



“Tradition and Innovation: Readers, Books and Libraries”

28-29 November 2019

The 2019 annual conference of the BSANZ will be held at the University of Melbourne on Thursday 28th and Friday 29th November. The conference is organised in conjunction with the Australian Libraries History Forum. The Keynote Speaker will be Professor Russell Goulbourne of the University of Melbourne who will be speaking on Voltaire’s marginalia with the title, “Voltaire as Reader and Annotator: Between Private and Public”. Voltaire, you will remember, once observed in connection with panegyrics, “He was a great patriot, a humanitarian, a loyal friend; provided, of course, he really is dead.”



Professor Goulbourne came to Melbourne this year via Leeds University and King’s College, University of London. He has edited several volumes for the *Collected Works* Voltaire project (which is now triumphally in its 51st year), and his more general interests include French Early Modern reception of classical authors, the History of the Book and editorial theory. (If you are curious why the Voltaire Foundation which is producing this mighty edition is based at Oxford University rather than at a French institution, read its most interesting history at <http://www.voltaire.ox.ac.uk/about-us/history-voltaire-foundation>).

The conference will be preceded on Wednesday 27 November by the now-traditional Rare Book Librarians day which will be held at the Melbourne Museum.

Registration details and a list of the papers being offered will appear on the Society’s webpage in the near future. In the meantime, further information can be had from Hayley Webster (Melbourne Museum) hwebster@museum.vic.gov.au, or Prof Véronique Duché (University of Melbourne) veronique.duche@unimelb.edu.au

Australian and New Zealand Rare Book School

The 2020 Australasian Rare Book Summer School will be held at the State Library of New South Wales from Sunday 2 February to Friday 7 February, commencing with Welcome drinks on Sunday evening. Planning is underway with two courses confirmed and an additional course on Rare Book description & cataloguing being negotiated.

The two confirmed courses are *English Bookbindings, 1450–1850: Identification*

and Interpretation, taught by David Pearson, and *The History of Maps* taught by Julie Sweetkind-Singer.



David Pearson was Director of Culture, Heritage and Libraries for the City of London, and is now at the Institute of English Studies, University of London. He has taught at both the London and Virginia Rare Book Schools. His

particular interests are the history of bookbinding and the provenance of books.



Julie Sweetkind-Singer is Associate Director of Geospatial and

Cartographic Services at Stanford University and is in charge of the Branner Earth Sciences Library and Map Collections there. She has published on aspects of maps, their preservation and curation and also on the preservation of digital geospatial data. She has taught at the California Rare Book School.

Information on the full programme will be released in August 2019. The fee for a 5-day course will be \$AUD800.00. The Society offers one fee remission bursary to help a member to attend the School. All members in good standing are eligible to apply, but preference will be given to postgrad students and early-career researchers. For further information contact the Convenor, Maggie Patton, State Library of NSW mpatton@sl.nsw.gov.au

Melbourne Rare Book Week

On behalf of the Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand, Dr. Patrick Spedding delivered a fascinating and practical workshop for the 8th annual Melbourne Rare Book Week.

Incorporating his experiences as both an academic and a voracious bibliophile, Patrick discussed the current state of the market and how antiquarian booksellers have adapted (or in some cases not adapted) to the global nature of online selling. Although it is of great shame that the number of brick and mortar bookshops has dwindled, Patrick strongly believes that there are still several excellent collecting opportunities to be capitalised on.

Focusing specifically on his interest in hand-press period books from the 18th century, Patrick imparted tips and tricks to set up optimal search techniques when searching for material online. These include setting up your search strategy, saving searches, and creating alerts. Patrick's impressive and methodical approach to book collecting means that he has managed to snare several rare tomes for a relatively cheap price.

The Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand would like to thank Dr. Patrick Spedding for his time in delivering this workshop, and Susan Millard (Curator, Rare Books) from the University of Melbourne for making available the Dulcie Hollyock Room as venue.

Daniel Wee
Monash University

The Australian Common Reader Database

Julianne Lamond announces an upgrade to the Australian Common Reader database which contains borrowing records for six Australian regional lending libraries in the period 1861 to 1928. The libraries are the South Australian Institute (1861-1862), Port Germein Institute (SA) (1892-1908), Lambton Miners' and Mechanics' Institute (NSW) (1903-1928), Rosedale Mechanic's Institute (Vic) (1905-1908, 1911-1912), Collie Mechanics' Institute (WA) (1908-1909), and the Maitland Institute (SA not NSW), (1908-1911). (Note that the dates given are those of the surviving records rather than those of the functioning of the lending library.) The number of borrowing records ranges from those of the South Australian Institute (over 32,000) to those of the Maitland Institute (just over 6,000).

The tidy search interface allows access via author and title of the book (or journal) as well as by name, gender and occupation of the borrower. Searches can be confined

to a specific lending library or limited by any of the search criteria. This allows for some reasonably sophisticated plotting, although the database seems wilfully synchronic. I could not find how to sort search results chronologically.

Under the *Explore* tab there are some fun facts graphed, such as the proportion of fiction loans to non-fiction, borrowers by gender, and the ranking of items according to popularity. Not surprisingly, journals top the list; the most popular novel, (232 loans) being Bulwer Lytton's *What Will He Do with It?* If this title has so far escaped your notice the good news is that a version is freely available from Project Gutenberg. However, its popularity may not have seen out the century. Of the 232 loans recorded, all but one were made in 1861-62, and of those all but 10 were to male readers. Perhaps the most fascinating of the listings is that of the occupations of the readers who include chaff merchants, sleeper-hewers, light-house keepers, a member of the Bengal Civil Service and, yes, several "Gentlemen".

Although developed at Curtin University by Tim Dolin and Jason Ensor, the database is now managed by Julieanne Lamond julianne.lamond@anu.edu.au at the Australian National University. It is worth knowing about, and fascinating to use if you have an application for it. You will find it at www.australiancommonreader.com

**2019 BSANZ conference
University of Melbourne
28-29 November**

**Professor Rod Cave, Print and Book
Historian (1936-2019)**

In mid-June in Rutland, England, Rod Cave passed away at the age of 83. Rod

(more properly Roderick) Cave was a print and book historian who wrote numerous books of which three remain seminal: *The Private Press* (1971, new edition, 1983); *The History of the Golden Cockerel Press 1920-1960* (2002); and *Impressions of Nature: A History of Nature Printing* (2010). His importance to New Zealand (and Australia, by association) was that he was first professor of librarianship at Victoria University of Wellington. In this role he taught, and actively encouraged, students especially in the History of Book programmes that he instigated. He was interested in hand-printing and wrote on both Australian and New Zealand private presses, most notably "Fine printing down under" (*The Private Press*, 1983). He used the presses that now make up the Wai-te-ata Press at Victoria University as teaching tools about book production and bibliography. These presses are now under the care of Dr Sydney Shep, and prior to that, Don Mackenzie, who was instrumental in getting Cave hired as first professor. As a library student myself, I well remember talking with him for hours (when I should have been in class) about the merits of the printing of Count Potocki de Montalk, heir apparent to the thrones of Poland and Hungary. Cave was instrumental in getting a film documentary completed on Potocki, one of the world's most eccentric private press printers. After his stint in Wellington, Cave taught at Nanyang Technical University, Singapore, and then retired to England, where he continued to produce books and articles on a wide range of print and book subjects. We emailed occasionally on topics such as John Buckland Wright (a Dunedin-born artist), Chinese art prints, and tapa cloth. I will miss these exchanges.

Donald Kerr
University of Otago

“The Third Stream”

Alan Loney draws members’ attention, especially that of members interested in fine book production, to a symposium sponsored by the Grolier Club and the Codex Foundation: “The CODEX Effect and the Emergence of the ‘Third Stream’ in the 21st Century”, to be held in New York, 18-19 November 2019. Alan writes, “The attached notice seems to me one of the most exciting things happening in the field of the Book Arts right now – books that use high-quality traditional crafts and high-quality contemporary technologies in the one book – it’s a change that has been brewing to my knowledge over the last ten years and is growing in momentum – this will be a wonderful event, and its participants are among the most interesting people in the field.” More details and a list of participants can be found at the CODEX Foundation site, <https://www.codexfoundation.org/the-codex-effect> .

The Willison Foundation Charitable Trust

One of the more generous sponsors supporting research in Book History is calling for applications for grants of up to £4,000 to be taken in 2020. Eligibility to apply is very wide although applications from postgrad students, postdoctoral fellows and ECRs are especially welcomed. Closing date for this round of grants is Monday 30 September 2019, and successful applicants can expect to be notified in December and to receive their funds in January 2020.

Full details on the conditions of the awards can be found at the Trust’s webpage <https://willisoncharitabletrust.org/>. To indicate the sort of research the Trust funds, it publishes final reports from previous awardees. Prominent among the

2018 reports is that of the Society’s Immediate Past President, Donald Kerr, who seems to have had a grand time pursuing the nineteenth-century English clergyman and book collector, William Arderne Shoults, through various UK and Irish repositories.

SHARP 2019

SHARP has posted the final updated program and abstracts from its recent conference at <http://www.sharp2019.com/program/overview-schedule/>. BSANZ is attempting retrospectively to do the same for its past conferences, although as Ian Morrison has pointed out, we may find it difficult to maintain successful version control. SHARP conferences alternate between Europe and North America (last year’s conference in Sydney was a once-in-25-year exception rabbitied out of the hat by Jason Ensor). Next year’s conference will be held in Amsterdam.

Whoops!

The 1631 Wicked Bible, that gave the seventh Commandment as “Thou shalt commit adultery” and caused a great deal of subsequent grief for its hapless printers had a print run of a thousand copies. The Reserve Bank of Australia comfortably bested that tally in October 2018 when it issued 46 million \$50 notes each of which three times omitted the final “i” in “responsibility”. The errors were, admittedly, in background printing which requires a magnifying glass to read, possibly explaining why the mistake took nine months to be noticed. Unlike the unfortunate Messrs Barker and Lucas in the seventeenth century, however, no one at the RBA seems to be being made to take, we might say, responsibility for the error.