775. By that time, however, the first shots had already been fired. Seven hundred British



*The Boston Tea Party December 16, 1773, as shown in a 1789 print.*

soldiers marching from Boston to seize the colonists' armory at Concord were met first at Lexington by dozens of colonial militiamen and then at Concord by hundreds. The British were forced to retreat to Boston, and many were picked off by militiamen on the way. The war had begun.

Despite growing tension and hostilities, the Second Continental Congress continued to pursue diplomacy with Britain but also worked to secure the support of British rivals, France and Spain. By July 1776, it was clear that reconciliation with Britain was not possible and that independence was the only way forward.

Congress established the United States as an independent nation in the Declaration of Independence and continued to press the British for resolution. But a British condition for negotiation was for Congress to rescind the Declaration of Independence. Congress refused, and the war intensified.

Fighting continued for five years. During that time, Congress passed further measures to unify and govern the new nation, including the Articles of Confederation. Meanwhile, American forces under General George Washington were steadily gaining an upper hand. In September 1781, the Continental Army and its French allies laid siege to British forces at Yorktown, Virginia, and after three weeks, the British surrendered. It was a decisive moment. The Americans had effectively broken the British, and serious negotiations began.

### Printing Comes to Florida – Part 1, continued

This doesn't mean that the fighting stopped. It is estimated that about 1 in 5 Americans remained loyal to the British crown. These loyalists, especially in the south, continued their resistance as gangs of loyalists and revolutionaries attacked each other's plantations. According to Harvard historian Maya Jasanoff, some the largest battles of the war in the South took place after Yorktown.

Generally, throughout the colonies, loyalists were reviled, and the continuing attacks created an atmosphere of violence and uncertainty for them. As the British left one city after another, loyalists went with them. Tens of thousands returned to England and just as many went to various provinces in Canada. British ships were leaving American ports regularly carrying loyalists to their new homes.

### A Moveable Press

On December 14, 1782, a British fleet carrying loyalists left Charleston, South Carolina. One of these ships was the refuge of Dr. William Charles Wells.

Wells's father, Robert, had come to Charleston from Dumfries, Scotland, in 1754, with his wife, Mary, infant son, John, and apparently several family members. Robert Wells had been in the printing, binding, and bookselling trades in Scotland and pursued this business in Charleston.

The printing and book trades in Charleston were dominated by the Timothy family. Most books were brought in from northern colonies, even almanacs, which were always in demand and could have been printed easily and more profitably in Charleston. A lethargic supply chain meant that the variety of reading materials available locally was limited. A specific complaint regarding the book trade was that personal libraries were disposed of without any catalogue.

The book and printing situation in Charleston presented many opportunities to an enterprising individual like Wells. Over a period years, Wells, through his Great Stationery and Book Store on the Bay, became the principal bookseller in the Carolinas



Charleston Harbor, 1768, engraved by Pierre Charles Canot

and has been credited with "revolutionizing the book trade in the Southern American colonies." Together with two other Scottish printers, David Bruce, and James Robertson, printing and bookselling, which had stagnated under the Timothys, were revived through "innovative methods, European sources of materials, liberal terms of credit for customers, and the development of markets in other parts of the South."

Robert's second son, William Charles, was born in Charleston in 1757. In the early 1760s, his father was already wealthy enough to send William and his older brother John back to Dumfries for education. William completed grammar school and attended the University of Edinburgh. He returned to Charleston in 1771 and served a three-year apprenticeship with a physician.

As described above, the early 1770s were a period when relations between the American colonies and the British were deteriorating rapidly. Robert was a staunch loyalist, and his position as a prominent businessman in Charleston as well as publisher of a loyalist newspaper, the *South-Carolina Gazette* was becoming increasingly difficult and unsafe. Leaving John to manage the business, Robert returned to Scotland in 1775, and William soon followed.

The following years were very productive for William, who by 1780 had completed his medical education at Leiden and Edinburgh.

In 1781, Robert requested that William return to Charleston, which was still under British control, to work with his brother to save what he could of the





### Printing Comes to Florida – Part 1, concluded

family business. In Charleston, William suggested that John should visit their father in Scotland, and John departed, leaving William, a doctor, to become “a printer, a bookseller, and a merchant” as he would later write in his autobiography.

William continued to operate the *South-Carolina Gazette*. The paper’s loyalist position was one reason that Robert had returned to Scotland, and William quickly found himself in the same position. By the end of 1782, he was preparing to depart for loyalist territory. His destination was the capital of British East Florida, St. Augustine.

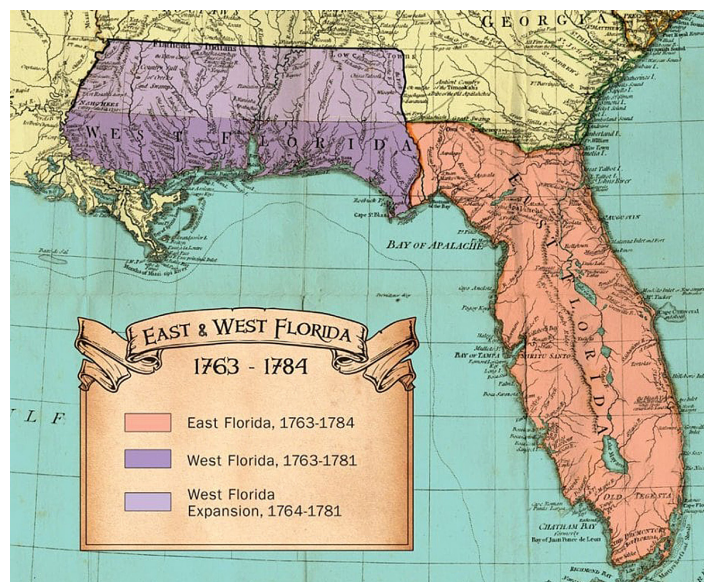
British East Florida? Florida had first been “discovered” and settled by the Spanish. They established St. Augustine in 1565. Florida remained under Spanish control until 1763 when Spain traded all of Florida to the British to recover Havana, which the British had taken control of the previous year. The transfer of Florida was part of the treaty that ended the Seven Years War, a global conflict among the European powers that played out in Europe, the Americas, and East Asia.

The British reorganized Florida into two provinces, East and West Florida, with capitals at St. Augustine and Pensacola, respectively. West Florida included parts of what are now Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. Florida was not part of the Thirteen Colonies and remained loyal to the British Crown throughout the Revolutionary War. As British territory, Florida became a haven for loyalists during the war years.

St. Augustine was the nearest loyalist city that William could reach, and he determined to take the business with him. We can only imagine what efforts it took to pack a printshop.

William described it thus:

I embarked in December, 1782, for St. Augustine, in East Florida, carrying with me as much of my brother’s moveable property as I could; amongst other things, a printing press, and a considerable quantity of printers’ types. When I arrived at St. Augustine, I



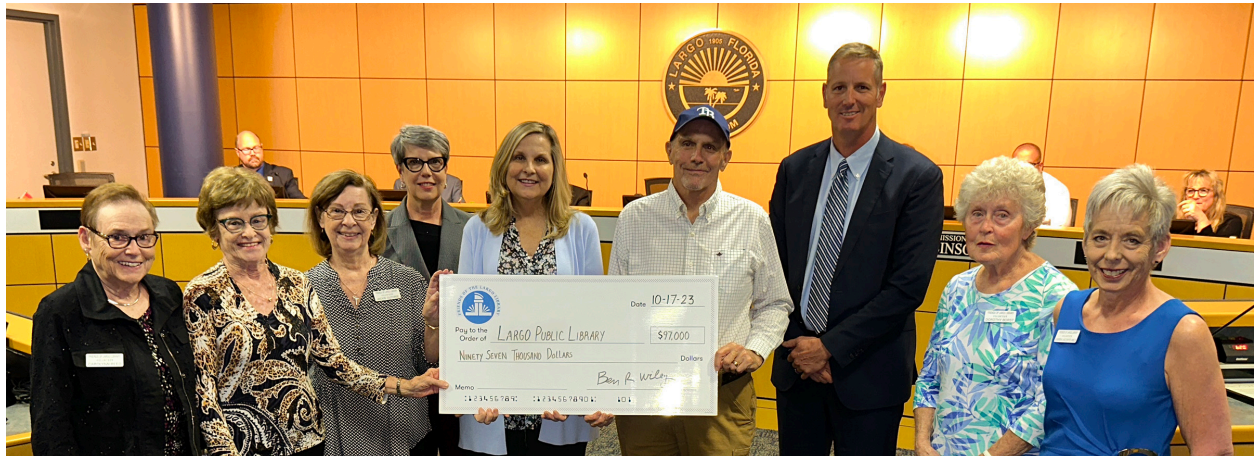
Territory of Florida during the British period, 1763–1784. The British gained sovereignty over Florida in the treaty that ended the Seven Years War, in which Great Britain soundly defeated its rivals France and Spain. East Florida (peach) and West Florida (darker purple) were divided at the Apalachicola River. When the British took possession of West Florida, they declared a new northern boundary (lighter purple) that extended the territory into previously French land.

determined to put up the press there, and print a newspaper. But here a considerable difficulty arose; the press had been easily taken to pieces in Carolina, and I naturally thought that it might be readily put together again; more especially as I had brought with me a regular pressman: but to my surprise he told me that he knew nothing of the matter; that he could work a press as well as any person, when it was put together, but that the putting it together constituted the particular business of a press-joiner. In this dilemma I recollected that there was amongst my brother’s books, one entitled ‘the Printer’s Grammar,’ containing rude cuts of a printer’s press. I studied this book for several days with the greatest diligence; and at length by means of the information derived from it, and with the assistance of a common negro carpenter, completely succeeded in my attempt to put the press in working order. Immediately afterwards, I began to publish a weekly newspaper in my brother’s name; the first thing of the kind ever attempted in that country.

**How Printing Came to Florida**  
*continues in the December issue.*

## New Work from FBS Members and Friends

### Friends of Largo Library Recognized by Largo City Commission



*This photo features, L to R, Friends board members Carolyn Reed, Pat Bell, Jackie Guthrie, Assistant Library Director Geri Remming, Library Director Casey McPhee, Friends President Ben Wiley, Largo Mayor Woody Brown, and Friends board members Dorothy Borst and Karen LaCorte-Nies.*

**Friends of Largo Library, under the leadership of its President Ben Wiley, was recently recognized by the Largo City Commission during the national Friends of Libraries Week.** Libraries can appear under attack these days, and such official government recognition of libraries and their Friends support groups validates and reinforces the central importance in our democracy of free and open access to library collections to all citizens.

On this occasion, the Friends displayed a ceremonial check for \$97,000 to support ongoing library programs (expansion of e-book collection and access, subsidies to the countywide Pinellas library system) and to initiate new community outreaches (Freedom to Read campaigns, Florida Humanities Speaker Series, library volunteer monitoring system). This \$97,000 represents a lot of \$1 book sales in the Friends Bookstore, a lot of \$10+ book sales on the Friends Amazon site, and a generous philanthropic bequest from the estate of Leslie Chandler.

Largo Public Library is a special friend of FBS as it continues to be the repository of FBS archives. Our forty years of history – programs, publications, photographs, meeting minutes, newsletters and more – are all catalogued, indexed, and housed in Hollinger boxes. These are specially designed and constructed archival cardboard boxes used to preserve and protect historical documents and photos. FBS archivist, Carl Mario Nudi, monitors and updates the archives as we anticipate a 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary keepsake book based on this history.

*In December 2018, FBS became one of the sponsors of the Largo Public Library Bookmobile through the efforts of our late member Lee Harrer. FBS identity was included on the back panel of the bookmobile (right).*





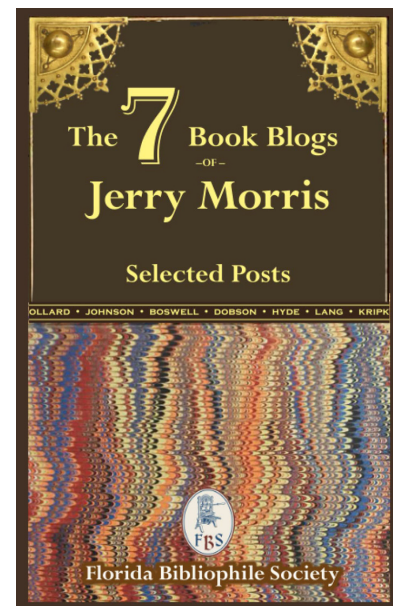
## FBS Publications

### *The 7 Book Blogs of Jerry Morris*

FBS. May 2023. 312 pp. \$43.50 (hbk), 30.00 (pbk). Color illus.

**The 7 Book Blogs of Jerry Morris** collects 29 out of the more than 300 blog posts that Jerry published over a 20-year period. Selected by a committee of Jerry's devoted readers, these posts represent the range of Jerry's bibliophilic interests as well as his many contributions to the history of books and the people that collected them. A few of the bibliophiles Jerry wrote about include Mary and Donald Hyde, J. O. Halliwell-Phillips, Adrian H. Joline, Alfred W. Pollard, and Madeline Kripke. A number of booksellers are also subjects of these blog posts, including Larry McMurtry and his famous bookshop, Booked Up, in Archer City, Texas, and John R. Lindmark and his ill-fated eponymous shop in Poughkeepsie, New York – an infamous “chapter” in bookselling history. Also included, of course, are Jerry's personal collecting interests, such as his extensive work cataloging the libraries of Samuel Johnson, James Boswell, and Charles Lamb. Especially close to Jerry's bibliophilic heart was his collection of the editions of William Strunk's (and later Strunk and White's) well-known guide, *The Elements of Style*. Jerry's meticulous research and wide-ranging relationships throughout the world of bibliophiles allows him to illuminate some overlooked but fascinating individuals and publications.

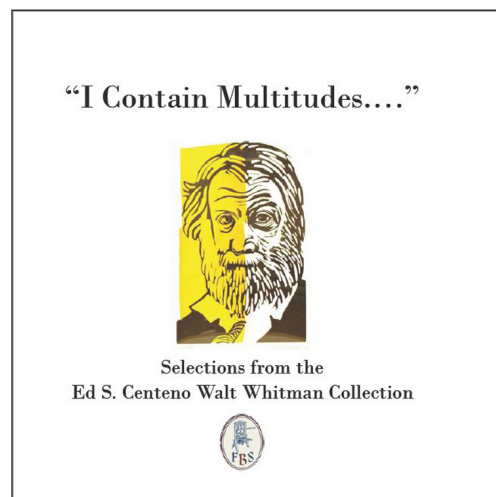
Available through Amazon Books: [hardback](#) and [paperback](#).



### *“I Contain Multitudes . . .”: Selections from the Ed S. Centeno Walt Whitman Collection*

FBS. April 2022. 58 pp. \$20.00 (pbk). Color illus.

**In April 2022, the Florida Bibliophile Society hosted a special exhibition of items from the Ed S. Centeno Walt Whitman Collection at the Largo Public Library in Largo, Florida.** Ed opened the exhibition with a slide presentation at the Largo library. This book contains photographs, descriptions, and history of over 100 items in Ed's collection, which includes editions of *Leaves of Grass*, Whitman ephemera and period collectibles, as well as specially commissioned works of art. The collection is a remarkable and revealing tribute to Whitman. This book is an excellent introduction to Whitman, with information on his creative process and output and his outsized impact on American and world poetry. The book is also an excellent introduction to Ed Centeno, an intrepid and engaging collector whose enthusiasm for life and for Whitman is truly contagious. Only a few copies of this limited edition of 100 books remain.



Order directly from the Florida Bibliophile Society by sending a check for \$20.00 to Florida Bibliophile Society, P.O. Box 530682, St. Petersburg FL 33747. You may also request a copy via email at [floridabibliophiles@gmail.com](mailto:floridabibliophiles@gmail.com) and use the same email address to pay through PayPal.



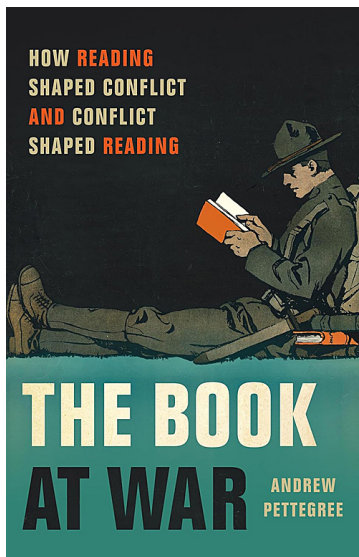
## Books in Brief

### The Book at War: Libraries and Readers in an Age of Conflict

Andrew Pettegree

Basic Books

480 pp., December 2023



With “precise analysis and sparkling prose,” Andrew Pettegree investigates the broad role that books have played in warfare, from inspiring patriotism and justifying conflict, to instructional manuals, to supporting troop morale.

The range of books considered includes treatises specifically

addressed to warfare, such as Sun Tzu’s *The Art of War*, Machiavelli’s *The Art of War* (1521), and Clausewitz’s *On War* (1832) as well as Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, which helped in shape Union support for the Civil War. In late-19<sup>th</sup>-century Britain, articles in magazines addressed to young men, such as *The Boy’s Own Paper*, nurtured a martial spirit. Pettegree considers books that spread “poisonous ideologies.” He also considers suppression of books such as by burning or removal from libraries. Then are the book protectors that found places for books that were safe from bombings or confiscation. There there are the books specifically for soldiers, published and distributed in the millions. Pettegree argues for the endurance of books in daily life and during conflicts, “notwithstanding the domination of

new technologies of war-making and information gathering.”

“Magisterial” — *Sunday Times*

**Andrew Pettegree** is a professor of modern history at the University of St. Andrews and a leading expert on book and media history.

Sources: Kirkus Reviews; Basic Books; *Sunday Times*



### The Chapter: A Segmented History from Antiquity to the Twenty-First Century

Nicholas Dames

Princeton University Press

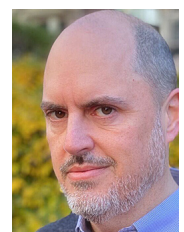
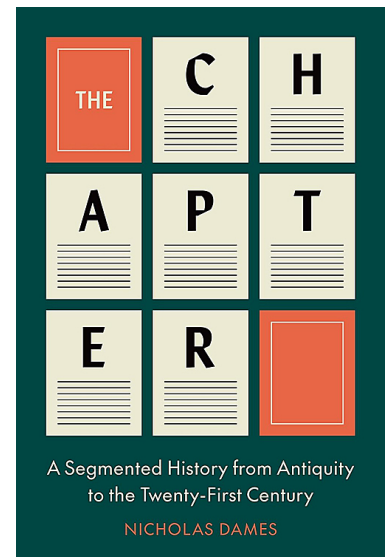
384 pp., November 2023

A simple but revealing question – Why do books have chapters? – begins a literary journey spanning 2000 years, showing how an ancient editorial technique became universally recognized in narrative art and a means to register the sensation of time.

Dames begins with the textual compilations of the Roman world, where chapters evolved as a tool to organize information. He goes on to discuss the earliest divisional systems of the Gospels and the segmentation of medieval romances, describing how the chapter took on new purpose when applied to narrative texts and how narrative segmentation gave rise to a host of aesthetic techniques. Dames shares engaging and in-depth readings of influential figures, from Sterne, Goethe, Tolstoy, and Dickens to George Eliot, Machado de Assis, B. S. Johnson, Agnès Varda, Uwe Johnson, Jennifer Egan, and László Krasznahorkai. He illuminates the sometimes tacit, sometimes dramatic ways in which the chapter became a kind of reckoning with time and a quiet but persistent feature of modernity.

**Nicholas Dames** is the Kahan Professor of Humanities at Columbia University and an editor in chief of *Public Books*, a magazine of ideas, arts, and scholarship.

Source: Princeton University Press



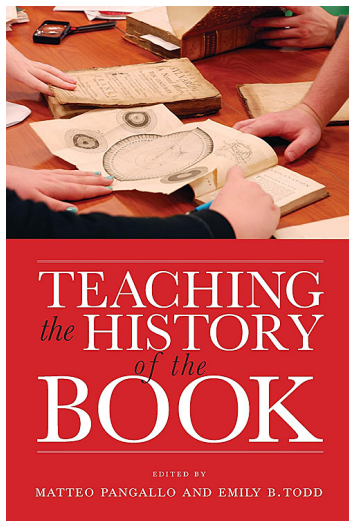


**Books in Brief, continued****Teaching the History of the Book**

Matteo Pangallo and Emily B. Todd (eds.)

University of Massachusetts Press

376 pp., May 2023



Since it first became an acknowledged academic discipline in the 1980s, the history of the book has benefitted numerous disciplines and become widely studied and taught.

With original contributions from a diverse range of teachers, scholars, and practitioners in literary studies, history, book arts, library science, language studies, and archives,

*Teaching the History of the Book* is the first collection of its kind dedicated to book history pedagogy. Presenting a variety of methods for teaching book history both as its own subject and as an approach to other material, each chapter describes lessons, courses, and programs centered on the latest and best ways of teaching undergraduate and graduate students.

This volume introduces ways of helping students consider text production, circulation, and reception. Chapters cover effective ways to organize book history courses, using book history in other courses, and selecting print and digital tools. Leading figures in the field share classroom experiences to bring to life the rich possibilities for teaching book history in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



**Matteo Pangallo** is associate professor of English at Virginia Commonwealth University.

**Emily B. Todd** is dean of the School of Arts and Sciences at Eastern Connecticut State

Source: University of Massachusetts Press

**I Give These Books: The History of Yale University Library, 1656-2022**

David Alan Richards

Oak Knoll Press

360 pp., 2022

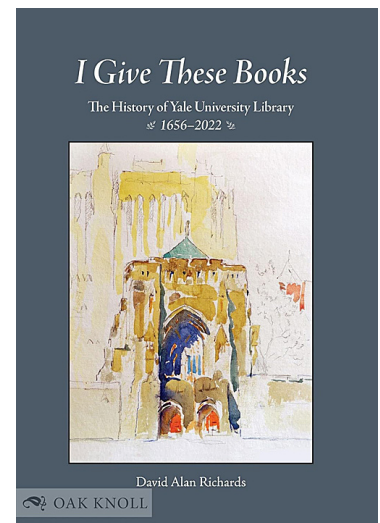
The first gift for a college library in New Haven was made in 1656, almost half a century before Yale College itself was founded. Books from Europe and England were brought by Puritans to Boston, seeking to found their own colony. They had travelled in 1637 in the same ship with John Harvard and his books, bequeathed at his death

to the new college which took his name. Most of Yale's ten founding trustees, themselves educated at Harvard, gave their vellum-bound volumes to form Yale's first roomful of folios and quartos in 1701.

*I Give These Books* is the first "fully-fledged history of the library of one of America's oldest universities from its founding through the present day." Each succeeding century witnessed a transformation of the collection. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, organization was the theme as acquisition from overseas libraries, faculty member collections, bequests, endowments, and auctions expanded the collection. Thus, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the theme was providing adequate storage, and in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, transforming a storehouse to a workshop, now with over 15 million volumes.

**David Alan Richards** is a retired real-estate lawyer with undergraduate degrees in history from Yale College and Cambridge University and a law degree from Yale Law School.

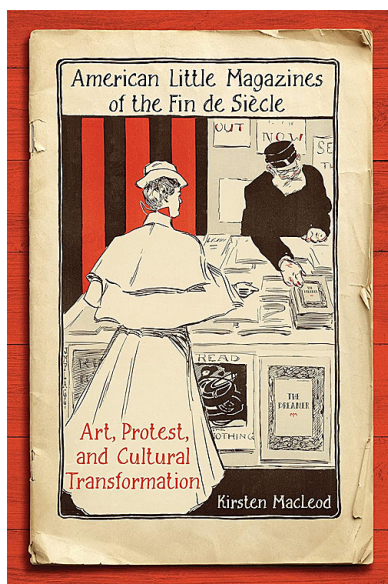
Sources: Yale Library; New Books Network



## Books in Brief, concluded

**American Little Magazines of the Fin de Siecle: Art, Protest, and Cultural Transformation**

Kirsten MacLeod  
University of Toronto Press  
508 pp., June 2023



“Little magazine” may not mean much to the uninitiated, but this is the name of an influential genre of magazine that transformed American cultural life at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In *American Little Magazines of the Fin de Siecle*, MacLeod examines the rise of this print media form. The little magazine has

long been regarded as an interest of modernist avant-gardes and elite artistic coteries, for whom it served as a form of resistance to mass media, but MacLeod’s detailed study of its origins paints a different picture. MacLeod demonstrates how the little magazine was deeply connected to the artistic, social, political, and cultural interests of a rising professional-managerial class. She offers a richly contextualized analysis of the little magazine’s position in the broader media landscape: namely, its relationship to old and new media, including pre-industrial print forms, newspapers, mass-market magazines, fine press books, and posters. MacLeod’s study challenges conventional understandings of the little magazine as a genre and emphasizes the power of “little” media in a mass-market context.

**Kirsten MacLeod** is a Reader in Modernist Print Culture and serves as Programme Lead for the Degree in Literature and History at Newcastle University (UK).



Sources: University of Toronto; Newcastle University

[Bookish fiction]

**The Librarianist: A Novel**

Patrick deWitt  
Ecco  
352 pp., July 2023

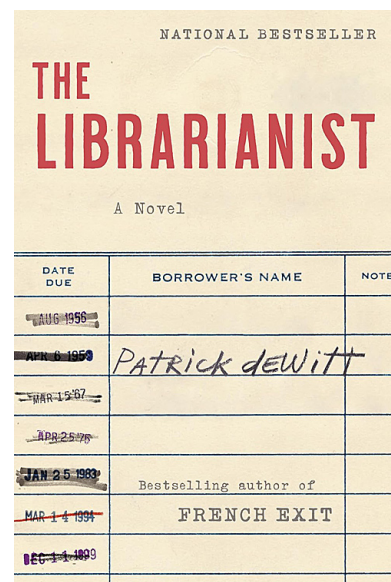
Bob Comet is a retired librarian passing his solitary days surrounded by books and small comforts in a mint-colored house in Portland, Oregon.

One morning on his daily walk, he encounters a confused elderly woman lost in a market and returns her to the senior center that is her home. Hoping to fill the void he’s known since retiring, he begins volunteering at the center. Here, as a community of strange peers gathers around Bob, and following a happenstance brush with a painful complication from his past, the events of his life and the details of his character are revealed.

Behind Bob Comet’s straight-man façade is the story of an unhappy child’s runaway adventure during the last days of the Second World War, of true love won and stolen away, of the purpose and pride found in the librarian’s vocation, and of the pleasures of a life lived to the side of the masses. Bob’s experiences are imbued with melancholy but also a bright, sustained comedy; he has a talent for locating bizarre and outsize players to welcome onto the stage of his life. Bob has lived his life through and for literature, unaware that his own experience is a poignant and affecting narrative in itself.

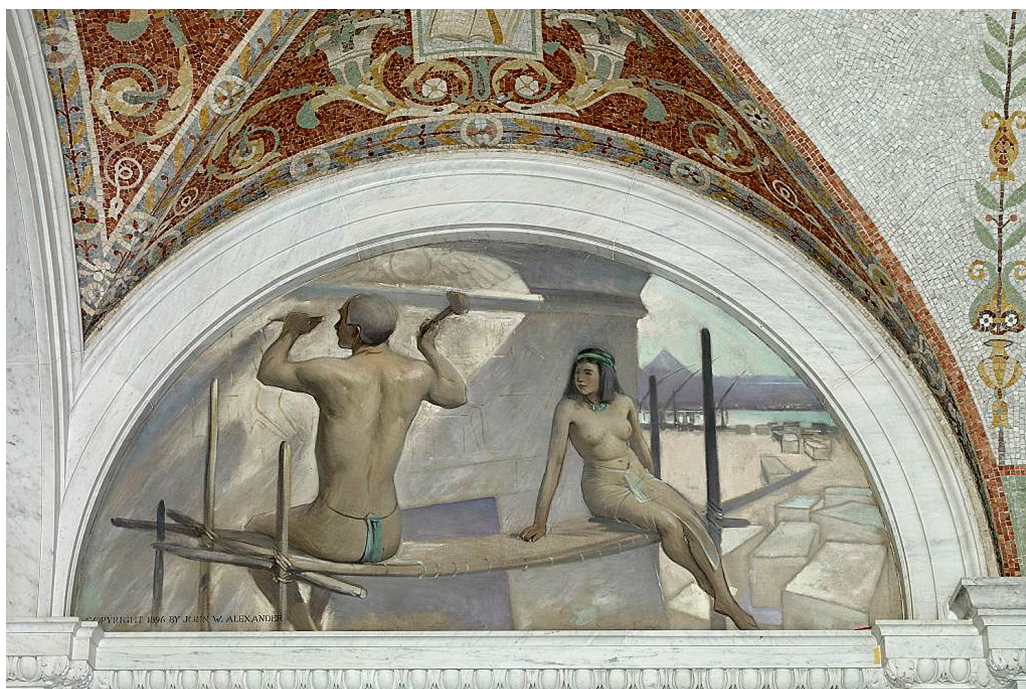
**Patrick deWitt** is the author of the bestsellers *French Exit* and *The Sisters Brothers* (short-listed for the Booker Prize).

Source: Ecco





**Murals in the Library of Congress.** Also in Alexander's "Evolution of the Book" series is *Hieroglyphics*, a nod to a great civilization, perhaps to the Library at Alexandria, and certainly to the 19<sup>th</sup>-century fascination with all things Egyptian. Ancient Egypt was unknown to Europe until 1798, when Napoleon invaded Egypt. Forty scientists went along, and they discovered wonders such as the Sphinx and perhaps more importantly, the Rosetta Stone. Written in hieroglyphics and Greek, it would lead to the decipherment of the ancient Egyptian language in 1822 and the ability to read the words chiseled into thousands of stone monuments and written on papyrus.



Library of Congress



### This Month's Writers and Contributors

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

Wesley Brown  
Sean Donnelly  
David Hall  
Maureen E. Mulvihill  
Carl Mario Nudi  
Irene Pavese  
Gary Simons

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!

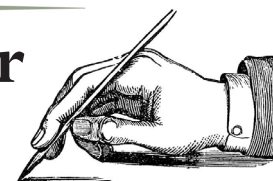
If you love books, take your interest to the next level by joining a group of dedicated book lovers (i.e., bibliophiles). You will meet serious collectors, dealers, scholars, and readers, and you will discover a lively, enjoyable group.



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, FABS, 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

### November 2023



### Bill Hale: Portrait of the Book Seller as a Young Man

Seminole Community Library  
9200 113<sup>th</sup> St. N., Seminole, FL  
November 19, 2023, 1:30 p.m.

(also available on Zoom)

James Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* tells a writer's coming-of-age story – Bill Hale has such a story of his own to tell. Now a writer and bookseller, it's not necessarily his relative youth that makes him unique but rather how someone of this generation develops such an interest in books and the antiquarian market at that. Bill will share his own "portrait of the bookseller as a young man": the byways and sidetracks, good choices and bad, and early literary influences that led him to his present book career and writerly interests. As an active online bookseller via his website Ageless Literature and as a busy promoter and entrepreneur of all things literary, he exemplifies passion, vitality, and a sense of unlimited horizons. He has a great story to tell.

### December 2023



Maria Christensen/Etsy

### FBS Holiday Party

December 17, 2023, 1:30 p.m.

The FBS Holiday Party will once again be hosted by Ben and Joyce Wiley at their home in Largo.

FBS members are requested to bring an appetizer, side dish, wine, or dessert. Please RSVP to Ben Wiley (bwiley@tampabay.rr.com) by Sunday, December 11, if you are coming, and let us know what you will be bringing.

FBS members are also requested to bring a wrapped book. Our book exchange last year was so much fun that we want to do it again!

Hope to see you there!





## 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

— November 9 —

#### Amelia Island Book Festival

Fall Celebrity Author Luncheon, featuring Jacques Pépin, Courtyard by Marriott, Amelia Island, FL  
([www.ameliaislandbookfestival.org/](http://www.ameliaislandbookfestival.org/))

— November 10–12 —

#### Life to Paper Book Festival

Nautilus Sonesta, Miami Beach, FL  
([lifetopaperbookfest.com/](http://lifetopaperbookfest.com/))

— November 11 —

#### Tampa Bay Times Festival of Reading

The Palladium, St. Petersburg  
([www.festivalofreading.com/](http://www.festivalofreading.com/))

— November 12–19 —

#### Miami Book Fair

Miami Dade College -- West Campus, Miami, FL  
([www.miamibookfair.com](http://www.miamibookfair.com))

— November 14, 11 a.m.–12 p.m. —

#### Banned Book Club

This month's book: Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home: A Tragicomic*  
Bookstore1, Sarasota, FL

— November 15–16 —

#### Cracker Storytelling Festival, Homeland, FL

([crackerstorytellingfestival.com/](http://crackerstorytellingfestival.com/))

— November 17 —

#### Ringling Literati Book Club, Sarasota, FL

Featured book: John Constable: A Portrait by James Hamilton ([www.ringling.org/event/literati-book-club/](http://www.ringling.org/event/literati-book-club/))

— December 6–10 —

#### INK Miami: Modern and Contemporary Works on Paper ([www.inkartfair.com](http://www.inkartfair.com))

— December 8–10 —

#### Art Basel, Miami

([www.artbasel.com/miami-beach](http://www.artbasel.com/miami-beach))

### Rare Book Cafe Coffee Break

#### FBS welcomes the Rare Book Cafe

**Coffee Break**, the new format of the Rare Book Cafe, begun several years ago by Florida booksellers and FBS members Steve and Edie Eisenstein. "Coffee Break" is co-hosted by long-time RBC regulars Lee Linn (The Ridge Books, Calhoun, GA) and Ed Markeiwicz (Montgomery Rare Books & Manuscripts, Portland, OR). Get a cup of coffee and join [RBC Coffee Break on Facebook](#).

#### COFFEE BREAK No. 32: Treasures of the

##### Harlem Renaissance – RBC co-host Lee Linn

shares some special Harlem Renaissance items she's taking to the Books in Boston Shadow Show (Oct. 28), including volumes by Langston Hughes and Countee Cullen. Co-hosts Lee and Ed chat with RBC regular Gigi Best, who has a special place in her heart for all things Harlem Renaissance. (Gigi and her husband Skip Richardson are reopening their museum in St. Augustine in a larger space. Stay tuned.)

#### COFFEE BREAK No. 31: Why buying from an antiquarian book dealer is best – Richard

Mori, the Road Warrior, shares some amazing finds for Appalachian Trail hikers in New Hampshire, with good advice for all book lovers. Ed and Lee join Richard to discuss the benefits of buying from knowledgeable booksellers. Lee shares material from Georgia-born composer and tenor Roland Hayes, who worked with the Boston Symphony.

#### COFFEE BREAK No. 30: The Road Warrior and the Boston Shadow Show – Co-host Ed

Markiewicz joins us from Verona, Italy, where he's learning book binding. Richard Mori checks in with a recent acquisition: a stunning pop-up book on birds, complete with built-in bird sounds and other interesting finds (Hawthorne, Geisel, Gorey). The (then) upcoming Boston International Antiquarian Book Fair and dealers of interest are discussed.

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:*

**Oct. 8, 2023 – Sir Tim Waterstone on Building a Bookselling Empire** – Andrew Nash is Reader in Book History at the Institute of English Studies, University of London, and Director of the London Rare Books School (RBS). We met in Reading to talk about Andrew's RBS course on how to use/work with publishers' archives. Andrew explains how publishers' archives are useful to many scholars, with materials that can be studied from economic, social, and cultural perspectives. These archives yield details about how knowledge and "culture" is "made public" in society.

**Sept. 14, 2023 – Andrew Nash on the value of Publishers' Archives** – Waterstone revolutionized British bookselling and changed the country's cultural landscape. We talked about his memoir, *The Face Pressed Against a Window* (Atlantic, 2019) and about how he accomplished what he accomplished. Topics included Tim's troubled relationship with his father, his eight children, the creative strategy behind growing Waterstones and more.

**Aug. 18, 2023 – Novelist David Mitchell on What he Does and How he Does it** – Mitchell feels compelled to make better and better narrative. A steady flow of award-winning novels led, in 2018, to the *Sunday Times* Award for Literary Excellence, which recognizes a writer's body of work. His "plan" is working.

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.

*Upcoming episodes:*

**Nov. 14, 7 p.m. ET – David Waldstreicher: *The Odyssey of Phillis Wheatley: A Poet's Journeys through American Slavery and Independence* (virtual)** – Admired by George Washington, ridiculed by Thomas Jefferson, published in London, and read far and wide, Phillis Wheatley led an extraordinary American life. Seized in Africa, enslaved, and sold to a Boston merchant, she became a noted young poet. She mastered the Bible, Greek and Latin translations, Pope, and Milton. She composed poems for celebrated events and people and lampooned, questioned, and asserted the injustice of her enslaved condition. Waldstreicher offers the fullest account to date of Wheatley's life and works, correcting myths, reconstructing intimate friendships, and deepening our understanding of her verse and her era.

**Nov. 30, 2 p.m. ET – Michael Roy: *Fugitive Texts: Slave Narratives in Antebellum Print Culture* (virtual)** – Antebellum slave narratives, once ignored, disparaged, or simply forgotten, have become valued in the America canon, now widely read and studied. One key aspect of the genre, however, has been left unexamined: its materiality. What did original editions of slave narratives look like? How were these books circulated? Who read them? In *Fugitive Texts*, Roy examines the slave narrative as a material artifact. Through a wide range of sources, he reconstructs the publication histories of famous and lesser-known narratives, placing them against the changing backdrop of antebellum print culture.



**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 [75 podcasts](#) on SoundCloud, with these recent additions:

**Visualising Dracula, by Simon Cooke**

– Although Bram Stoker did not invent the vampire character, his version – never out of print since it first appeared in 1897 – has become a cultural archetype. The first edition was not illustrated, but its garish yellow cover with red lettering, while unremarkable today, was selected carefully to match the color of yellowbacks, reliably sensational novels of the Victorian era, as well as *The Yellow Book*, the famous journal of the Decadent movement. In one color, the design connects the Gothic, the Decadent, and the Sensational. Starting with these insights, Cooke goes on to examine illustrated editions up to the present day and what they bring to the the book and character.

**University of Miami Special Collections**

[“Deep Dives”](#) is an online series of webinars offering an informative, enticing, and educational look into a selection of images that are representative of materials in Special Collections.

**Sept. 12 – Arthur Dunkleman – A Virtual Tour of the Jay I. Kislak Collection** – Jay Kislak was a prominent collector, philanthropist and Miami resident for more than 60 years. Al his life, he collected rare books and historic artifacts with a particular interest in Florida and the Caribbean and exploration, navigation and the early Americas. Kislak made financial gifts and donations of important materials to several institutions, including the Library of Congress, the University of Miami, and the City of Miami.

**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:

**Oct. 23 – Jason Dean on “Hertzog in the**

**House of Grolier”** – In his career of 61 years, Texas printer Carl Hertzog and his work earned numerous awards and wide recognition for his work, including from the AIGA and the Rounce and Coffin Club. Hertzog was responsible for the design or printing of over 300 books, and several hundred ephemeral works. Though well-known during his career and especially in Texas, Hertzog today is less widely known than his work merits. Drawing from his own collection as well as from institutions, Jason Dean will illustrate his argument that Hertzog should be recognized more widely among American fine press printers of the 20th century, and will discuss Hertzog’s underappreciated work and legacy. Dean will focus on four of Hertzog’s most important books: *Interwoven*, *Calendar of Twelve Travelers through the Pass of the North*, *Unpublished Letters of Adolphe Bandelier*, and *The King Ranch*.

**Oct. 16 – Joseph Black on “The Private Libraries of Early Modern British Women”**

– Professor Black (U Mass, Amherst) reports on discoveries about books owned by women in early modern Britain. Evidence for women’s book ownership in the period was scant; however, over the past five years, the Private Libraries in Renaissance England (PLRE) project has edited more than sixty booklists associated with early modern women, generating an archive of more than two thousand records of women’s book ownership in England, Scotland, and Ireland between 1550 and 1700. The searchable archive enables researchers to browse libraries of early modern women and compare collections with one another and with those of other book owners in the period. Black has published widely on the history of early modern British books and reading and is General Editor of the PLRE project, hosted by the Folger Shakespeare Library.

## ...and More

**F**ont. These days, the word “font” is often used synonymously with the word “typeface.” These are two related but different things.

A **typeface** is a design for the letters and symbols used in printing. For example, the typeface you are reading right now is Perpetua, designed by the sculptor Eric Gill in 1925.

A **font** is a specific size, weight, and style of a typeface. For example, the font you are reading right now is Perpetua, 12 point, regular weight, roman or upright.

*Now you are reading Perpetua 14 point, bold, italic.*

In terms of the little pieces of metal type that are used in letterpress printing, there must be a limited number of fonts because each one has to be designed and cast. It may be obvious that to make a single piece of type requires casting molten metal into a mold. A set of these molds is made to produce a single font when someone carves each letter and symbol in the font. To make larger versions of the font cannot be achieved by simply enlarging something. For a well-made font, the designer goes back to the drawing board and adjusts the proportions of each letter and symbol for the larger size.

Perpetua, 16 pt, reg, Rom  
Perpetua, 12 pt, reg, Rom

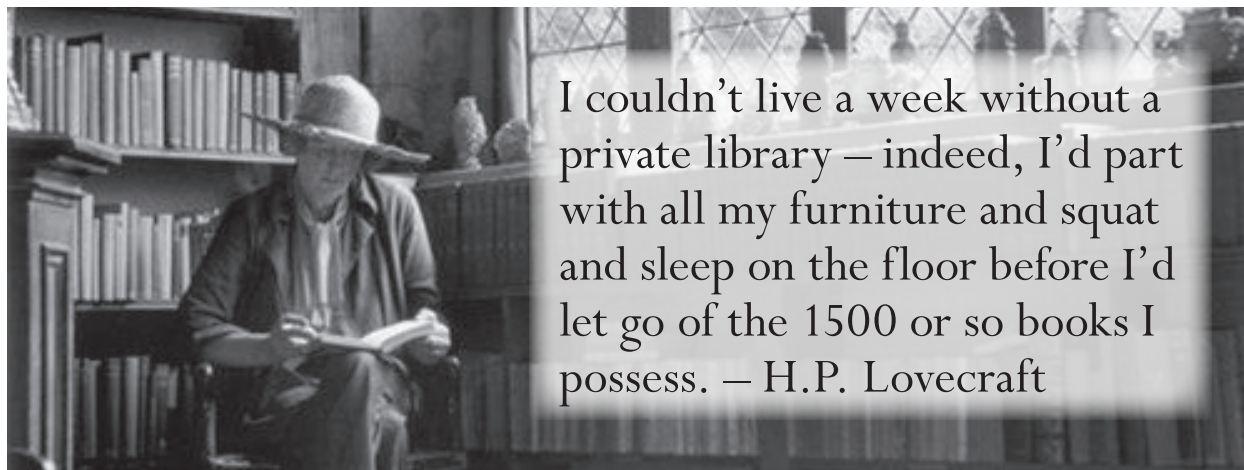
In this example, we have written a font name in Perpetua 16 point, both regular and roman. The second line is Perpetua 12 point enlarged on the computer to 16 points. If you look carefully, you will see the subtle differences between the designed 16 point (line 1) and the enlarged 16 point. It is subtle with just a four-point difference, but already it is easy to see that the small horizontal marks, such as the crossbar in the lowercase “e” is much heavier in the enlarged version. This is because Perpetua has medium contrast, which means the vertical strokes tend to be thicker than horizontal strokes. This is part of what gives a typeface a quality called type color. To preserve this type color, the contrast of larger point sizes must be increased.

Italic fonts of a typeface are a separate design problem. Italic fonts are intended to more closely resemble human handwriting – very nice human handwriting – rather than the Roman capitals from which standard English typefaces (“the roman alphabet”) are derived. Thus, italic typefaces are carefully designed; they are not just slanted versions of the regular typeface. For example, compare Perpetua italic, 12 pt, regular weight with Perpetua 12 pt, regular, slanted to 10 degrees:

*Perpetua italic vs. Perpetua slanted.*

This makes it easier to see the many design elements that are changed to make an italic font

Is it clear that this is a subject that can become enormously detailed?



I couldn't live a week without a private library – indeed, I'd part with all my furniture and squat and sleep on the floor before I'd let go of the 1500 or so books I possess. — H.P. Lovecraft



# Florida Bibliophile Society 2023–2024 Season



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

**September 24 • FBS Members—September Show and Tell:** Members brought a remarkable assortment of books to share – each with its own remarkable story!

**October 15 • Rob Norman – Skin in the Game: Writer, Bookseller, Dermatologist** – We met at Rob’s “Book Lovers Bookstore” in Tampa. It’s a work in progress where we searched for treasures as well as hearing Rob’s presentation about his life in books.

**November 19 • Bill Hale – Portrait of the Bookseller as a Young Man** – In his mid-20s, Bill Hale is a writer, a bookseller, and a promoter of arts and culture in the St. Pete area. Bill will tell us the unusual chain of events that led to his love of books and writing.

**December 17 • FBS Holiday Party:** Planning is underway for another glittering holiday gala at Ben and Joyce Wiley’s home in Largo. Stay tuned for more details.

**January 21 • Gino Passi, Carl Nudi, Sean Donnelly – University of Tampa’s MacDonald Kelse Library Special Collections:** Under the guidance of Special Collections Librarian Gino Passi, with insights from Carl Nudi and Sean Donnelly, we will tour the Special Collections and inspect some of its more important books and ephemera.

**February 18 • Kaitlin Crockett and Jeff Williams** – We will be meeting in Gulfport to visit the letterpress printing facilities of Kaitlin Crockett, one of our May 2023 banquet speakers. We will also visit with muralist and sign painter Jeff Williams in the same building.

**March 1–3 • Florida Antiquarian Book Fair,** one of the largest book fairs in the U.S., will be held at the St. Pete Coliseum. FBS will host a hospitality table in the foyer and staff a booth where we can spend more time with guests and introduce them to FBS. Sunday will feature our free book valuations.

**March 17 • Ted Wray – Book Artist.** Ted will share some his amazing sculpted book creations and discuss his methods and inspirations.

**April 21 • Jason Fortner – Field Trip to Clearwater’s Francis Wilson Playhouse:** We will meet at the Francis Wilson Playhouse in Clearwater for a tour, display, and presentation of Jason’s collection of theatre ephemera, including vintage Broadway posters and backstories. We will also be able to enjoy a Sunday matinee production of the award-winning play “The Play That Goes Wrong” by Henry Lewis, Henry Shields, and Jonathan Sayer. Play tickets are extra.

**April 20–24 • Gainesville Getaway:** The semiannual Alachua County Friends of the Library book sale features over 500,000 books, CDs, and other media in the Friends’ Book House in downtown Gainesville. FBS members often make a day trip on Saturday or make a weekend of it in beautiful North Central Florida.

**May 26 • Annual Banquet:** Our May banquet speaker will be **Roslyn Franken**, award-winning author and motivational speaker. Roslyn is the Holocaust memoirist of *Meant to Be: A True Story of Might, Miracles, and Triumph of the Human Spirit*.

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



## Endpaper • Prelude to Thanksgiving



An intrepid band of Florida bibliophiles – Gary, Irene, Stephanie, and Sean – drove up from Sarasota and St. Pete on Saturday, October 21, to join me and several thousand other book lovers to partake of the Alachua County Friends of the Library Book Sale, or for short, the Gainesville Book Sale.

The sale is a semiannual event, and a few FBS members usually come up for it. There's half a million books, CDs, records, etc. It's worth a trip.

Of course, the first thing you do is stand in the line to get in. That could be anywhere from 90 minutes on Saturday morning to 40 minutes on Saturday afternoon. I got there around 9:30 and had the longer wait, but the weather was wonderful, and it was very peaceful. When I walked in, I went straight to the Collector's Corner to look at the better books – there's always something interesting.

I bought a couple of books and stuck them in my

canvas book tote and headed out onto the main floor.

It's hard to describe the atmosphere – it's just very peaceful. People are quietly reading, pulling books for closer inspection, and reshelving – or sticking a book of their own canvas tote, or cardboard box, or whatever they brought to bring home their goodies. There's a quiet hum, punctuated by the occasional, "I've been looking for this one," sometimes directed at no one in particular. Or "Wow. That's beautiful. You've got to get it!" exchanged between friends.

I just wandered a bit and listened.

I thought about the news that weekend from Maine, from the Middle East.

And I thought how happy I was to be here with these people in this peaceful place.

Text from Gary: they had arrived and were in line.

See you at the bookstore! — Charles

## The Florida Bibliophile Society

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

The Florida Bibliophile Society is a 501c3 organization. All contributions to FBS are tax deductible.