

# Skin Deep

The Biannual Newsletter from J Hewit & Sons Ltd.

No.19 – Spring 2005

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# So what is going on at J. Hewit & Sons.....?

By Roger Barlee

J Hewit & Sons Ltd has had an exciting and eventful life during the last 200 years and six generations. We have suffered at least six fires and had our London office destroyed during the Second World War, however, for the current directors, the last couple of years have also been very dramatic.

For those of you who don't know, just over two years ago we closed our warehouse in Park Royal after having had a continuous presence in London for over 120 years. Indeed at our peak my Great-Great Uncles (the sons of \*J\*(ane)) had their head office in Fleet Street and a tannery in Bermondsey. This step was not taken lightly, as our London warehouse was there to service the London Bookbinders with leather, bookcloth and other materials. As the era of the large British craft bookbinders came to an end, the focus slowly changed to servicing the amateur and smaller binderies in the South East. We have never been backward in employing new technologies, and in 1997 David Lanning started our Web Site. Over the years this progressed far beyond our wildest dreams with its biannual newsletter "Skin Deep", and more recently our on-line catalogue. The online catalogue finally proved to be the straw that broke the camel's back as far as the necessity to have a stocking presence in London. With the advent of the cheap 1-day couriers the need for holding goods in two places disappeared, but it was the online catalogue that allowed the amateur binders to order their goods with the knowledge, from pictures and the background information, that they were getting what they wanted at a set price. Even so the shutting of the London warehouse was a step into the unknown, but has proved to be a great success and, with hindsight, was probably carried out at precisely the right moment.

Our intention was to let the dust settle before any further changes occurred, however things never go to plan, and it was therefore a great surprise to everybody when William McLean decided to leave at Christmas. William, my cousin, had been with the firm for 29 years, and since my father's retirement in 1992, he and I carried the vast bulk of the administration of the tannery on our shoulders. With his departure changes obviously had to be made. The most obvious of these as far as our account customers are concerned, has been the introduction of Factors from our bank to run the sales ledger. It was decided almost immediately that myself and Douglas Black, the accountant, could not cram three people's jobs into two, and using the Royal Bank of Scotland's factoring services seemed to be an obvious way to ease some of the administrative workload. Overall this has worked well, but as with any new system there are bound to be teething problems, and I would like to thank everybody involved for their patience in the first few months.

David and I have still had time for some other innovations over the last six months. Firstly and most importantly we have finally sorted out our long-term calfskin problem. For the last 30+ years we have traditionally used Scandinavian calf as our source of raw skins, however the numbers of skins that have been available to us has been dropping at an alarming rate. Things reached a critical point last autumn, and something had to be done. We had been buying vegetable tanned Bangladesh Calfskins for about five years mainly as a source of large panels for embossed leather orders. Some of the skins were being creamed off for BVC fairs, however we were hesitant to use this leather widely since it would not be of a suitably archival tannage for quality bookbinding leather. I decided to try retanning this leather with aluminum, as we have been doing very successfully with our Chieftain Goats for several years and, much to everyone's surprise the resulting leather has been a great success. Indeed nearly everybody who tested out our original trials at the end of last year, reported back saying how well the leather worked. As a result we have now moved the entire repair calf range, including a new natural R9, across to this leather, and stocks of repair calf are now complete. With the pressure taken off the dwindling calf stocks,

and a surprise new source of raw skins, as I write this letter we are within a few weeks of completely catching up on all the back-orders of bookcalf. It may take us a few months until we have good working stocks on the shelves in every colour, but for those of you on the wrong-end of the six month waiting lists of last year this must be welcome news. Again I must thank all of you who have had unacceptable delays in the supply of their calfskins for your patience and understanding.

Hewits have been very concerned about lack of new bookbinders coming into the trade and over the last few years have introduced our Bookbinders Starter Pack of basic materials as well as our registry of study opportunities and bookbinding courses both in the UK and overseas. We are in the process of introducing two new ranges of products for beginners. The first of these is a range of blank book blocks (photo albums, address books etc) for beginners to use when they first start bookbinding. These have just come into stock and can be found on the web site. The second item, as yet a month or so away is a range of 3-4 square foot (0.3m<sup>2</sup>) BVC aniline calf necks and pieces of other leathers as a cut-price Leather Starter Pack so that people can train on using leather without the risk of ruining an expensive whole skin. We believe that these two items will be as successful as the original Starter Packs have proven to be.

I am also delighted to announce that in April, David was elected to the post of President of the *Institute of Bookbinding and Allied Trades* and would like to wish him every success for his year in Office

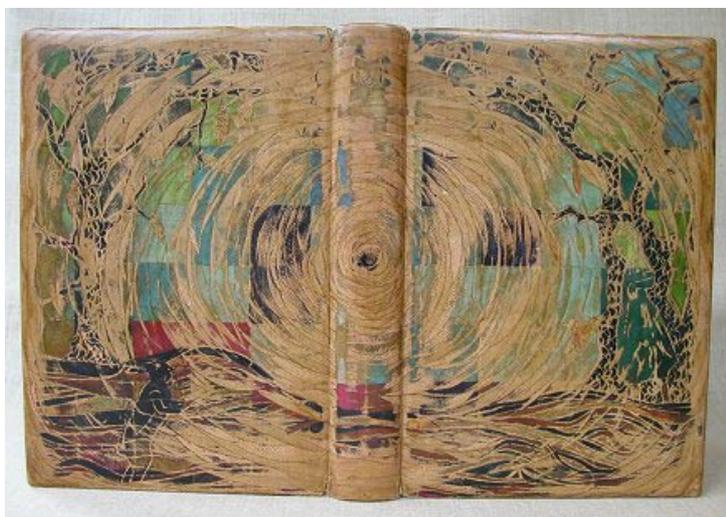
Finally, I would like to thank William for returning to the fold this week as I recover from a rather horrific crash on my bicycle last Friday that resulted in me being admitted to the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary for six hours. I am well on the mend, but it was a great comfort that William was willing to drop what he was doing and step in to cover for me this last week.

Best Wishes,

Roger Barlee  
Edinburgh - May 2005

## Product & Company News

### Designer Bookbinders Competition



As in previous years, the 2004 Designer Bookbinder Competition produced many wonderful fine bindings. We are delighted to announce that this year, the J. Hewit & Son prize for 'The Interesting Treatment of Leather' was awarded to Dominic Riley. The prize was well deserved for his binding of 'Alice's Adventure in Wonderland', published by The Tern Press. This is an excellent 'two-in-a-row' for Dominic who also won this prize last year for his binding of 'Silk Road' by Frances Wood, published by The Folio Society.

Our warm congratulations go to Dominic.

## Leather Paring Machine

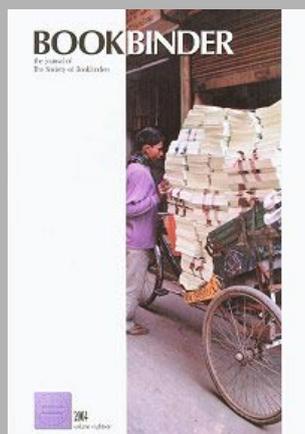


The P&S Leather Paring Machine is based on the tried and tested Brockman design. It is simple to set up and operate. The leather is pulled between the anvil and fixed blade. By raising the anvil, thin cuts can be taken until the required thickness is achieved. It is an invaluable tool for quickly preparing inlays, onlays, labels and thin leather pieces for repairs or half and quarter bindings. The machine has a large throat area to accommodate the pared leather when preparing larger pieces for full leather bindings. The anvil can also be adjusted to produce a feathered edge if required. The Machine is sold with a pack of blades.

Prices:

Paring Machine - £228.00  
Spare Blades - £2.10 per pack of 10

## Society of Bookbinders Journal 2004 - Volume 18

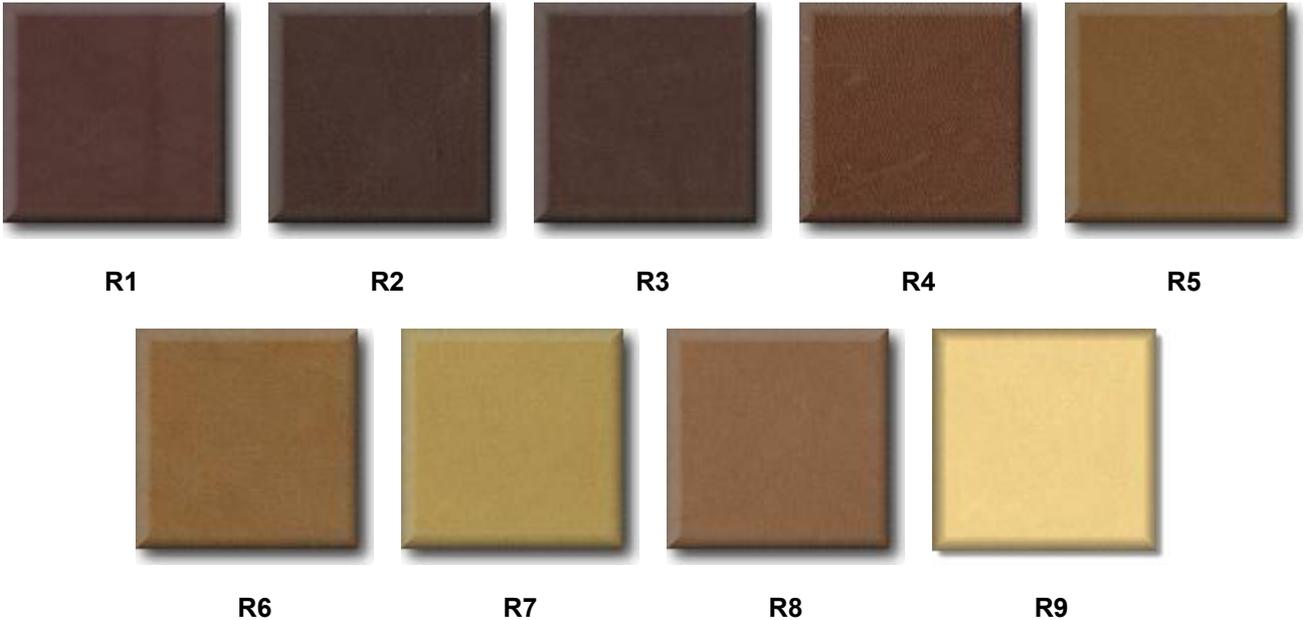


Is now available to purchase at £18.00

## New Repair Calf now available

Our new Repair Calf is sourced from the Indian subcontinent. The leather is initially tanned at source using mimosa, or materials from the same family of tannins. When the skins arrive in our Edinburgh Tannery, we remove the majority of this original tannage and then re-tan, using Tara or Sumac. In addition to improving the leather with these superior tannages, we also add our Archival tannage, yielding leather that is both durable and a pleasure to use.

These skins are produced in a mixture of whole skins or 'sides' (half skins taken from much larger whole skins). Average Skin Size: 0.80 - 1.0m<sup>2</sup> (8½ - 10.75 ft<sup>2</sup>), yielding an approximate cut size of 80 x 50 cm. They are finished to a standard substance of 0.75mm and are available in a range of 8 shades plus natural undyed (biscuit) in three grades II, III and IV



## Ready Prepared Book Blocks

Following numerous requests from our customers, we are pleased to bring you a selection of book-blocks which are supplied ready for binding.

To start with, there will be four variations available and depending on their popularity, other sizes may be added later. The initial four sizes are:

### **Classic Photograph Album - Small**

205mm x 150mm (8" x 6")

30 leaves acid free pages per block, interleaved with glassine page protectors @ £3.56 each

### **Classic Photograph Album - Medium**

320mm x 310mm (12.50" x 12.25")

40 leaves acid-free pages per block, interleaved with glassine page protectors @ £7.74 each

### **Journal/Note Book Block**

A5 Portrait (6" x 8")

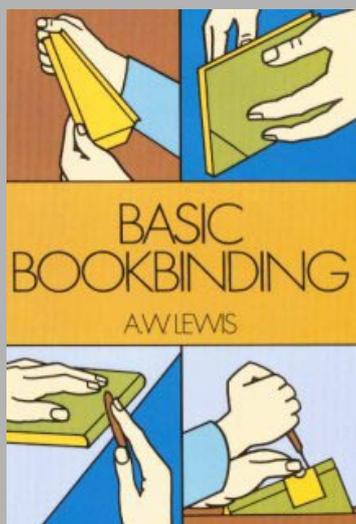
Un-ruled Acid-free Cream Pages @ £4.08 each

### **Address Book Block**

A5 Landscape (8" x 6")

With laminated tabs, Cream Pages, supplied sewn and ready to bind @ £4.06 each.

## Basic Bookbinding



By A.W. Lewis. Re-published by Dover - Paperback from the 1952 Edition. 144 pages, 261 black & white illustrations. 13.5cm x 20.5cm

Starting from basic principles and assuming no previous experience, this modern exposition of the elements of bookbinding enables both the beginner and the expert to apply the latest and most simplified techniques to rebinding old favourites and binding many new paperback books.

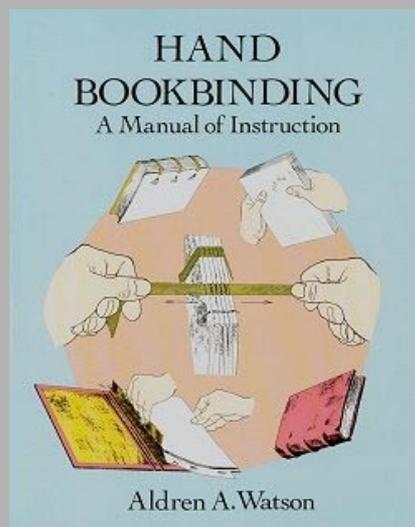
A complete list of all necessary materials, including a guide to the proper selection of tools, paper, glue, boards, cloth and leather covering fabrics and lettering inks and pigments, introduces the subject. In surprisingly easy stages, you are shown how to collate a book, sew it, back it, trim it, make boards and attach them to the book. Step-by-step instructions and hundreds of photographs and diagrams of equipment and key operations reduce the process to essentials.

Individual chapters are devoted to single-sectioned, multi-sectioned and case-bound books, hollow-backed and library style binding, the use of end papers and the most practical methods of lettering the finished book. The author includes a valuable appendix which summaries the precise steps followed in each operation in convenient tabular form.

This elementary text is simple enough for the beginner yet contains new material of interest to the expert. Basic Bookbinding avoids intricate techniques and elaborate equipment. Mr. Lewis, twice first prize-winner in national competition, presents the Subject with the clarity born of many years of experience in teaching bookbinding.

Only £6.95

## Hand Bookbinding – A Manual of Instruction



By Aldren A. Watson. Published by Dover - Paperback 160 pages, 273 black & white illustrations.

Before the advent of modern mass-production methods, books were bound by hand to remarkably high standards of quality. Beautiful and durable, they appealed to book lovers who appreciated not only a book's content but also the quality and craftsmanship of its binding.

Unfortunately, the introduction of machine-binding methods, while making books widely available at reasonable prices, also largely curtailed the art and craft of making fine books by hand.

This expert guide offers a solution. In its pages, craftspeople can learn the traditional methods of bookbinding and produce high-quality hand-bound books themselves. Thorough, detailed instructions, with over 270 helpful illustrations by the author, cover materials, tools and equipment (including making your own); fundamental procedures and technical methods; rebinding an old book; making a slipcase and other essentials. Also included are well illustrated, step-by-step directions for eight binding projects: dust jacket; blank book, single signature; folio; blank book, four signatures; manuscript binding; music binding and two more.

Clearly written and easy to follow, this manual will be indispensable to anyone wishing to create high-quality handcrafted bindings themselves; it will also serve as a valuable reference for students and professionals in publishing and its allied trades.

Only £11.95

All of these new items may be ordered from our online shop.

(Prices shown are subject to shipping and handling charges and VAT where applicable)

# Cobden-Sanderson

By E. L. de Coverley

It is generally agreed that Thomas James Cobden-Sanderson has had more influence on modern bookbinding than any other person. The following brief notes may therefore be of interest to fellow-members of the craft who will remember that it was in our small workshop that he first became acquainted with the mysteries of the trade in which he was destined to make such a mark.

It was in 1880 that I first remember him as a customer, having a fine small Italian classic bound in plain morocco, Jansenist style. He was always very particular about the lettering being perfect and I remember at least one book being re-covered to please him.

One day early in 1883 he came to the shop during tea-time and said he wanted to learn bookbinding. My father tried to dissuade him from the idea at first, but finding him set on it, said that the only way to learn properly was to come into the workshop and work at the bench. His first idea had been to have some lessons, but he seemed mighty pleased at the idea of coming into the workshop — and was very proud of his first apron.

We had a very good small press by 'Meager' of 24 Endell Street, W.C., with plough and tub that we used to send out to jobs. It was almost new and the size suited him. He became so fond of this that he insisted upon buying it when he left us and it was with this press that he started business.

During his stay of rather over six months he tried his hand at every sort of job that turned up in a binder's shop — and one knows that there are many. Only one thing seemed to defeat him and that was the glue-pot, which he never quite mastered while with us.

He was always trying to find out the best way of doing things and would take no end of pains with the most simple job. We often laughed at his quaint ideas, but on the whole he was a very pleasant man to get on with. He used to go out to lunch, but always had tea with us and generally kept up a running conversation the whole of the time.

We found that he had tried quite a lot of things since he left Trinity College, Cambridge — the last thing being matrimony, he having married the youngest daughter of Richard Cobden and added that lady's name to his own. They were living at his chambers, 3 Paper Buildings, Temple, and invited my wife and me to go and see them.

Mrs. Cobden-Sanderson we found quite as enthusiastic about books as he was, and she had a great idea of setting up a press to print good books, that he might bind them. This was many years before the Doves Press was started, but she had the satisfaction of seeing her ideal realised in that direction.

When he left us, Cobden-Sanderson took a floor in Maiden Lane and started in business as a bookbinder. He had many influential friends; he seemed to know everyone in the literary and artistic world, and they sent him plenty of work. In fact, they rather overwhelmed him with it.

He had taught his wife sewing and headbanding and I think it was their first idea to do all the work themselves, but they soon found this was impossible.

The most successful books I saw bound by him while at Maiden Lane were two for Mrs. William Morris. The first was entirely covered with a small scroll tool that he had cut from a drawing he made of an iron Grill in Florence. It made a very pretty book and I remember when he showed it to me he asked what I thought it was worth, and I told him thinking it would please him to have what I

thought a top price, but noticed he seemed a little disappointed at my low estimate of the value of his time. We soon found the bookbinders would never have complained of his undercutting them in price, as he succeeded in obtaining much larger sums for his bindings than we had dreamed possible.

The question of how and why he did this is well worth discussing. First as to the man himself. He was forty-three years old when he learned bookbinding and about forty-seven before he began to achieve any great success — an age when most men are thought too old to launch out in a new career — but he possessed the vitality of youth combined with the signs of mature age. Having made up his mind to do good work and finding he could obtain plenty of orders, he took an old house in The Mall, Hammersmith, close to his friend William Morris, and secured the services of two first-class workmen, Mr. Wilkinson from Zaehnsdorf's, and Mr. McLeish from Riviere's. These men had the advantage of training in two of the best shops in London and were, of course, able to execute his work with a degree of finesse that is only acquired after long practice.

Up till this time he had done both forwarding and finishing himself except when he first moved to Hendon. There I worked with him for a short time as he was getting overwhelmed with books sent to him by his numerous friends. His success at the Society of Arts Competition (where he carried off first prize with a copy of *Endymion* bound in blue morocco tooled all over with leaves on scrolls); lectures at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition and at various other places; interviews with newspaper correspondents, etc. had all helped to advertise him so that American collectors were anxious to possess a specimen of his work.

The Doves Bindery, as he called his new workshop, was soon turning out work at a fair rate, though the output might have been considered small by some of our west-end binders. The prices obtained were high, even considering the long time spent on the work, but his customers soon found they were making a good investment, as whenever a book bound by him came into the market it was sure to fetch a good price.

Prices at Sotheby's, November 4, 1910, the property of F. S. Ellis:

<i>Endymion</i> , blue morocco, gilt sides	£131 0 0
<i>Love is Enough</i> , gilt	£107 0 0
<i>Morris</i> , 4to reddy-brown morocco	£111 0 0
<i>Dream of John Bull</i> , olive green, gilt	£99 0 0
<i>Atlanta</i> , blue morocco, 2 single lines on side only	£67 0 0

Now I believe the books turned out at Hendon when he was alone fetched higher prices than the Doves Bindery.

All his early schemes of decoration were floral, but later he began to make use of the lines that were so successfully used by Grolier, the Eves, and Le Gascon — styles that had been referred to as being closed or dead.

The future, he said, is not with them, or their developments or repetition.

And now I will close with a quotation from his article on Bookbinding, describing a well-bound book:

*'It is neither out of type, nor finished so that its highest praise is that, had it been made by a machine it could not have been made better. It is individual: it is instilled with the hand that made it. It is pleasant to feel, to handle, and to see. It is the original work of an original mind working in freedom simultaneously with hand, heart, and brain to produce a thing of use which all' time shall agree, ever more and more, also to call "a thing o Beauty".'*

*From a paper read by Mr. E. L. de Coverley, to the Master Binders' Association in about 1912.*

# Study Opportunities

## Book North 2004/05, Halifax, North Yorkshire

During 2005, we are running a series of bookbinding workshops in Barkisland, near Halifax. The workshops will run from 9.30 am to 4.30 pm daily. The cost is £70 for each two-day workshop and £180 for the five-day workshops. The cost will include most materials and buffet lunches. Details of local accommodation can be provided.

Barkisland is located in the lovely Calder Valley, which is great Yorkshire walking country. It is within easy reach of Halifax, and the M62 between Manchester and Leeds

The 5-day workshops are:

**Cased Bindings** with Peter R Jones: 16-20 May 2005 and

**Gold Tooling** with Tracey Rowledge: 25-29 July 2005.

For further details or to book a place, contact Hilary Henning on +44 (0)1932 787268, or email [hilary.henning@britishlibrary.net](mailto:hilary.henning@britishlibrary.net) If you want to hear about future Book North courses, contact Hilary to add your name to the Book North mailing list

## The Otter Bindery in Surrey, England

### Workshops 2005 - 1st Saturday of Every Month

- June Saturday 4th - Forwarding The process from sewing the book to covering it, with Royston Haward.
- July Saturday 2nd - Total Beginnings in Bookbinding A Direction with Marysa de Veer.
- August Saturday 6th - Traditional Gold Finishing with albumen glaire Learn the process of lettering and decorating the cover of your book with Steven Orriss.
- September Saturday 3rd - Book Restoration Learn about antiquarian book restoration with Marysa de Veer.
- October Saturday 1st - Artist Within the Bookbinder Learn about art and design with Andrew Campbell.
- November Saturday 5th - Forwarding The process from sewing the book to covering it, with Royston Haward.
- December Saturday 3rd - Box Making Learn how to make a drop-back box, with Royston Haward.

Courses are aimed at novices up to experienced bookbinders. Our aims are to give high level instruction with two tutors to a maximum of six students in relaxing surroundings. Students will leave with enough new knowledge to continue developing skills in their own home environment.

Bookbinding/creativity courses are available to government institutions as well as commercial - if you would like a group workshop day for your company please ask for details.

### About the Workshops

- The workshops will be held in a small working bindery, The Otter Bindery
- Fully typed illustrated notes will be available with each course.

- Details of the tools required for each course will be given on enrolment.
- Excellence in Bookbinding Certificate to be awarded on completion of the one day course.
- Teas, coffees and lunch are included in the cost of the course.
- Directions are on the website [www.otterbindery.com](http://www.otterbindery.com) or email [marysa@otterbindery.com](mailto:marysa@otterbindery.com)
- Dinner, bed and breakfast available for £55 per night for those travelling from afar.
- Cost per student £130

## The Tutors

- Royston Haward is a highly accomplished bookbinder of some 30 years experience. Royston undertook an apprenticeship at a trade bindery E G Ellis's, London in 1973 for five years after which he then went on to work for another large trade bindery Errington and Martin where he specialised in the making of albums for six years. In 1983 he joined Sangorski and Sutcliffe as a fine binder and gilder where he worked until 1990. He has worked at the British Library Bindery since 1991 as a book conservator. Royston is becoming an experienced demonstrator on bookbinding techniques and has talked at the last Society of Bookbinders Conference in 2003.
- Linda Harris gained a diploma with distinction in bookbinding and paper conservation at Guildford College in 1998 where she won the William Matthews Memorial Award for best student of her year. During the same year she was also given an award for forwarding by The Wynkyn de Worde Society and The Worshipful Company of Stationers and Newspaper Makers and later won a highly commended certificate in The Bookbinding Competition sponsored by the Designer Bookbinders. Since qualifying, she gained experience working for two years for Youngs Bindery, Guildford and for six months as a paper conservator at The Surrey History Centre. She also continued studying part time and passed her HNC in 2000. She set up her own bindery business in 2001 and now divides her time between that and working two days a week for the Otter Bindery.
- Steven Orriss attended Harlow Technical College in 1985 where he studied both art and design and graphic design graduating in 1987. After working for various design and advertising agencies including freelance illustration, Steven joined the British Library in 1995 and was trained in conservation, bookbinding and gold finishing. A year after joining the British Library, Steven's natural talent in forwarding and design were highlighted in winning the first prize in bookbinding for The National Library of Scotland Bookbinding competition in 1996. Steven has been predominantly a gold finisher at the British Library for the past five years.
- Andrew Campbell trained in print, publishing-design, typography & bookbinding at Oxford University Press. He graduated with a BA (Hons) in Fine Art at Falmouth (1980) after a Foundation at Oxford Brookes. He was commissioned for original abstract art for the second edition of the Oxford Illustrated Dictionary (1973). He has exhibited at several art galleries, with work in collections both here and abroad. He's studied with many eminent artists and was a founding member of the Oxford Artists Group. His more recent work can be viewed online at [www.dialogonleadership.org/indexPaintings.html](http://www.dialogonleadership.org/indexPaintings.html).
- Marysa de Veer having completed her course at Guildford College, enjoyed work experience at The Royal Bindery, Windsor Castle. In 1992 she formed part of the human chain that evacuated books from the Royal Library during the great fire. Marysa founded The Otter Bindery in 1994 and has produced numerous designed bindings and exhibited both in France and at the British Library, London. In 2002 Marysa undertook a chemical science course for conservators at Hammersmith College. In 2003 the Society of Bookbinders awarded her a highly commended certificate in Restoration. The restored book

was exhibited in the National Library of Wales. Clients include book dealers, celebrities, private collectors as well as institutions.

Please contact Marysa de Veer for further information on any of the above courses at:

The Otter Bindery  
42 Hare Hill  
Addlestone  
Surrey KT15 1DT  
Tel/Fax +44 (0) 1932 845976  
www.otterbindery.co.uk  
e-mail marysa@deveer.co.uk

### **Residential Workshop on the Isle of Skye**

This may be the last chance to experience a residential workshop at Quiraing Lodge in Staffin on the Isle of Skye for some time. Laura West is teaching two back-to-back workshops in Bookbinding in mid-April 2005.

There are two two-day courses, back to back. Do the first, do the second or do both.

#### **Hand Sewn Free Form Books, Decorated extravagantly - 14th, 15th & 16th April 2005**

Make real multi-section books of up to 60 pages and decorate them using coloured threads, ribbons, beads, handmade papers, exquisite Japanese papers and bone clasps. Over the two days we will make one book with a heavy paper cover and one with a leather cover. Your book can be for you or as a gift; for drawing, for visitors or for writing. However you choose to make them your books will do you proud and the techniques you learn will enable you to make many more. All materials will be provided, including tools for use during the workshop, and you can expect to develop genuine skills in bookbinding. (3 nights/2 days - Residential Price £195 -- Non-residential £80)

#### **Vellum Binding - 17th, 18th & 19th April 2005**

Make a Renaissance style soft cover binding that was once so popular with Venetian scholars. This book brings together lustrous vellum, sparkling white alum tawed goatskin, linen thread and fine paper to create a classically elegant book that will age with character. Additionally you may want to add coloured hand sewn linen end-bands, ties or ivory clasps if the mood takes you. This is a more challenging project than the books completed over the previous two days. The workshop price includes the cost of the vellum. (3 nights/2 days – Residential Price £220 -- Non-Residential £105)

Cost for both workshops, with Sunday being a non-teaching day: £415.00 If you are interested in booking for these workshops, please contact: Laura West, +44 (0)1478 613 123 or books@laurawest.com Sam Gardener (Quiraing Lodge) +44 (0)1470 562 330 or email: samandsuzy@quiraing-lodge.co.uk

### **CBL Ascona, Switzerland**

The Association centro del bel libro in Ascona is the parent institution of an internationally known and recognised technical school with the specialised areas of Bookbinding and Design and Book and Paper Conservation. The Association exists for the continued development and ever higher qualification of its instructors in both areas. Competitions and exhibitions help inform the public about their activities and expand public awareness of the book. The Association makes it possible for experts in related fields and for interested laypeople to acquire knowledge and skills pertaining to the book through special courses of instruction. The Association is a not for profit organisation.

Its departments assure the smooth functioning of the school and an especially well organised office assists course participants with their stay in Ascona. The Directorate, among other duties, is charged with attracting new supporting members for the Association to ensure the continued work and development of the School. Should you be in agreement with the stated goals of the Association – we would be pleased to welcome you as a new member!

**Department of Bookbinding and Design** - The study areas of Bookbinding and Design offer discerning bookbinders the opportunity of technical and creative challenges. Course participants have the opportunity to further their qualifications through learning internationally recognised methods and techniques, are able to hone their skills and increase their knowledge, evaluate themselves and be inspired by colleagues. They will exchange ideas and find paths in creativity and through self reflection; paths which open up by being away from job demands and daily stress, away from routine, and the pressures of time and expectations of productivity. The annually changing course offerings are continually enhanced by timely developments to expand students' depth of understanding. They include classic hand bookbinding techniques, such as the French full leather binding, the Bradel technique, as well as hand gilding. Another area of program concentration is the contemporary design of bookbindings, in which design, technique and material complement each other and fulfil the functional and qualitative aspects of a book.

**Department Book and Paper Conservation** - The study of book and paper conservation at the centro del bel libro ascona assures further education specifically for book and paper restorers and delivers timely, inclusive and internationally recognised competencies in theory and practical applications. Scientific bases of restoration, restoration ethics, as well as documentation and decision making are encouraged and fostered in order to increase the knowledge of course participants in these areas. The opportunity to engage in dialogue in related disciplines, support and evaluation of innovation, and most of all development of practical skills to assure correct restoration and conservation measures – all are addressed in this context. The exchange of ideas among experts, and the addition of highly specialised guest lecturers provide the best conditions for exploring all relevant subjects in depth. Highly qualified teachers, a pleasant study and work environment, course participants from countries world wide, and the much renowned southern joie de vivre facilitate learning, ignite the desire to learn and communicate, and reward the student with improved self confidence. Building on these facts, it becomes an easy task to develop conventions for the protection of our cultural heritage, the book – a task which the centro del bel libro ascona has set itself and which it fulfils.

Further information regarding courses programs can be found on the school's web site at:  
[www.cbl-ascona.ch](http://www.cbl-ascona.ch)

## **Leeds College of Technology, Yorkshire, UK**

Last year with great success, Leeds College of Technology, Yorkshire, UK, ran a basic craft bookbinding course. They had a good response, with eight enrolling on the course, most of who would like to move on to more advanced level. They have also had a few interested enquiries for the next basic course. This has prompted them to set up an Intermediate Craft course, which will start in February, following on from the beginners course in September. The new course will again have a certificate from NCFE after successful completion. They intend to move on to quarter and half bound case books and quarter and half bound leather bindings.

The courses will run on Wednesday evenings, 5.00-8.30 pm., 18 weeks each course. The fee will be £150 plus a small enrollment fee.

For more information: Contacts:

Mick McGregor at Leeds College of Technology

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## London College of Printing, London, UK

**BA(HONS) Book Arts and Crafts** - a course designed to develop a creative and innovative approach to the art and craft of designing and making books, as functional artifacts and art pieces.

This programme of study is unique in the United Kingdom, being the only course available specifically in book arts & crafts. The course is spread over three years, year one is mostly skills based and covers a variety of bookart areas, year two includes a range of electives allowing the student to focus on certain areas in detail. This year also includes work experience. Year three includes 2 major practical projects and a dissertation in a related area. The course starts in year one as tutor led and gradually becomes student led.

During the course visits are arranged to museums and galleries, field trips abroad and the possibility of engaging in the college exchange programme. A range of methods delivers the course: e.g. practical demonstration, lectures, seminars and tutorials.

Bookart projects are practically based and detailed feedback is always given on student's work either through assessment sheets or in tutorial. Written projects are required in the Cultural Studies and Personal and Professional Development modules.

Here is an outline of each year

**Year 1** - Modules include basic skills in Printmaking, Craft bookbinding, craft printing (letterpress and screen), visual studies (drawing & illustration), photography and creative bookarts. Computer studies (computer-aided design), Cultural studies and Professional development. (CS & PPD run throughout the course). Year one is intense and requires attendance over 3/4 days.

**Year 2** - Modules include advanced bookart structures and fine print production, electives include advanced printmaking & illustration, design bookbinding, artist's books, historical / oriental structures, conservation techniques and CAD etc. Students may now focus on particular area or specialism and drop areas they do not wish to pursue. PPD not only helps arrange work experience, but sets up student exhibitions in various galleries and the London Artists Bookfair each year.

**Year 3** - This year is assessed over 2 major projects and 2 lesser projects. You will be expected to produce a dissertation of around 5000/6000 words and produce a Major Elective Study, which is assessed by exhibition. Projects are student led, this year of the course using a supervision/tutorial system for major projects. Students also set up their own exhibition in a private gallery during this final year. Technical help and advice is always available and most tutors operate an "open door" policy for students who need one-to-one help.

**Exit Profile** - Over 70% of graduates find employment in areas related to the course programme,(2002). Some have gone into teaching (PGTC) some onto post graduate education, (MA Bookarts, MA Fine Art, MA Product Design and MA Publishing etc.)

This art and design course using as it does a range of 3D graphics and the book as a medium has a wide range of applications. Graduates work as makers in bookbinding, printers in Fine press (Limited Edition), printmakers, illustrators, book designers using the latest computer applications, in art departments for publishers, paper engineering (pop-ups), board-game and package design, book & card production and as exhibiting book artists.

Students have exhibited to acclaim in major galleries and won international awards in France, UK, USA and Holland. This (undergraduate) course has been generally recognised as being the best available in this field. Resources are second to none, fully equipped workshops coupled with experienced staff all of whom practice within their specialism, professionally, (e.g. printmaking is taught by Tessa Holmes, exhibiting printmaker and Visual studies by the artist Daphne Plessner)

Full-time students at the LCC (lcp) ,also have the advantage of being offered a large range of related "bolt-on" courses, free, to enhance their studies. The course is relatively small, targets for

each year being only 25. The age range is from 18 years, at present there is a 65/35 ratio women to men. Retention rate is 92% (2002/03). HEFC inspection rating is 22/24. Students come from a wide range of cultures and backgrounds, e.g. Taiwan, Germany, France, Sweden, USA, Brazil, Spain, Greece, Japan and Korea.

Prospective applicants are encouraged to visit the college. For full curriculum details and further information, please contact Mike Brunwin at: [m.brunwin@lcp.linst.ac.uk](mailto:m.brunwin@lcp.linst.ac.uk) or telephone on 0207 514 6500 (ex.6660) or write to:

UCAS entry codes;  
route A Linst L65 WW27 Ba/BArts  
Route B Linst L65 EW 27 Ba/BArts

London College of Communication (formally London College of Printing) School of Printing & Publishing, Elephant & Castle, London SE1 6SB

### **Oxford Brookes University**

Bookbinding classes have been held at Oxford for the past 45 years, and are currently run at Oxford Brookes University as a part of the Continuing Education programme. Non-vocational classes providing an introduction to bookbinding, examining the techniques, materials and equipment needed to bind and repair books. Traditional methods are considered in conjunction with practical alternatives. Students will achieve an understanding of the requirements and processes involved in producing clean, neat, basic work. Students work at their own pace and are individually tutored. Tutor/Organiser - Ian Ross

For further information, please contact:  
Maureen Jones, Centre for Continuing Education  
Oxford Brookes University, Harcourt Hill Campus, Oxford. OX2 9AT  
Tel: +44 (0) 1865 488609 or e-mail [mljones@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:mljones@brookes.ac.uk)

### **American Academy of Bookbinding in Telluride, Colorado**

American Academy of Bookbinding in Telluride, Colorado has openings in the following classes available this summer and fall.

#### **Telluride Campus**

Advanced French Style Leather Binding (2nd-3rd year)  
23rd May - 3rd June with Monique Lallier

Design and Titling  
6th - 10th June with Don Etherington

Beginning French Style Leather Binding  
21st June 21 - 1st July 1 with Monique Lallier

#### **Ann Arbor Campus**

Beginning French Style Leather Binding  
3rd - 14th October with Monique Lallier

Introduction to Book Conservation Series: Restoration of Cloth and Leather Bindings  
17th - 21st October with Don Etherington

For complete details contact:  
Linda American Academy of Bookbinding at [linda@ahhaa.org](mailto:linda@ahhaa.org)

## *Private Tuition*

### **Bookbinding Tuition in Summerfield, North Carolina, USA**

Monique Lallier, teaches in her studio at home, one-on-one or up to a maximum of 4 students at a time. She teaches every Monday, afternoon or evening or both to regular students that come every week or other week. Monique also teaches on a weekly basis for out of town students. Lessons may be booked for one week or longer at a cost of \$500 per week for a 6 hours a day. In all cases, the tuition program is tailored to meet the specific needs and abilities of the student, where each student has an individual program. All aspects of bindings are taught as well as box making.

For further details, please go to Monique Lallier's web site at:

www.moniquelallier.com  
or e-mail her at: folium@triad.rr.com

### **The Otter Bindery in Surrey, England**

The Otter bindery specialises in one to one tuition and small groups of a maximum of three. We offer three workshops:

**Workshop 1** - Beginners - Learn about why paper folds easier one way than the other (grain direction) and it's importance as a fundamental of book binding. Then sew and create a single section note book. The course is designed for those with little or no experience but who have an interest in the craft of bookbinding. Marysa will show you various other simple projects that you can either do at the workshop or take home with you. The idea behind this is to teach you the basic skills and show you how, with minimal materials you can produce beautiful creations from your own home.

**Workshop 2** - Learn how to repair a favourite paper back and take the skills home with you to carry on with minimal equipment. Following on from the above course learn some more complex structures as well as simple methods of creating photograph albums, scrap books and portfolios.

**Workshop 3** - For the more experienced, an exploration into leather, the different types of leather used in bookbinding and why. You will then have an opportunity to create and cover a book in leather.

Please note the above courses are designed to run for one and two days. The workshop descriptions are a guide only. Suggestions are always welcome and changes can be made to the workshops to fit in with your requirements. Accommodation is available if travelling from afar. The Otter Bindery welcomes experienced bookbinders wishing to visit and share knowledge.

Please contact Marysa de Veer for further information on any of the above courses at:

The Otter Bindery  
42 Hare Hill  
Addlestone  
Surrey KT15 1DT  
Tel/Fax +44 (0) 1932 845976  
www.otterbindery.co.uk  
e-mail marysa@deveer.co.uk

## **Studio Five - Bookbinding Tuition in London**

Studio Five is a privately owned bookbinding and book arts studio situated in an old mews property, in Barnes, London. Whilst being only ten minutes from Hammersmith and having excellent communications, Barnes has a village atmosphere, surrounded on three sides by the river Thames, a nature reserve and Barnes Common define the other boundary.

### **Structured Courses for 2005**

Bookbinding for beginners. No experience required. Introduction to bookbinding and box making.

Intermediate 1. Experience required - Bookbinding for beginners or similar. Multi sectional flat back and rounded and backed case binding.

Intermediate 2. Experience required - Intermediate 1 or similar. Introduction to working with leather.

Intermediate 3. Experience required - Intermediate 2 or similar. Full leather binding.

It is anticipated that on completion of the intermediate courses or practitioners with prior experience, students may wish to study more advanced techniques or specialise. Studio Five offers further structured courses in most aspects of fine bookbinding, book arts and restoration. Topics covered include South East Asian Binding, Vellum Binding, Bradel Binding, Contemporary and Design Binding, Artists Books, Type Set, paper engineering (Pop Ups) various other forms of printing and paper decoration. Class and workshop numbers are limited to four (Five in the event of a 'Hosted' workshop) ensuring near individual attention at all times. Past Studio Five members and students have gone on to full time employment in various fields within the book genre, opening studios or extending their existing skill base.

For more information on course availability, Studio Five membership, Fees and general information please contact:

Mark Cockram at Studio Five  
The Mews 1st Floor  
46 - 52 Church Road  
Barnes, London, SW 13 0DQ, UK.

## **Bookbinding Tuition in the North East of Scotland**

Weekend and week-long sessions available in all aspects of bookbinding. Tuition tailored to suit the needs of the individual. All aspects and levels of craft and design binding, including repair and renovation work, may be undertaken under professional instruction in a private, well-equipped bindery in the Scottish countryside.

For further details call:

Mark Ramsden +44 (0)1467 671581 evenings.  
E-mail: [bookman@bti](mailto:bookman@bti)

**If you would like to advertise your course(s) or tuition services in this regular feature, please send an e-mail to [sales@hewit.com](mailto:sales@hewit.com)**

**It is our pleasure to offer this service free of charge.**

# Magazine Binding

By Johan Potgieter

## Introduction

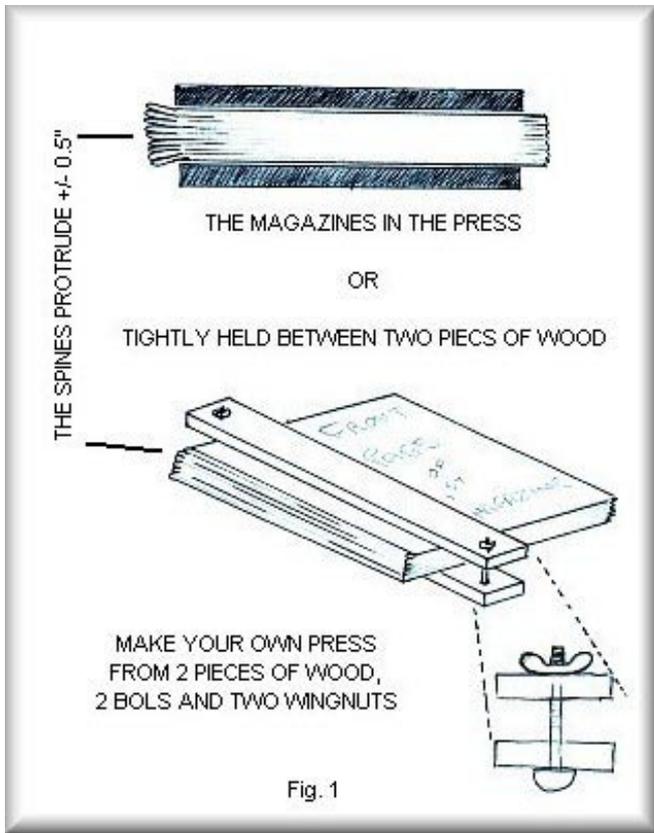
When I was a small boy, my father subscribed to a youth Magazine for me. After receiving all the copies for every year, he would bind them in volumes, which gave me endless pleasure for a long time after that.

After having done leatherwork for a number of years, I became interested in binding all the old leather craft magazines I had accumulated. Before I could ask my father about his methods, he passed away. I then did extensive research, reading as much as I could, but also visiting bookbinders that still practice their craft by hand.

Traditional bookbinders use their methods, developed over centuries, because it produces the desired product and “because it has always been done that way”. I wanted something simpler, producing a stronger volume that could open completely for easy photocopying and I did not want to follow methods that required all sorts of weird tools.

The method I developed and describe here, is completely my own and not traditional at all. It works best for binding magazines that consist of single (or multiple) signatures, i.e. the original magazine was produced by printing it on wide pages, folding them in half and stapling the pages together on the spine.

This then is my way of doing it:



1. Assemble the magazines. Take out any contents that you do not want in there permanently, like the pattern pages in the Leather Crafter & SM Journal. Do NOT take out the staples that hold the pages together. Some people argue that this makes the spine of the eventual bound volume thicker. In my experience, not noticeably. Having the pages float all over while trying to stitch the signatures (magazines) together is much more difficult.

2. Place all the magazines in their proper sequence, i.e. Jan to Dec.

3. Take blank sheets of paper, double the size of the magazine, and fold them in half to form “blank magazines”. One of these, consisting of two or three sheets of folded paper, is added in front, before the first magazine, and another is added to the back of the volume, after the last magazine. These serve to protect the magazines and as a place to paste in an index or table of contents of the articles. We will call these the blank signatures.

4. The magazines must now be “immobilized” or clamped in a bookbinding press as in *fig. 1*

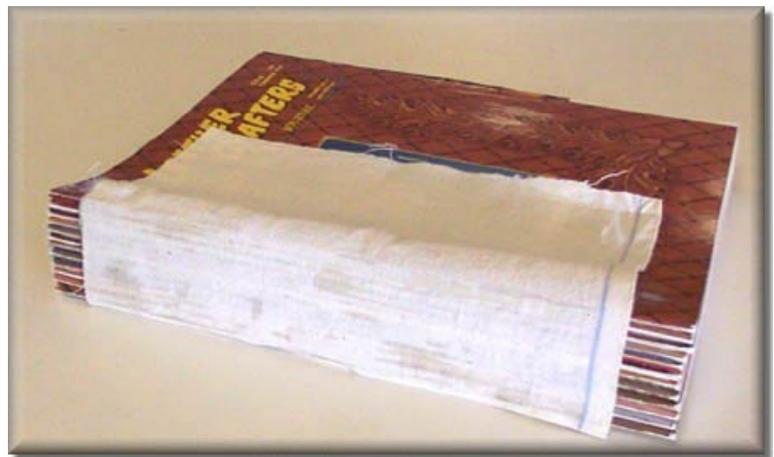
You can get away with just weighing down the magazines under heavy books, or you could use two long pieces of wood that you clamp over the magazines with pistol-grip clamps you can buy in any hardware store. Or the two pieces of wood can be firmly tightened with long brass bolts and wing nuts.

All sides must be precisely squared up, as the magazines will now be “fixed” in their final positions within the volume.

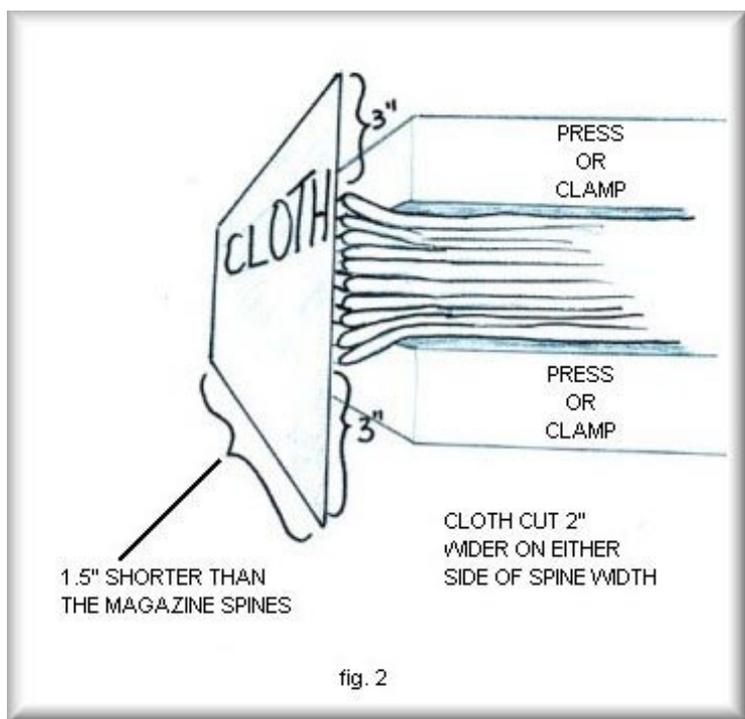
Be careful not to tighten the clamps or book press too much. As long as the Magazines cannot slide around, you have enough pressure on them. I have made the mistake of putting so much pressure on Photostatted (Xeroxed) newsletters that the print was transferred to the opposite page as well. With a book press it is not difficult to apply this much pressure.

5. Measure the length of the spines of the magazines and cut a piece of cloth 1½” shorter than this. It must be wide enough to cover all the spines of all the magazines plus 3” to the front and back of the volume.

*Here the cloth has been glued to the magazines and the whole volume can now be handled free of the press or clamp.*



I prefer to use unbleached linen, but you can also use the cloth from an old retired denim shirt - any cloth that will not stretch.

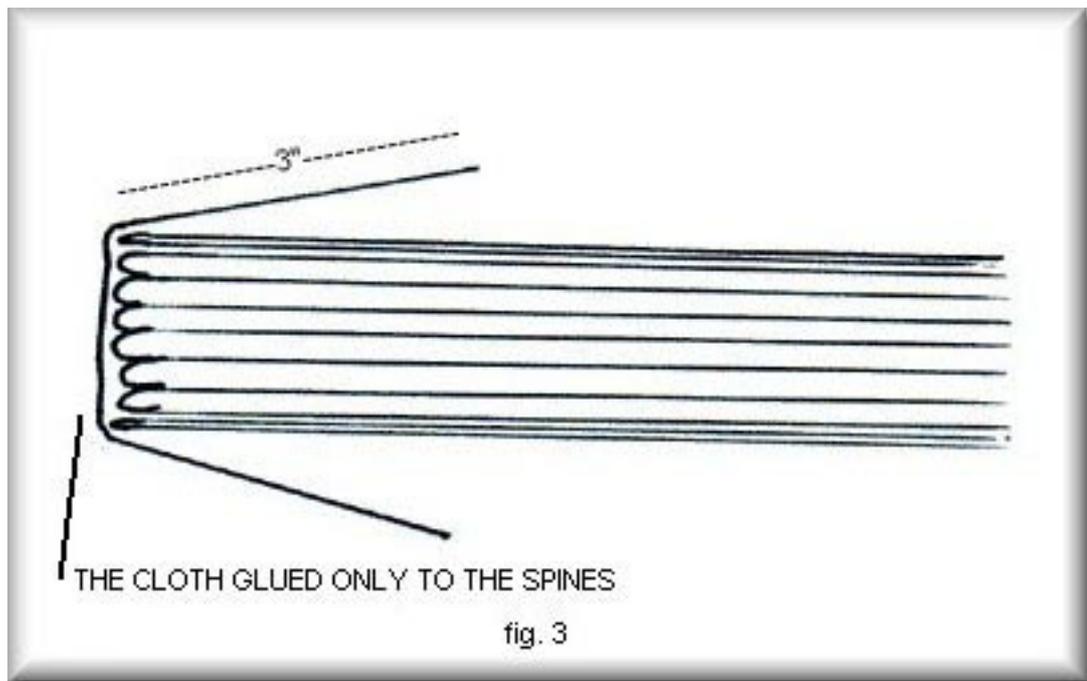


shows a cut-through view of the spine side of the volume.

6. Put glue on the spines of the magazines. Cold white wood glue / project glue is fine and I believe Leather Weld should work very well. Quickly put the piece of cloth over the spines and make sure that it is glued to every magazine and to the blank signature that is in front and back of the volume. Leave it to dry, preferably overnight.

This temporarily holds the magazines / signatures together while you stitch them to the cloth, but it does also serve to strengthen the final volume and give the spine a bit of rigidity.

7. When you take the volume out of the press, you will have all the signatures (magazines) glued to the cloth, with three inches of cloth lying on the top and at the bottom of the volume. *Fig. 2*



## Stitching

The thread used must not stretch and it must not be so thin that it cuts the paper easily while at the same time it must not be so thick that it adds too much bulk to the spines of the magazines. Have a look at the photograph above to see the thread I use. I draw the thread through a ball of beeswax once or twice to prevent it from knotting while I am sewing.

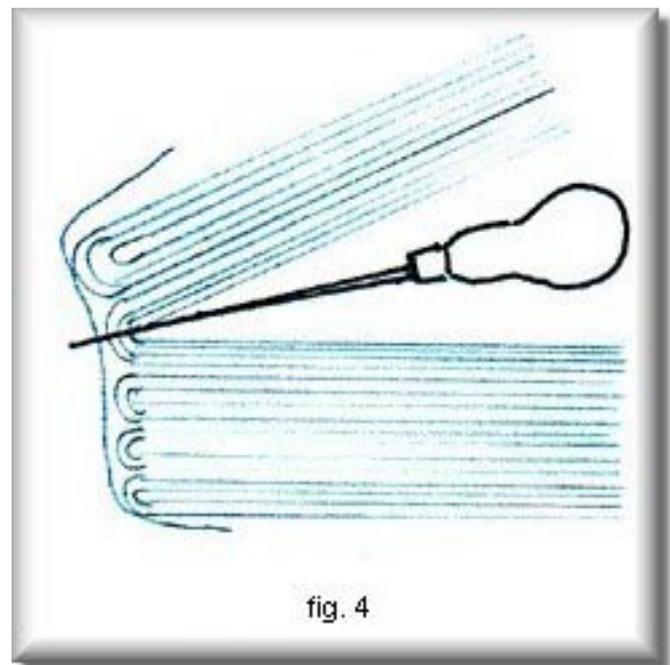
1. All the holes for the stitching is done from the inside of each individual magazine - from the exact centre spread, so that all the pages will be held by the stitches. Never open up a magazine completely. Keep it as shown in *fig 4*.

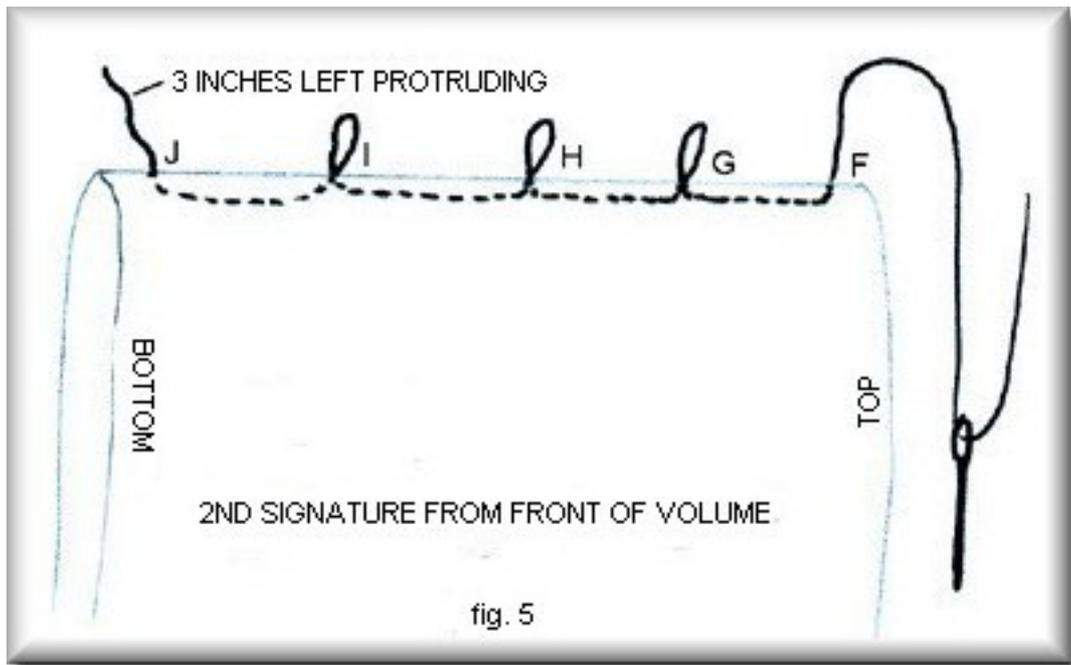
Each hole that is made, is immediately used, in other words you do not make a whole row of holes and then attempt to find them all again to put the needle through.

2. *Fig 4* also shows how stitching is begun with the second signature, i.e. the first magazine after the blank signature. See also *fig 5* where the blank signature is invisible and only the first magazine is shown.

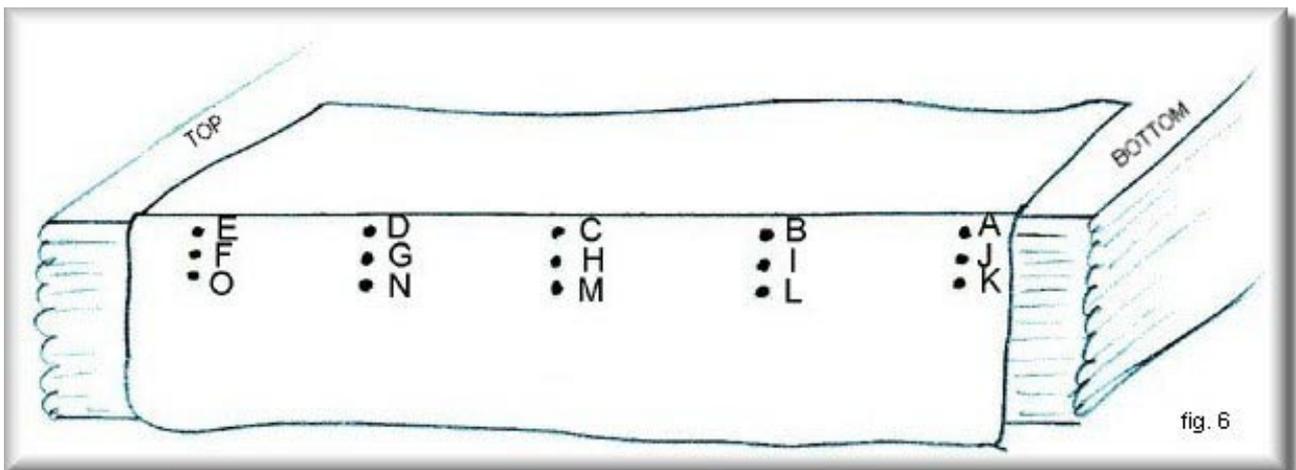
3. In *fig 5* the thread is shown to go in and out of five holes. These correspond with the five holes shown in *fig 6* as J, I, H, G and F, from magazine bottom to magazine top.

4. The first hole made, is # J. the thread is taken from the outside into the middle of the magazine and about 3" - 4" is left to protrude on the outside.





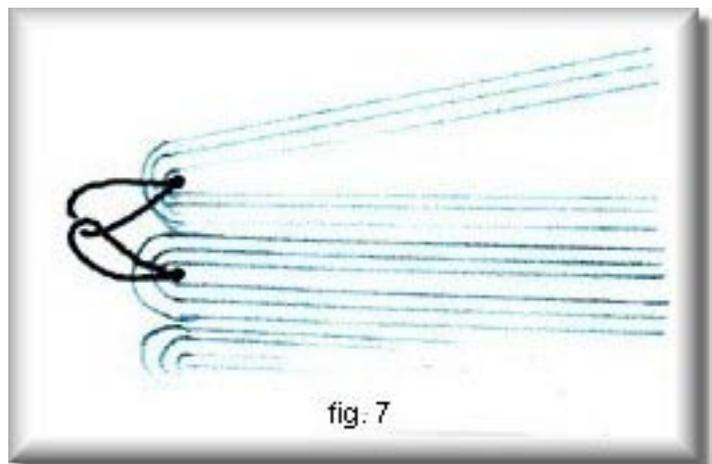
5. The thread is taken out at hole # I, looped around a Chinese Chopstick (not shown), and taken through the same hole back to the middle of the magazine again. The same looping is done at holes # H and # G.



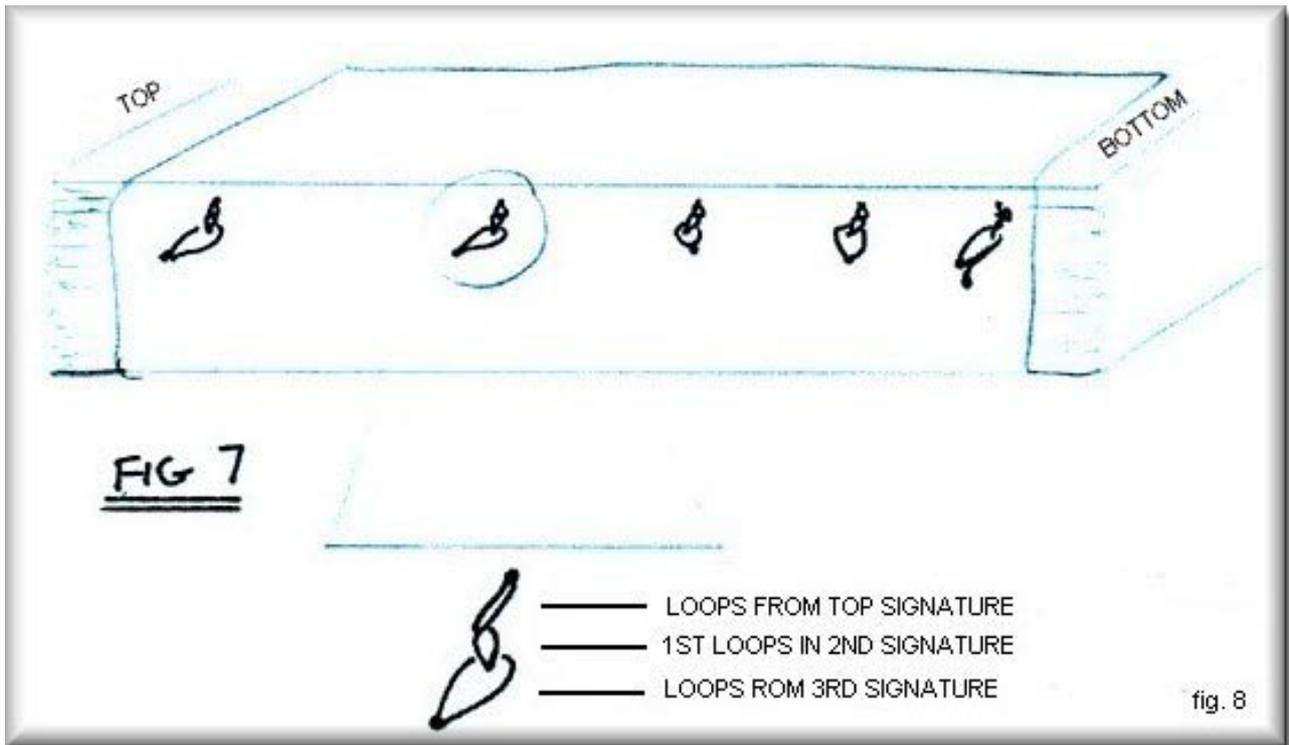
6. At hole # F the thread is taken just to the outside. Open the first signature (the blank signature) in the middle, taking care not to shift the folded blank pages. Remember these will not have a staple through and can therefore move around.

7. Hole number E is now made in the first signature and the thread brought to the middle of the signature through that.

8. The thread is taken along the inside of the first signature to hole # D where it is taken to the outside, looped through the loop left there previously, dangling from hole # G and taken back through hole # D to the middle of the blank signature. The thread looping out of holes #D and # G will now give the cross section shown by fig 7.



9. Carefully pull on the thread now in the middle of the signature as well as on the loop coming from hole # H, so that the two loops have no slack on the outside and meet in the middle of the two holes as shown in the detail of *fig 8*.



Take care not to pull the loop from hole # H in such a way as to pull the loop out of hole # I.

10. It is not necessary ever to have these holes in the same position in all the signatures. I prefer to have them a bit away from each other on purpose. When they are too close to each other, the thread tends to bite into the paper. So, if hole # E is 2" from the top of the magazines, hole # F can be 2.5" and hole # O can be 1.75 " or close to that.

11. The same procedure done with holes # D and # G is repeated at holes # C and # H as well as at # B and # I.

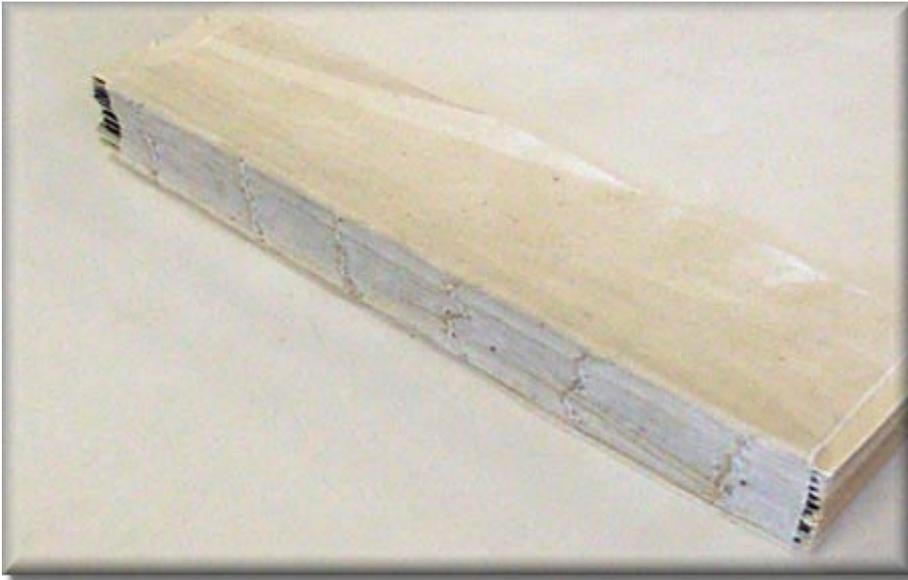
12. When the thread comes out of hole # J, a knot is tied with the 3" of thread left there in the beginning.

13. The thread is then taken into the middle of the third signature (the second magazine) through hole # K.

14. The thread is taken to the outside through hole # L, looped around the threads from holes # B and # I and is taken back inside through hole # L. This basic step is now repeated until all the signatures have been sewn.

15. When the thread comes out of the very last hole, it is tied to the other threads on the outside and cut off, about 4" from the knot.

16. The whole spine of the newly sewn volume is given a thin layer of glue, the Leather Weld type, and left to dry.



*The cloth has been sewn onto the magazines, forming a nice solid and secure spine. The flap of material seen on top of this volume will be sandwiched (and glued in place) between the outer cover of the volume and the stiffener or inner page of the volume.*

With the signatures now securely sewn together, the volume can now be set aside - it is quite sturdy and can even survive a trans-Atlantic crossing. If you are going to make a leather cover for it, this can be done at leisure.

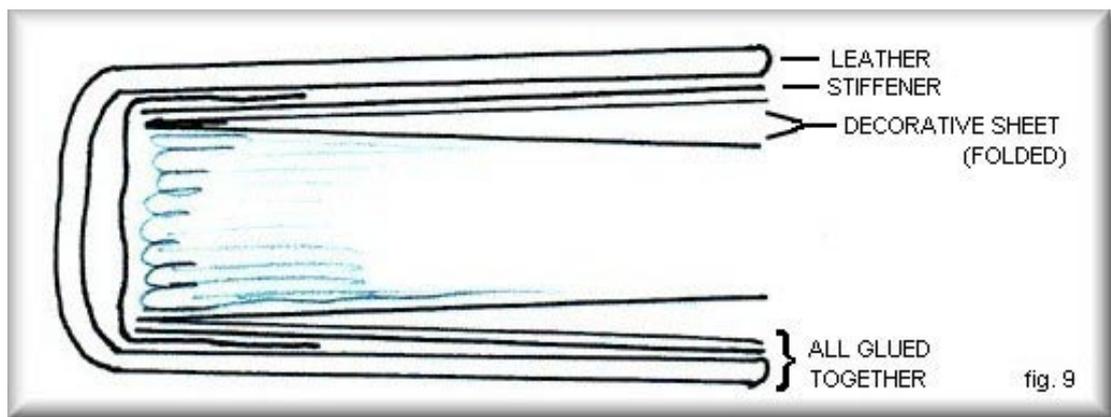
### **Covering The Volume**

1. There are no hard and fast rules about covering the volume. My father covered my youth magazines with cardboard box and brown paper and they outlasted my childhood. The covers look better than the insides. Here is my suggestion for the easiest leather cover. A lot of the basic techniques are left up to you. As always it will be a very good idea to try out every step on a test piece first. You can sew together a few folded blank pieces of paper and make a small note book to practice on.

2. Between the first blank signature and the 3" of cloth lying on top, I glue in a folded piece of decorated paper, using normal paper glue. This paper was traditionally marbled, but can be plain coloured or white. It is glued to both the cloth and the first blank signature page. The inside of this folded decorated paper will be what you see when you open the outer cover of the finished volume.

3. Optionally, on top of this decorated paper (on the outside), you can also include a stiffener. The always useful X-ray plates is one suggestion - any material goes, depending on how sturdy you want the volume to be. I like at least a thick cardboard. This is glued in under the cloth so that it is sandwiched between the cloth and the decorated paper.

4. To summarize: You will now have all the signatures in the middle, with a decorated page folded double on either side of the signatures. On the outside of these you will have an optional stiffener and folding over all of these, will be the cloth to which the magazines were sewn. *Fig. 9.*



5. Cut and decorate the outside leather cover as you would to cover a paperback book. I prefer to cut this cover in three pieces - Front, back, and the spine. That way you can utilize the original leather size better (you need a smaller original piece of leather to cut the three smaller pieces from). They can be sewn or laced together. As long as you end up with one single leather cover that can be glued to the volume.

6. Glue is applied to the whole outside of the volume, except the spine where the signatures were sewn to the cloth. This will never be glued to the leather cover - there will always be a gap along the spine of the volume between the cloth and the leather, allowing the volume to be opened up completely.

7. Weigh the volume down with other books or place it in a press again, being careful not to spoil the leather, and let the glue set and dry completely.

### **The Finished Volume**

You should now be able to pick up the volume only by the outside cover, which will consist of the leather, cloth, stiffener and one half of the decorative paper. The other half of the decorative paper is glued to the first page of the first blank signature, but unlike traditional bookbinding, this decorative page does not attach the cover to the volume - an inherent weakness in the traditional method.

You should also be able to open up the volume at a chosen page and put it face down on a Xerox machine - completely flat. Of course, this depends also on the original binding method of the magazines.

### **Johan Potgieter**

*Johan was born in South Africa. His dad bound youth magazines into volumes for him, based on instructions in the old British "Hobby" magazines. An early classic comic of the Elves and the shoemaker inspired Johan to start working with leather, which he did during student years in the late seventies. These two elements led to an interest in the binding of magazines in book form, with leather covers, of course.*

*Johan is married and lives with his wife and two sons in Minnesota in the USA. He has a BSc. Biochemistry and Zoology degree and taught Computer Programming for more than ten years. He is currently a trainee store manager for a Tandy Leather store in Minneapolis.*

*Johan can be contacted at [leatherworker@gmail.com](mailto:leatherworker@gmail.com) and you are welcome to visit his website: [www.johan-potgieter.com](http://www.johan-potgieter.com) to see some of his leather craft."*

# Dates for your Diary

**18<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> August 2005**

**\*The Society of Bookbinders Biennial Education & Training Conference**

To be held at the University of Bath.

List of Presenters	Wes Baker - The history and working/tooling of Russia leather Glenn Bartley – Leather joints and doublures Tony Cains – Repair treatments for vellum manuscripts Lester Capon – Leather covering Julie Chen – Artists books Chris Clarkson – 15 <sup>th</sup> Century Spanish boxed bindings Mark Cockram – Bradel bindings Neil Holroyd – Traditional edge gilding Katinka Keus – Conservation bindings in Carton Tini Muira – Onlay techniques Ann Muir – A hands-on opportunity to try paper marbling Nicholas Pickwood – Early paper bindings 1480 – 1800 Dominic Riley – Sewn boards Geert van Daal – Self-healing finishing tools Wim Vischer – Making vellum/parchment Tony Ward – Managing a small bookbinding business
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Further details are available on the Society's web site at: [www.societyofbookbinders.com](http://www.societyofbookbinders.com) or by e-mailing Ray Newberry at: [conf.organizer@societyofbookbinders.com](mailto:conf.organizer@societyofbookbinders.com)

**27<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> October 2005**

**\*The Guild of Bookworkers annual Standards of Excellence Seminar**

Portland, Oregon

List of Presenters	Tim Ely Renate Messmer Peggy Skycraft Paul Delrue Inge Bruggeman
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Further details will follow in the next edition of 'Skin Deep'

**5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> November 2005**

**\*UK Fine Press Book Fair**

Saturday 11.00 – 18.00, Sunday 10.00 – 17.00

Oxford Brookes University, Gipsy Lane, Oxford, UK

\*We will be in attendance at these events