



OXFORD GUILD OF PRINTERS

# NEWSLETTER

December 2010

*This month's editor* Paul W. Nash 01608 654349  
*Next month's editor* Brian Clarke 01295 738535

*Chairman*  
Miles Wigfield 01285 750662

*Vice-Chairmen*  
Colin Cohen 01869 377040  
Richard Lawrence 01225 313494

*Events Secretary*  
Louisa Hare 01608 685924

*Treasurer and Membership Secretary*  
Michael Daniell 01865 510378

## A.G.M. Review

The Annual General Meeting was held at the December meeting of the Guild. The Chairman expressed his thanks to his committee for their support during the year, particularly for a successful Wayzgoose. The committee was re-elected with the addition of Brian Clarke both as co-editor of the *Newsletter* and as manager of the Guild website. It was agreed to appoint a Membership Secretary to relieve the Treasurer of this duty: any suggestions or even a volunteer would be warmly welcomed.

The Guild has a substantial surplus of funds and it was agreed that this should be dispersed as follows: A donation of £500 towards the purchase of the Cheyney archives for the Bodleian Library; bursaries to help students learn about letterpress printing particularly at St Bride Library but elsewhere as the occasion arises; and a short-story competition – the prize being the printing in a limited letterpress edition for the winning entry – through the auspices of the the Department of Creative Writing at Oxford University. (A meeting has already been arranged with the Director, Dr John Ballam, in the new year to plan this further.) Otherwise a pleasant evening was enhanced by mince-pies and mulled wine.

## Editorial

First of all, I must apologize, both for the lateness of this *Newsletter* (which has been caught in the pre-Saturnalian chaos) and for a number of errors which appeared in the last *Newsletter*. These are corrected here. Our Treasurer reminds me that subscriptions fall due in January, and that forms will be sent out with this *Newsletter*. Prompt payment will be greatly appreciated, and will help to ease the work of the Treasurer and reduce the need for reminders later in the year. I would like to thank Miles Wigfield for his excellent report on the AGM (and for his equally excellent first year as Chairman, not President, as I mistakenly called him last month), and all the other officers – Michael, Louisa, Jean-Claude, Richard and Colin – for their sterling work during 2010. Finally, may I wish all our readers a very happy Christmas and everything good in 2011.

## Guild meetings

Meetings are held at the Bell in Charlbury, and start at 7:30 for 8:00 p.m. The Bell serves food (as well as drink, naturally) and some members have taken to dining there before meetings. The food is recommended, and there is often a special (and very pleasing) £6.00 menu available from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m.

There will be no meeting in January.

**Monday 7 February** *Film Night - 'Proceed and be Bold'*.  
Details to follow soon.

**Monday 7 March** *Emil Rudolph Weiss: master type-designer*. Illustrated talk by Graham Moss.

**Monday 4 April** *Typecasting*. Talk and demonstration by Geoff Hullett, formerly of the Stephenson Blake (many apologies to Mr Hullett for having used the M-word in a previous description of his background).

**Monday 9 May** *The Pen and the Quill*. Calligraphy in performance by Paul Antonio.

P.T.O.

## Other events

### Justin Howes Memorial Lecture

On Tuesday 22 February 2011, John A. Lane will speak on *Printing types in the Dutch golden age: Nicolaes Briot, Christoffel van Dijck and Nicolaus Kis*. Types from sixteenth-century France and the Low Countries and from most of the eighteenth-century British foundries have been well catalogued. But Nicolaes Briot – possibly the most important figure in the Dutch ‘golden age’ – remains almost unknown, the types of the more famous Christoffel van Dijck are best known from specimens issued by his successors, and those of Nicolaus Kis from recuttings made in the 1920s from a few surviving sets of matrices (issued under the name Janson). John Lane will show types by these Dutch masters and suggest that Briot’s romans were the principal models for Van Dijck, Kis and Caslon. The lecture will be held in the Bridewell Hall, St Bride, London, and is free (but please book tickets in advance from St Bride; see below).

### Print workshops

As mentioned last month, St Bride is now running a series of letterpress courses. The exhibition room has been transformed into a print workshop, where practical teaching and hands-on experience can take place. Bookings are currently being taken for a ‘letterpress short course’ (three hours a week for six weeks), two day ‘letterpress intensives’, one day workshops for linocut and type posters and make-your-own-greeting-card classes. Group bookings are available and are tailored to meet the needs and interests of each specific group. Open access bookings for use of the space can be made for four- and eight-hour sessions, following an induction. For more information see [printworkshop.stbridefoundation.org](http://printworkshop.stbridefoundation.org) or contact the Foundation on 020 7353 3331. The project is seeking randoms and tallboys, and a cylinder proofing press (Vandercook or similar). If you can help, please contact Richard Lawrence by telephone on 01865 424594 or by e-mail on [ZRLawrence@aol.com](mailto:ZRLawrence@aol.com).

## Book review

*A Sixteenth-Century Book of Trades: Das Ständebuch* translated, with an introduction, by Theodore K. Rabb (Society for the Promotion of Science and Scholarship, Palo Alto, California, 2009).

This fascinating and beautifully produced book, set in Centaur, has recently been brought to my attention. *Das Ständebuch* was first published in 1568 by the Frankfurt publisher Sigmund Feyerabend. A most remarkable book, it appeared simultaneously in two editions, one in Latin and one in German, both illustrated with over one hundred woodcuts by Jost Amman (1539–1591). Complementing each woodcut was a verse, those in German by a famous popular figure, Hans Sachs (1494–1576). The book represents an extraordinary cross-section of mid-sixteenth-century northern European culture, describing and illustrating 114 different elements that made up German society at the time, starting with the Pope, followed by traders such as the Pedlar, the Brewer, the Spur-Maker and the Carpenter, and ending with the Slow-Witted Fool.

Theodore K. Rabb is an historian of the early modern period and is Emeritus Professor of History at Princeton University. He had hoped to publish his translation jointly with Cyril Stanley Smith, an eminent historian of metallurgy at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who first introduced him to *Das Ständebuch*. But the translation took many years to complete and remained unfinished when Smith died in 1992.

The verse below each woodcut is in the same form and metre, in each case eight lines long. Rabb’s translations follow the original remarkably closely, both in style and flavour. Here (above right) is a copy of *The Printer*, with Rabb’s translation. The woodcut, like all the others in the book, is full of detail. In this case Amman has made a mistake: if one were to pull on the lever, the platen would move upwards rather than downwards.

Simon Haviland

## Der Buchdrucker.



Ich bin geschicket mit der press  
So ich aufftrag den Firniß reß/  
So bald mein dienr den bengel suchet/  
So ist ein bogn pappys gedruckt.  
Da durch fombt manche Kunst an tag/  
Die man leichtlich bekommen mag.  
Vor zeiten hat man die bücher gschribn/  
Zu Weing die Kunst ward erstlich triebn.

### THE PRINTER

As master of the press I start  
By spreading ink to every part;  
On lever then my helpers pull  
To print the sheet of paper full.  
This work makes knowledge  
widely spread  
Because it is so quickly read.  
The scribes wrote books from  
night till morn  
Until in Mainz the press was born.

## Printing press wanted for demonstration

Debra Power writes: In April 2011, Saint Mary’s Church Kingsclere, Hampshire, is celebrating the four-hundredth anniversary of the publication of the King James (Authorised) Version of the Bible. As part of a week of events, we are hoping to provide an exhibition on the history of this version of the Bible and the printing process which made it so accessible to the populace. We would like to provide a demonstration of printing, with a working press in the church for the week, to enable people to see how the pages were created. If anyone can help with making this part of our week a reality, please contact Debra Power by phone on 01635 291247 or by e-mail at [debra.power@scottwilson.com](mailto:debra.power@scottwilson.com).