



Turning the Page: Bibliographical Innovation and the Legacy of Aldus Manutius

The University of Melbourne, Australia
26 and 27 November 2015

2015 marks the quincentenary of the death of the great printer and publisher Aldus Manutius (c. 1451–1515). Aldus was an innovator in a number of ways, from his development and use of the first italic typeface and publishing of small octavo editions, to printing many first editions of classical Greek authors and the production of one of the most beautifully designed and illustrated books of the fifteenth century, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*.

To honour Aldus's life and afterlife, the Society invites papers exploring innovation or design in the printed book in any period from the time of Aldus to the modern day. Paper topics can relate to any aspect of the history of the book, from printing and publishing to the transmission from print to digital format and the reading experience.

Enquiries and proposals of 250 words for papers of 20 to 25 minutes should be sent to Anthony Tedeschi (atedeschi@unimelb.edu.au), Curator, Rare Books, Baillieu Library, The University of Melbourne. The deadline for paper proposals is **Monday 29 June 2015**. Students undertaking higher degree research are encouraged to submit offers of 'work in progress' papers; some travel bursaries will be available.

Details will be made available progressively on the BSANZ Inc. website: <http://www.bsanz.org/>

John McLaren Emmerson (1938–2014)

Newer and younger members of our Society may not be aware of all the claims John Emmerson, President for the years 1993–1995, had to real distinction both in Australia and in a wider sphere. Obituaries have already appeared in print (Michael Collins Persse in *The Age*, 29 September 2014; Nicolas Barker in the Winter 2014 number of *The Book Collector*, pp. 644–46) and it is probably unnecessary to repeat all the details. However, the main points must be made before consideration of what John gave to our studies and to the world of books.

The Emmerson parents were both lawyers by training, but their elder son John elected, following brilliant studies at Geelong Grammar, to pursue science at the University of Melbourne, where he was a member of Trinity College and prominent in a number of extra-curricular activities. After taking his BSc and MSc in Physics he went on a postgraduate scholarship to Worcester College, Oxford. His DPhil duly completed, he stayed on as a Junior

Fellow at New College working on particle physics. Reluctant to be involved in the commuting to CERN in Geneva that was to become the routine for Oxford physicists in the 1970s he returned to Melbourne a decade after he had first ventured abroad. Taking a new path he turned to Law, graduating with the Supreme Court Prize in 1974 from the University of Melbourne. In 1976 he was admitted to the Bar, specialising in intellectual property. Nine years later he took silk as one of the leaders of the profession in a field of increasing importance. His intense legal work continued apace until his last two or three years of illness, although he still went regularly to his chambers.

Apart from John's scientific research and teaching, crowned by the publication of *Symmetry Principles in Particle Physics* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1972), the Oxford period was notable in launching him on a third career as a book collector. His account of this, 'The Early Education of a Book Collector', appeared posthumously in *The Book Collector* (Autumn 2014, pp. 369–82). The essentially

low-key and understated article has to be read carefully because it lays out the methodical thought behind John's approach to his new hobby. The modesty is deceptive. As Nicolas Barker notes, Emerson was "to become one of the great book collectors of our time". What he achieved from a base in Melbourne is very much bound up with his involvement, from the early 1970s on, with our Society and with the Book Collectors' Society of Australia, whose Victorian President he was for several years up to his death.

High-class collecting is a form, indeed a major one, of bibliographical scholarship. John had a clear focus on the English Civil War and on Charles I, but this also meant that he was attentive to the whole social, economic, political, religious and cultural context of his chosen topics. The collection reflects this in myriad ways. It will become much better known, because John, in an act of patriotic generosity, has bequeathed it, together with a substantial endowment, to the State Library of Victoria. That institution will shortly be making formal announcements about what it has received, so it is inappropriate to say much more here. It is enough to indicate that with approximately 5000 pre-1801 items it is the most dazzling legacy the State Library has ever received. Nicolas Barker, who visited John as recently as May last year, points out some of the outstanding strengths in his obituary. Provenance, condition, significance in intellectual terms, all these are present in profusion.

John took his commitment to the bibliographical milieu very seriously. He participated in the planning of the Australia and New Zealand Early Imprints Project at the end of the 1970s, and he was a longtime Honorary Research Associate of Monash University's Centre for Bibliographical and Textual Studies, rebadged in 1999 as the Centre for the Book. At Monash too he had a quarter of a century as President of the Friends of the University Library. The strong seventeenth-century collections at Clayton reflect his interest and his generosity.

His own library was at the centre of his contributions to bibliographical and book-history research. Eleven papers published between 1981 and 2009, mostly in the Society's *Bulletin* and then *Script & Print*, reveal how he used his own books and

experience to add to the store of knowledge about the seventeenth century but also to reflect on wider historiographical and bibliophilic questions. A review article on the new *STC* in 1986 and a few pieces on pamphlets and the pamphlet trade in England take us into the heart of his thinking and hint at what he wanted to do with his library. The description in 1983 of Charles I's travelling library—willed to and now triumphantly installed in the Bodleian—took care to avoid mentioning that John had become its owner. In 2003 he celebrated Dan Fleming and John Evelyn, two of his favourite seventeenth-century collectors, many of whose books he successfully sought to acquire and whose style he emulated. Original condition was paramount. It was part of the authentic context he cherished, especially in unbroken volumes of pamphlets continuing to jostle with their original neighbours. Anybody concerned to study how a great library was put together and what, in its collector's eyes, it could contribute to understanding of a critical century cannot go past what John Emerson wrote over three decades for our Society's publications. Those of us who knew him mourn an exceptional person whose memory will live on for generations to come.

Wallace Kirsop

President's Report from the 2014 AGM
(slightly abridged)

Back in 2012 I wrote that 'issues surrounding incorporation were raised' and 'It is hoped that we move a little closer to finalising this, one way or the other.' Of course this 'Inc-ing' has occurred. Done and dusted. And due to the rules and requirements related to this new attachment the Committee has grappled with a number of international phone conferences over this past year. Occasionally a member on the line disappears back into the ether, but modern communications soon restores connection. By year next we will truly be a modern age Committee by skyping each other.

And here I must thank Dr Chris Tiffin (Secretary) for all his work and management, and Andrew Sergeant for tackling the Treasury business so quickly, and competently. Thanks also to the Council for their support. There has been a little traffic this year and input from

those concerned is always appreciated. On this representative note, we have Council vacancies in WA and ACT. We will endeavour to fill these positions.

The website www.bsanzt.org is now well established and members are encouraged to contribute to it. David Large is more than happy to include any postings. Thanks to David for his work in all this. Incidentally, he deserves hearty congratulations for a successful outcome with his PhD.

Script & Print continues to appear through the office of Dr Shef Rogers, editor. Of particular significance is that *Script & Print* is available in digital form via Australian Public Affairs Full Text (APA-FT). And through this facility it is amazing to see the typewriter font of the *Bulletin* of the 1970s change to the much more pleasing style of today. The fact that recently some 19,000 downloads were achieved of the uploaded S&P issues is also extremely gratifying. Thanks again to David Large for this work. The *Broadsheet* has also appeared thanks to Chris Tiffin; this sort of information will no doubt be transferred to a blog in time.

As you all know, the BSANZ Inc conference for 2014 is in Canberra, 27-28 November. The theme of 'Bibliographica' has attracted a number of excellent sounding papers from a wide range of individuals. And following the pattern of previous years, Wednesday 26 November will be Rare Book Librarians' day, culminating in an evening event which will open the BSANZ conference. The keynote speaker for the conference is Colin Steele, ex-Bodleian Library, Oxford and the Australian National University Library. It is also with great pleasure that the BSANZ Inc has awarded a travel bursary of \$300 to Jean McBain to attend this year's conference. A letter of congratulations has been sent to her on behalf of BSANZ Inc.

It is also pleasing to note that collegiality continues with the inclusion of the Australian and New Zealand Association of Antiquarian Booksellers (ANZAAB) at our conference. They will host a pop-up book fair on the first day of conference; excellent synergies.

It is with sadness I report that the BSANZ lost three stalwart members this past year, including two Past-Presidents of the Society: John Emmerson, a Melbourne barrister and

bibliophile; Victor Crittenden, librarian and proprietor of Mulini Press in Canberra; and Bill Thorn, librarian, printer and publisher of Canberra. On behalf of BSANZ I offer condolences to the families of each.

And the BSANZ conference for 2015? I am pleased to report that Anthony Tedeschi, VP of the Society and rare books librarian at the University of Melbourne, has taken on the task of steering us back to Melbourne. I recommend that we take this offer up. And Chris Tiffin – in one of his emails – has also asked about future locations in 2016 and 2017. Hopefully by the end of the AGM, these venues can be sorted.

It is also pleasing to note that the Committee will recommend to the AGM that the membership and subscription rates for 2015 remain unchanged. This is excellent news, and hopefully it will attract more members to our Society. This is my old 'chestnut' – the need for more members to invigorate the Society and ensure its longevity. This continues to be my personal challenge: to cajole fellow scholars, librarians, bibliographers, book historians, etc, to join.

And to further promote our Society, it has been decided to invest in a portable pull-up banner that can be displayed at our conferences or at other events at which we are represented. The banner will feature the Society's name, logo and web details. This sort of presence indicator is a good thing.

I wish members a successful conference, enjoyable holidays, and a bibliographically satisfying 2015.

Donald Kerr

Editor's Report from the 2014 AGM (slightly abridged)

After five years of editing *Script & Print*, I am beginning to come to grips with the editorial role and timetables. I have been overseas for the second half of the year, but thanks to the skills of Jo Oranje, our proofreader and generally incredibly able departmental assistant, the production and distribution of the journal have gone on much as if I were in Dunedin, and having a sufficient number of submissions to be able to work a bit ahead made it possible to plan out issues 3 and 4 even before I left Dunedin.

By the end of the year, I hope that we will

have the full run of the *Bulletin*'s issues online on our website. I'd like to thank David Large for his immense effort on this task, and the Society for providing very modest funding for David.

Your editor also served on a panel at SHARP in Antwerp in September this year, along with editors from *Book History*, *PBSA*, two Canadian book history journals, *Publishing History* and (in absentia) *The Library*. It was fascinating to hear how each journal regards itself as having a distinctive audience and tradition. Most of us felt less in competition with one another than in vaguely parallel tracks. *Script & Print* probably relies most heavily on its editor for all the tasks that some journals distribute to various firms or individuals, but it is also the best-looking of the journals (thanks again, Sydney Shep, for the makeover) and probably the most heavily illustrated, though the online Canadian journal has the most freedom in that regard.

This year has brought a change of system for managing the mailing list, with that duty shifting from the Treasurer to the Secretary. A few slips in the posting of issue 3 should be sorted for issue 4. Subscriber numbers are holding steady in the mid-180s, though the loss of two stalwart members, John Emmerson and Victor Crittenden, cannot be offset simply by new members. Nonetheless, the range and appeal of the journal, along with the warmth and engagement of our annual conferences, seem to be attracting new readers.

Costs are holding relatively steady, and so long as the special NZ postage rate remains in effect we will be able to operate on the current subscription income. Should that rate change, we may need to consider other options for production and distribution. The Council will also need to determine just how current it wishes our website to be; I have heard suggestions for a gap of anywhere from one to five years between the current issue and the most recent issue online. I personally favour a narrower gap, because our good material reaches many more readers digitally, but I realise it is subscribers who are paying for the production and we will continue to need that income if we wish to produce a printed journal.

Finally, I would like to thank the journal's active editorial board. They all respond promptly to requests to referee and are

generous with their time and critical insights, insights that greatly improve every essay we accept.

All of the editors at SHARP were asked what they would most like as editors, and to a person we all said we would welcome more feedback on our journals. So please don't hesitate to send me any thoughts you may have about *Script & Print* (shef.rogers@otago.ac.nz).

Shef Rogers

Webmaster's Report from the 2014 AGM (slightly abridged)

The contents of the BSANZ site have been updated to reflect the Society's incorporation and the consequent changes in naming and membership.

This year the Society has funded the digitising of the backrun of *Script & Print* and its predecessor, the *Bulletin*, and their mounting on the webpage. All issues of *Script & Print* from 2005 to 2010 have now been indexed and uploaded. The indexing and digitising of the *Bulletin* issues from 1970 to 2004 are almost complete, and they will be online shortly, possibly by the time of the conference.

While our analytics are not sufficiently sophisticated to identify which issues and articles are the most frequently accessed, we do have gross statistics for this section of the website. Since 1 January 2014 we have had over 19,000 downloads from the *Script & Print* back issues.

Traffic on the site from January to August averaged roughly 375 unique visitors per month (based on individual IP addresses). In the last two months this number increased dramatically to 700 unique visitors per month probably because of the upcoming conference.

Members are reminded that the News section of the Society's webpage contains notices of conferences, prizes and publications relevant to bibliography and book history. Members may submit relevant material for posting there. Send items of interest (CFPs, related conference or symposia information, upcoming lectures or relevant new books) to the Webmaster at david.large@otago.ac.nz for inclusion in the website's 'News' page.

David Large

