

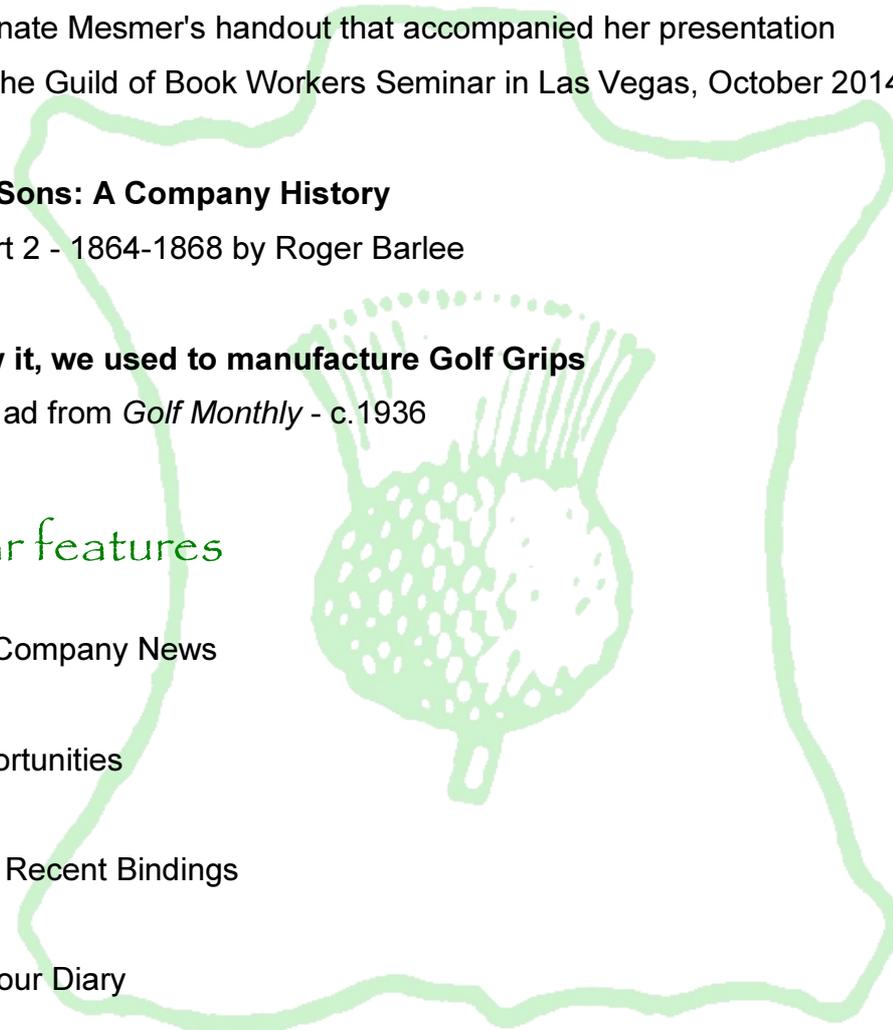
# Skin Deep

The Biannual Newsletter from J Hewit & Sons Ltd.

No.40 – Autumn 2015

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# The Medieval Girdle Book

Making a Model

by Renate Mesmer



*This handout was written as a tool for Renate's presentation at the Guild of Book Workers Standards of Excellence seminar, October 2015, in Las Vegas. The information in the handout covers all aspects of making a girdle book model, but is not meant as a step-by-step manual on how to make a model.*

## Introduction<sup>1</sup>



Girdle books were small portable books worn by medieval European monks, clergyman and aristocratic nobles as a popular accessory to medieval attire between the 13th and 16th centuries. They consisted of a book whose leather binding continued loose below the cover of the book in a long tapered tail with a large knot at the end which could be tucked into one's girdle or belt. The knot was usually strips of leather woven together for durability. The book hung upside down and backwards so that when swung upwards it was ready for reading. The books were normally religious: a cleric's daily Office, or for lay persons (especially women) a Book of Hours. One of the best known texts to become a girdle book is Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*, although it is the only surviving philosophical/theological girdle book. Women especially wore the girdle book out of convenience since it was already fashionable, at least in the 15th century, to wear a girdle belt above the waistline. A book secured on the girdle belt served both the utilitarian function of enabling hands-free carrying and protecting valuable books from theft and the elements. It also made a visible statement of social position wealth and learning (or at least literacy). Authoritative figures, saints or apostles like St. Jerome were often depicted holding girdle books. Artistic depictions of the girdle book confirm their popularity as an accessory.

Girdle books first appeared in the late 13th century and gained popularity through the 15th sometimes becoming ostentatious jewel-encrusted presentation books and falling out of favour late in the 16th century, when printed books had become much more common. Another possible reason for their decline was the relatively small number of specialized girdle-protected texts becoming outdated with little need to replace them. In an environment of increasingly cheap printing it was simpler to replicate texts than spend time preserving individual manuscripts. The intricately constructed girdle bindings were simply impractical after a certain point.

There are hundreds of artistic representations of girdle books. Their popularity in art indicates a much wider distribution and adoption of the girdle book as a binding than surviving copies suggest. A list of 150 examples "shows the proportion of representation in painting and in sculpture [as] almost equal." However, only 23 medieval girdle books have survived in their original binding, the oldest datable example being from Kastl, Germany (ca. 1453). At least part of the reason for the small number of surviving examples stems from the fact that the use of the girdle book was largely confined to a narrow area from the Netherlands to the Upper Rhine Valley.

Girdle books were a variant on other forms of medieval bookbinding in which the leather or cloth continued loose beyond the edges of the hard cover. Especially for small personal books like the Book of Hours, the leather often extended sideways, which gave extra protection for the book when not in use - the loose edges could be wrapped round, and often buckles or laces enabled the book to be securely closed. In addition, when reading, the book could be held from outside the cover, so that the clean inside surface of the leather, rather than the thumbs of the reader, touched the pages. This stopped the pages acquiring the dirty patches in the lower margins that many medieval books have. These too are often shown in art, although it is noticeable that readers are often not making full use of the protective way of holding the book. The knot used for the handle was a Turk's head knot, so named for similar appearance to the turbans worn by medieval Muslims of the Turkish Empire. Sometimes the girdle book had a hook that fastened to the belt; "a hinge connected the hook to the flap of the binding, allowing maximal movement of the book while it was still attached."

Many girdle books were unadorned; however, there are also many that have brass corner pieces, carvings, awl punctures, artisan clasps, and possibly a family crest or other mark on the front. Given the security afforded by carrying the book around, it was less risky to add decoration and gilding to a book less easily stolen than a shelved manuscript. Additionally, ornate metal clasps and hinges were more durable than woven leather or cloth bindings that wore out more quickly from heavy use.

<sup>1</sup> From Wikipedia

### **Making a Girdle Book Model with one Clasp**

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| Dimensions | Textblock: 9 x 13.5 cm<br>Wooden boards: 9.7 x 14.7 cm   |
| Materials  | Textblock<br>Sewing thread<br>Sewing support (cord, or alum tawed)<br>Deer skin or soft leather<br>Leather or vellum hinges (optional)<br>Wooden boards (beech, or white oak)<br>Brass 0.8 and 0.3 mm thickness, brass nails, or brass rods<br>Twine, hemp or sisal (approx. 1mm in diameter) for Turk's head knot base<br>Leather strips (approx. 2-3 mm wide and as long as possible) for Turk's head knot |

## Textblock

Add one section at front and back to the textblock from the same paper or similar paper. Traditionally it would have been a similar paper.

Pare leather hinges which will be hinged around the first and last section

- Split the leather to approx. 0.4 – 0.5 mm thickness



- Bevel and feather along one long side (this part wraps around the section)

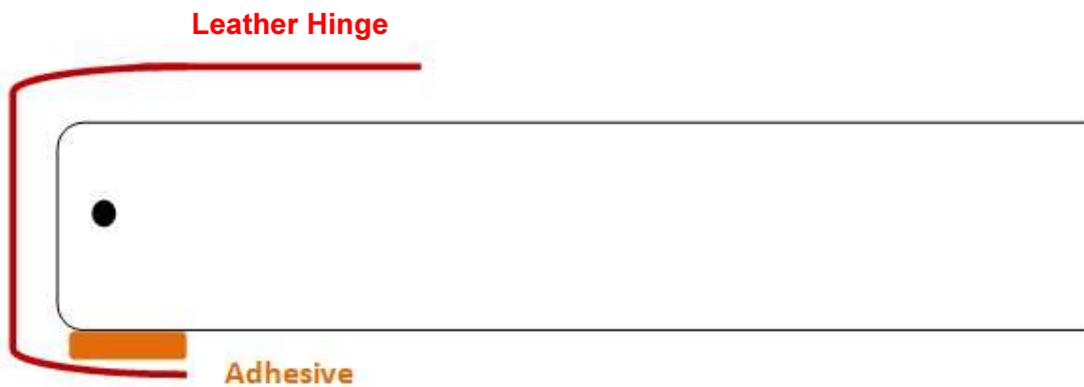


- Bevel the other long side in a long and flat angle (this part will go onto the board)

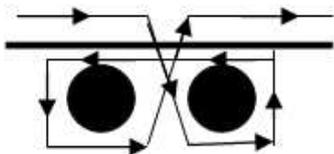


- Feather the very edges at head and tail

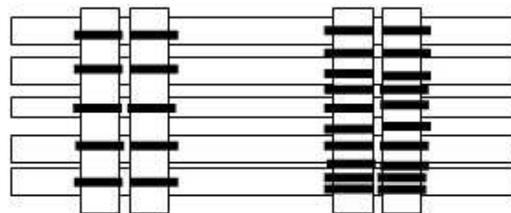
## Endpaper



## Sewing

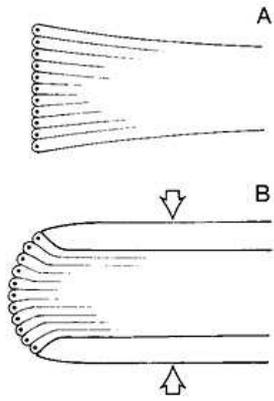


Double raised cords



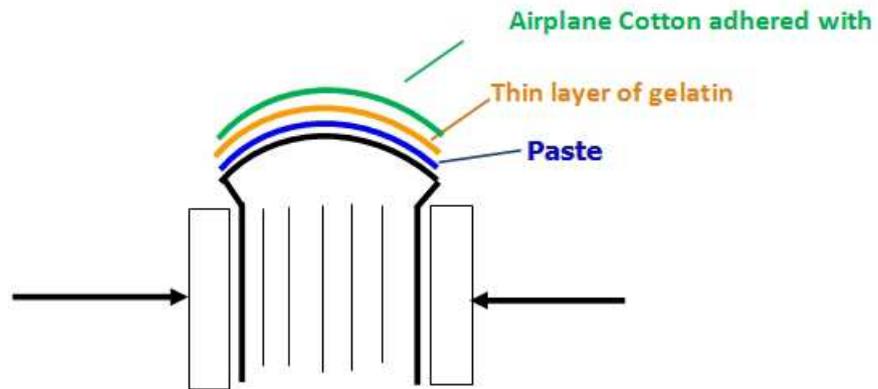
all-along

all-along packed



A perfectly sewn textblock will fall into a nice 45° shoulder. No backing should be needed.

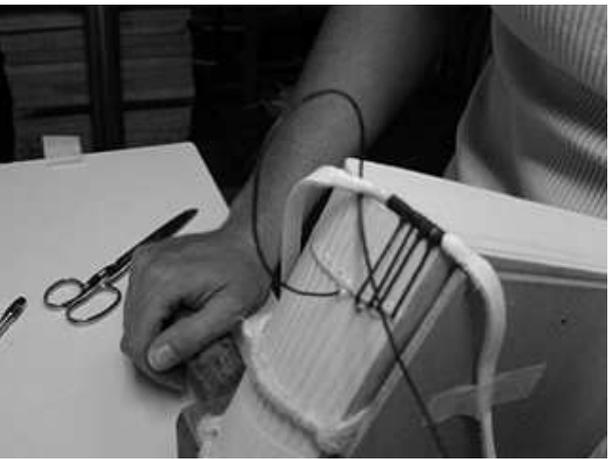
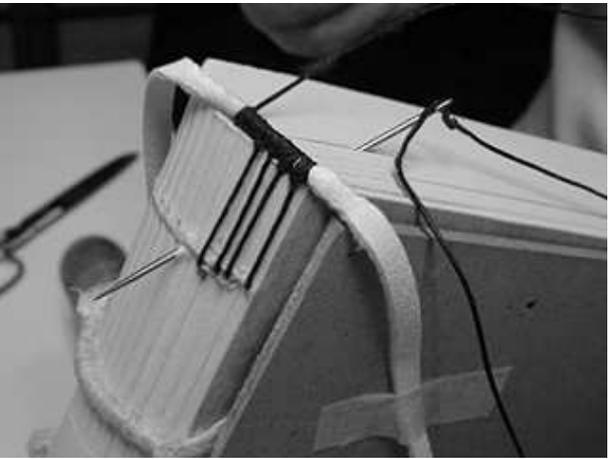
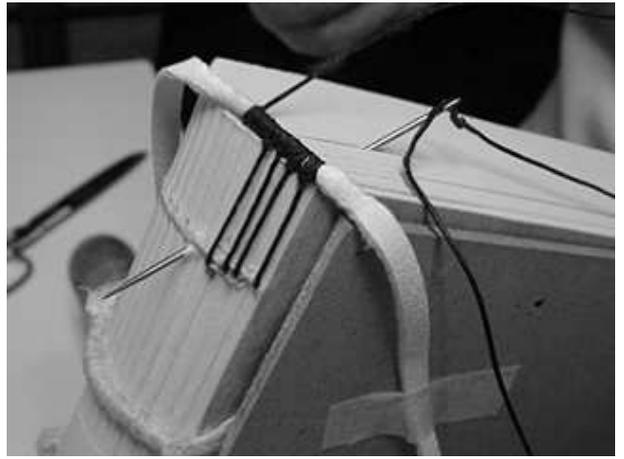
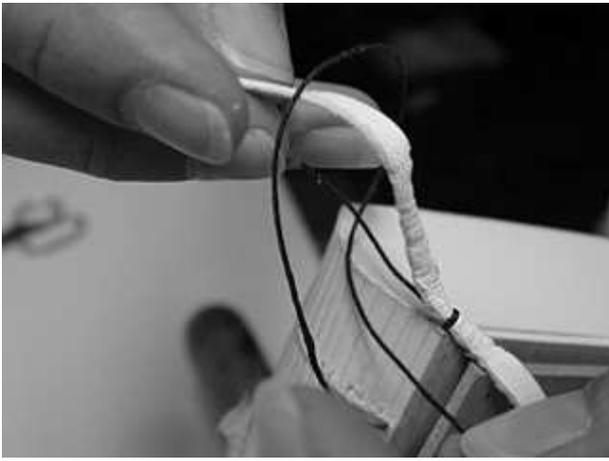
**Spine lining**



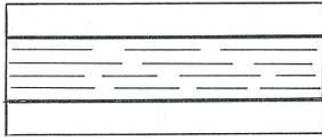
**Primary Endband (with a back bead)**

*photos by Renate Mesmer*

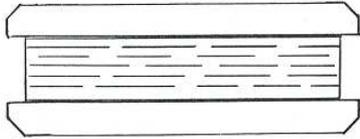




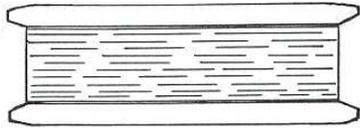
### The Wooden Boards<sup>3</sup>



The oldest codices were bound in wooden boards made from oak. Oak is extremely sturdy, hard and durable and is less likely to be infested from insects.



Since the 11th century beech wood was also used, and was mostly used in the northern areas of Germany in the 15th century.



In the 14th century the wooden boards which often were left uncovered are starting to be covered. First half and then full leather or alum-tawed coverings, or sometimes parchment as well.



In the 16th century paper boards start to take over in the binding world.

### Preparing the boards<sup>4</sup>

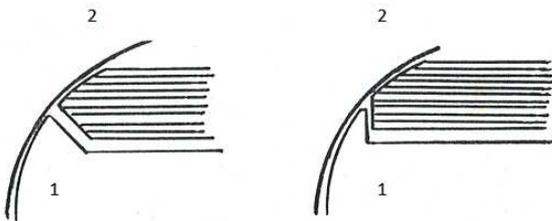
- Mark your boards: front, back, inside, outside, spine edge, head and tail



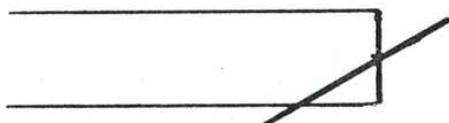
*Sand or file head and tail so they are not too square.*



*With pencil mark the centre of the thickness of the board on all four edges.*



*Shape the spine edge to fit the shape of the shoulder and 2. carry the shape of the spine onto the board.*

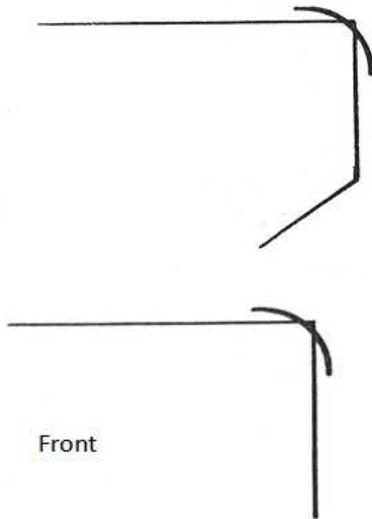


*Use a plane to bevel the squares at head, tail and foredge to create a nice straight facet on the inside of the board*

<sup>3/4</sup> From Dag Ernst Petersen: *Notizen zum Beutelbuch*, 1989

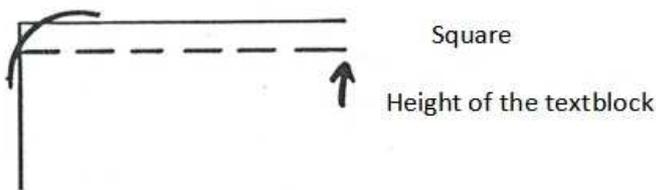


*Finished shape of a board*

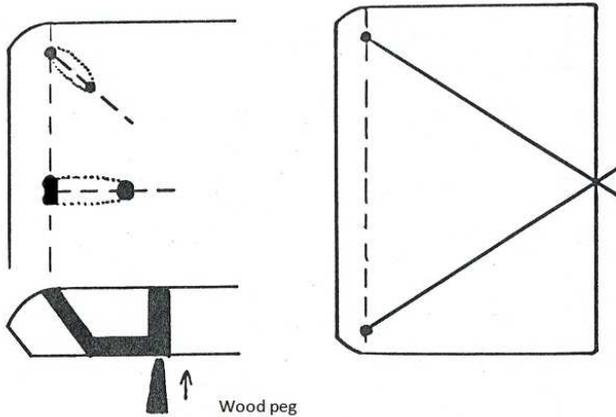


*Sand the outside edges of all three sides*

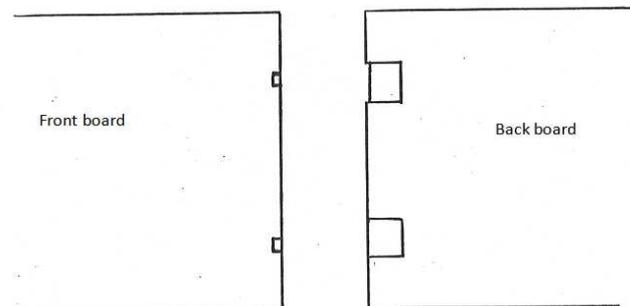
*Sand the corners and round them just a little*



*Round the back corner*



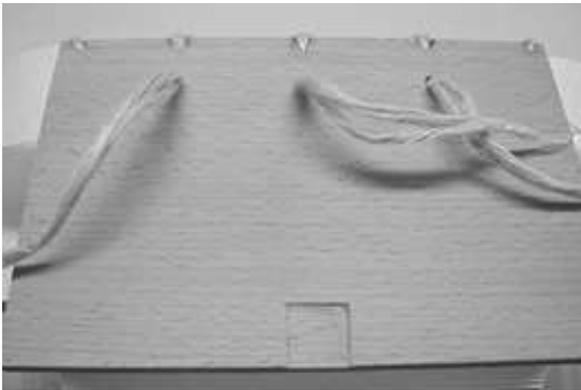
*Mark the holes and channels for the sewing supports. Drill holes and carve out the channels*



*Cut-outs for the clasps*

## Attaching the boards

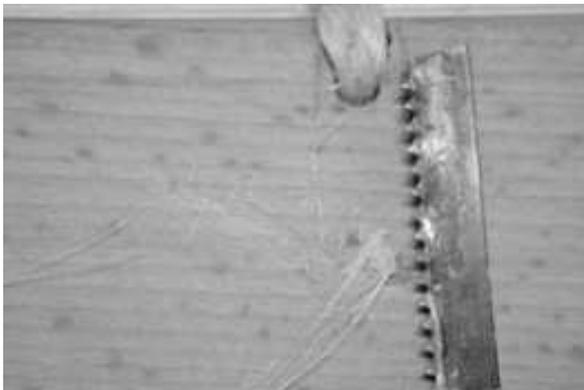
Put a spacer in front and back that creates room for the leather hinges and the turn-ins. The thickness of the spacer depends on the thickness of your leather hinges and turn-ins.



*Lace cords through the board*



*Use pegs to secure the cords*



*Cut off pegs*

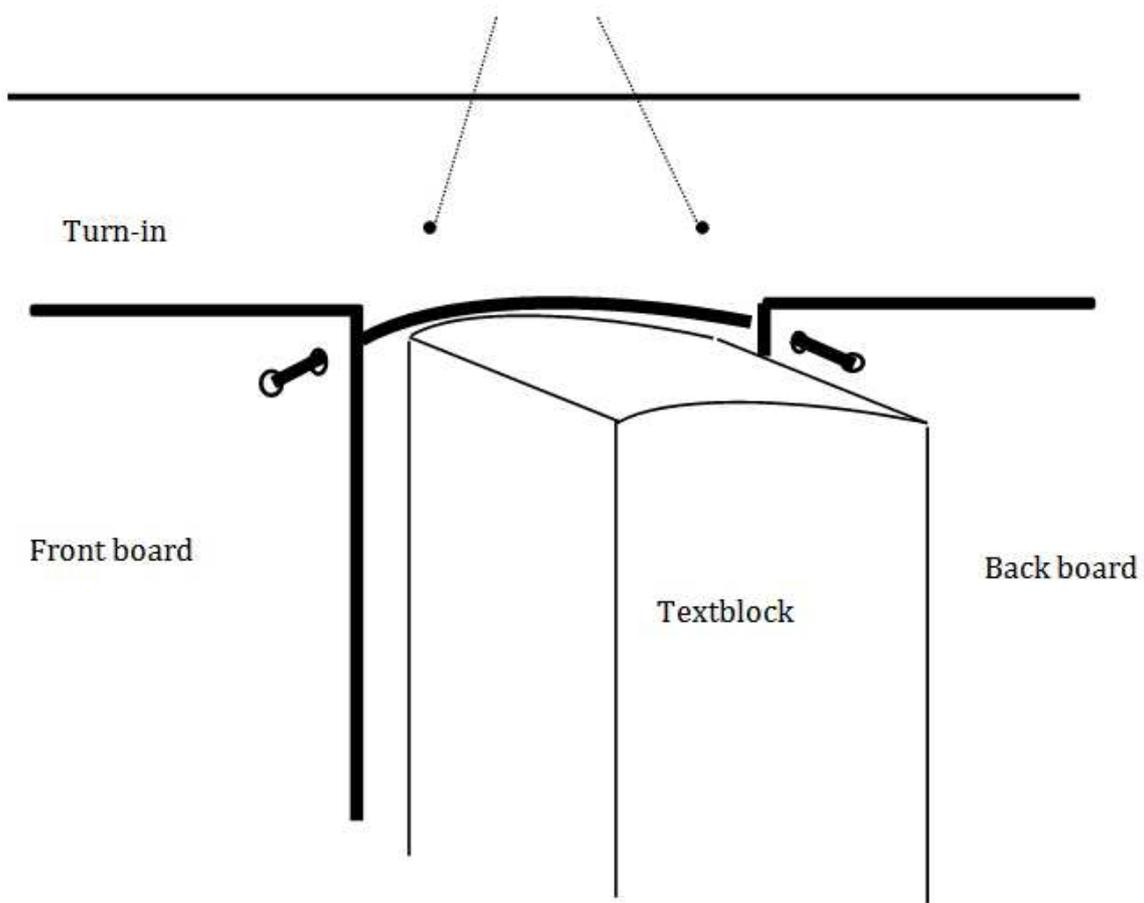


*Sand the pegs*

## Covering with Leather

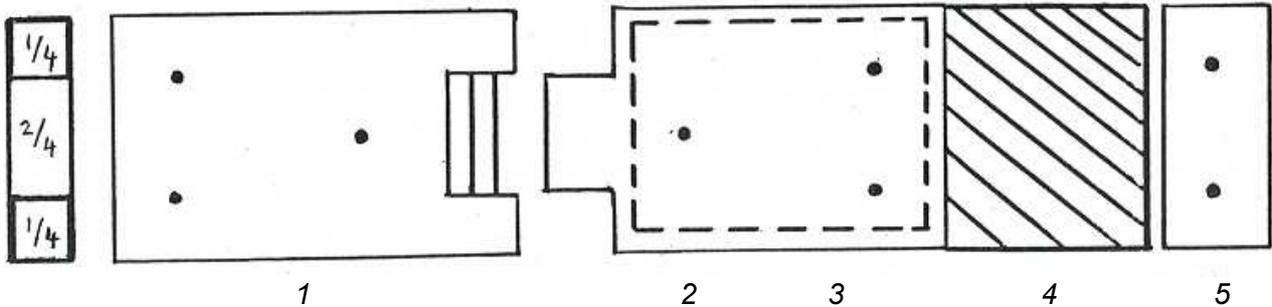
- Prepare a strip of leather which will cover the tail of the book. It can be rather thin and should be feathered to 0.00 on the side that goes on the outside of the board so it won't show under the leather covering.
- Measure and cut the leather for a full cover with an extended tail (approx. 2.5 -3 times the height of the book). Make sure the extended tail has an appropriate length!
- Turn-ins should be approx. 3cm on each side. Remember: no turn-in on the tail end of the book!
- Dampen the leather, apply paste, let rest, remove paste, apply fresh paste.
- Cover your book.
- Tie-up your book in the press.

This diagram shows how to make the cut for a turn-in over laced through endbands.



## The Clasps<sup>5</sup>

The clasps are made from brass which is a combination of copper (Cu) and Zinc (Zn). CuZn37% has approximately 37% Zinc in the alloy. At this percentage brass can be formed cold.

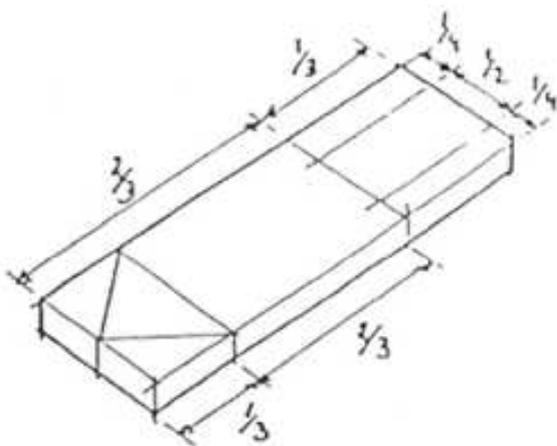


1 Catch, 2+3 Hook and hook plate (back side), 4 Strap and 5 Strap plate

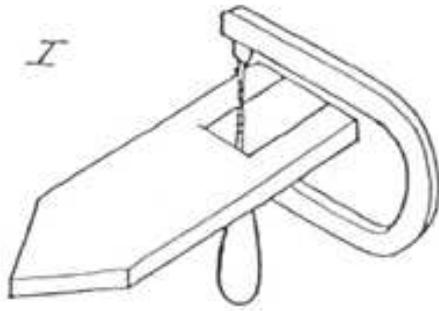
- Draw a design of choice on paper
- Heat the brass and quickly immerse it in cold water
- Adhere the paper design to the brass plate and cut a strip of brass the width of your design
- Cut out the clasp, file sand and maybe decorate
- Cut metal plate
- Drill holes for nails
- Polish clasp
- Expose to ammonia vapour in a small chamber for patina (optional)
- Attach clasps to the book

<sup>5</sup> From Dag Ernst Petersen: *Notizen zum Beutelbuch*, 1989

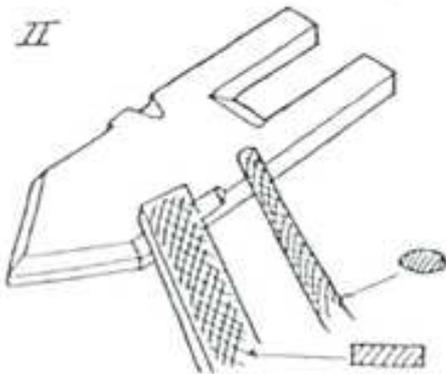
## The Catch<sup>6</sup>



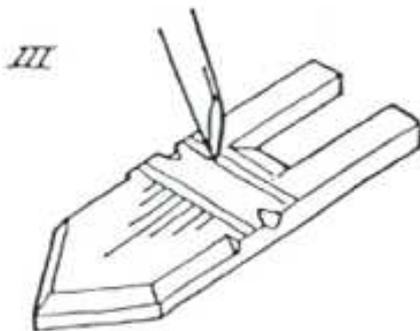
The proportions shown here are traditional proportions but can vary from binder to binder.



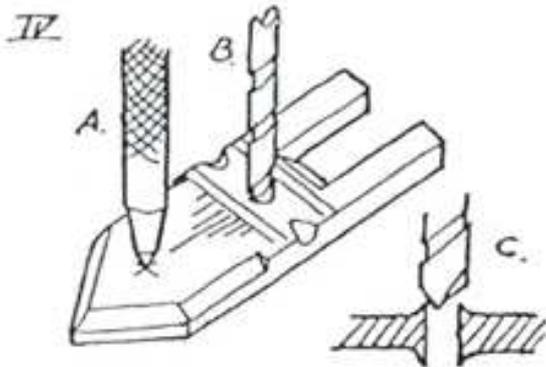
*Using a jeweller's saw*



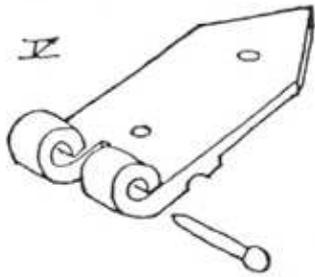
*The use of various shapes of metal files to create the decorative profile on the edges of the clasp.*



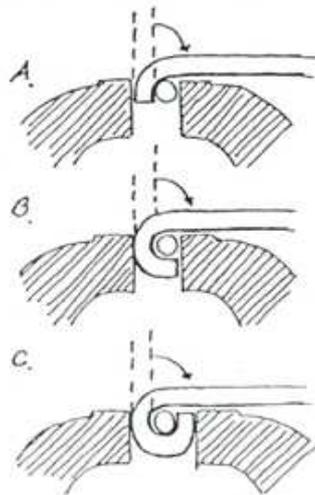
*Decorating the surface*



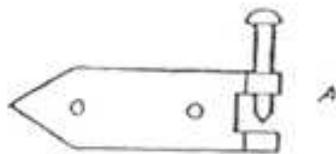
*Mark the position of the hole. Drill hole. Soften rough edges around hole with larger drill bit.*



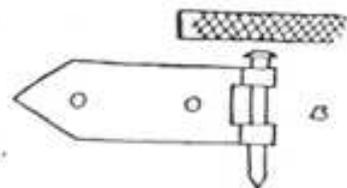
Making the catch.



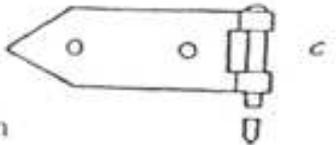
Rolling the ends



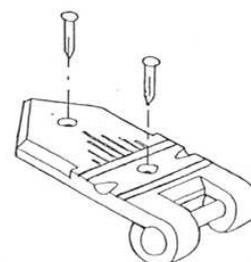
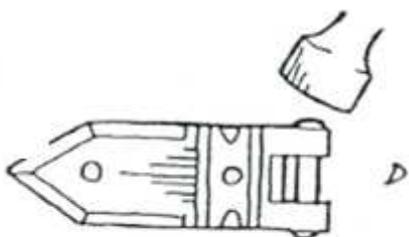
Inserting the brass nail.



Flatten the head of the nail before fully inserting.



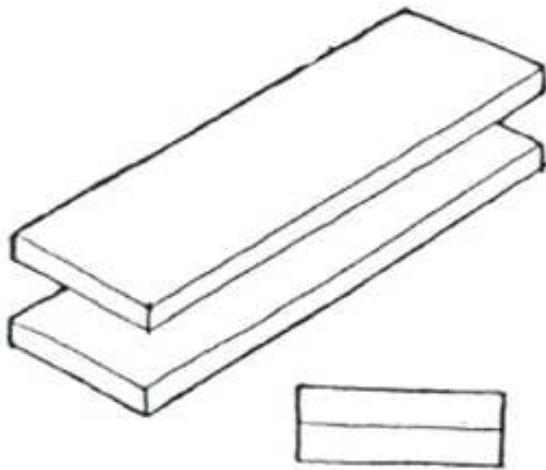
Cut the end of the rivet.



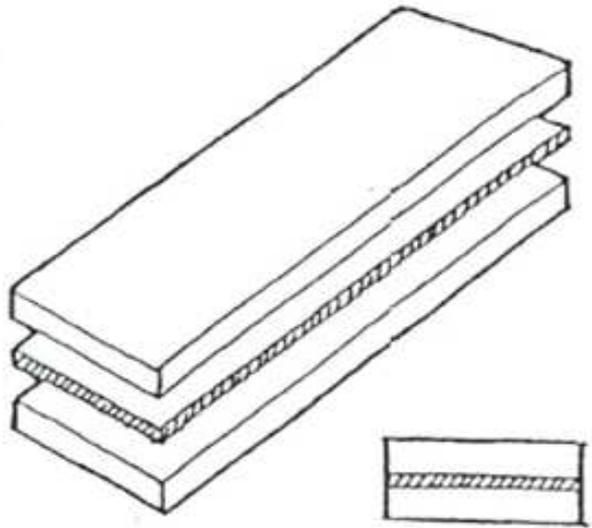
<sup>6</sup>Drawings are from: *Schliessenanfertigung*, Workshop Ascona, Switzerland (originally in German). *Herstellen neuer Schliessen*. Translated into English by Renate Mesmer

## The Leather Strap

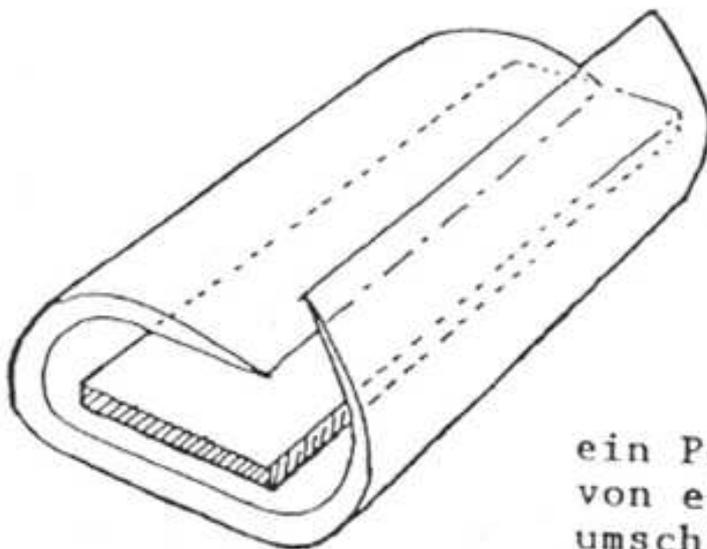
The leather strap should be made before cutting out the space for it in the boards. There are a variety of straps:



*leather/leather*



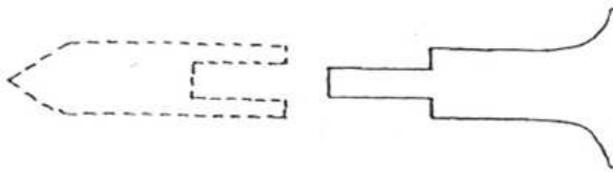
*leather/parchment/leather*



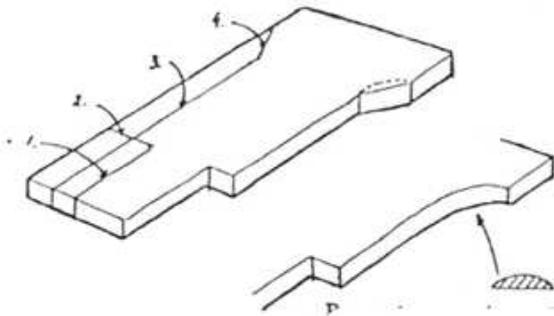
ein Pergamentstreifen  
von einem Lederband  
umschlossen

*Parchment wrapped in leather*

## The Hook

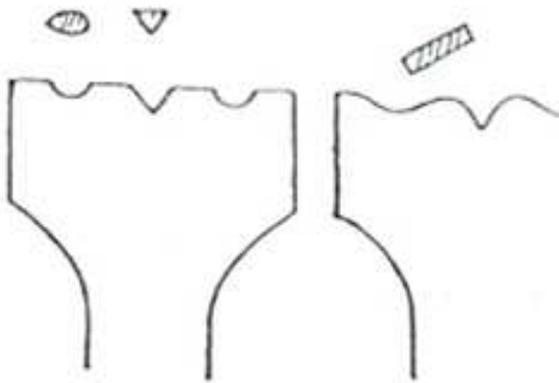


Like the catch, the shown proportions are traditional, but can vary from binder to binder. Note: the narrower the actual hook, the less strong it will be and might bend open.

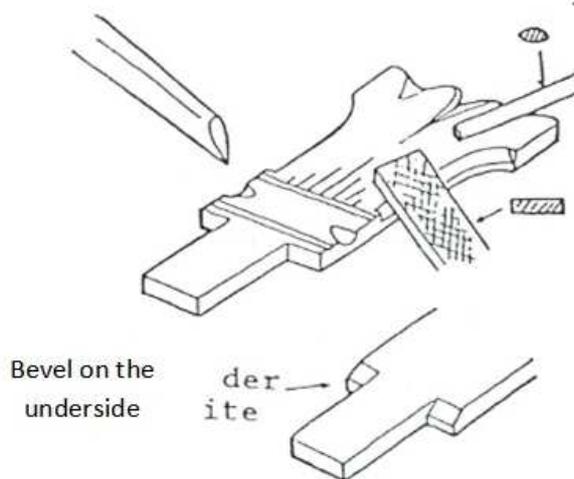


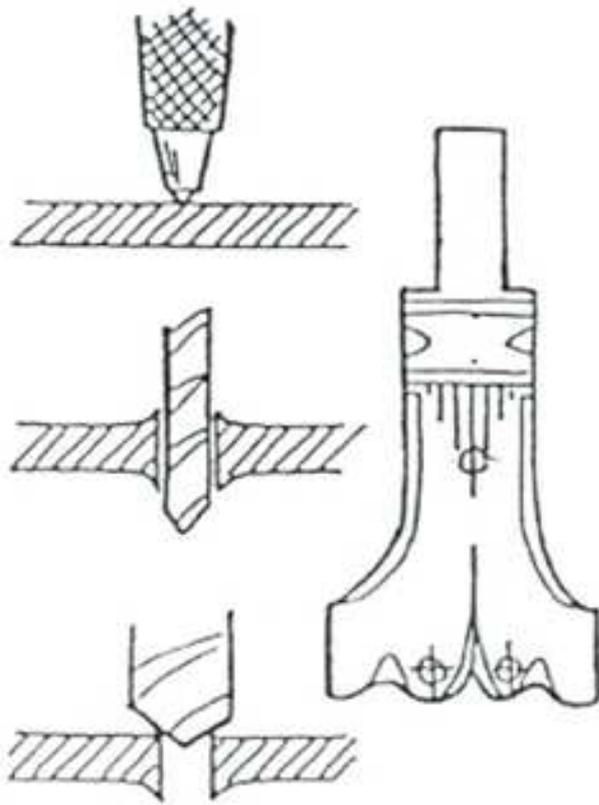
All straight lines will be cut with a jeweller's saw. Rounded edges can be cut with the jeweller's saw or can also be filed. This very much depends on the shape of the clasp.

Use half round file to create this profile.

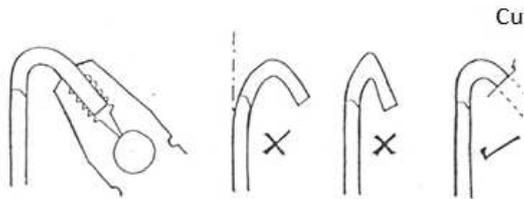


A variety of files in different shapes can be use to create a great variety of profiles and designs. Decorative lines are done with an engraver's tool.

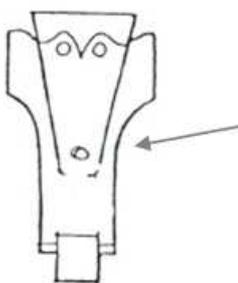




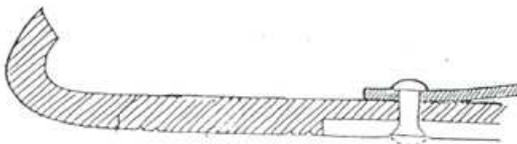
*Mark the position of the hole. Drill hole. Soften rough edges around hole with larger drill bit.*

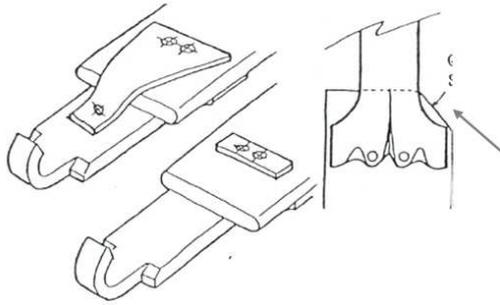


*Bending the actual hook*



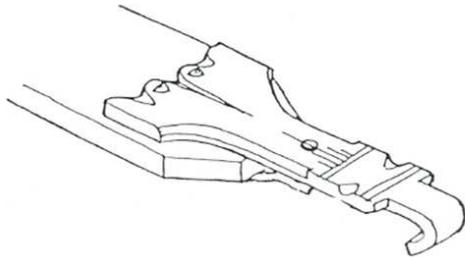
*To attach the hook part to the leather strap a thin brass plate (0.3mm thick) needs to be cut and attached. The plate will be attached with one nail at the top first. Should the head of the nail distract the design of the clasp, it can be flattened with a file.*





*The leather strap is attached with two nails between the hook part and the plate.*

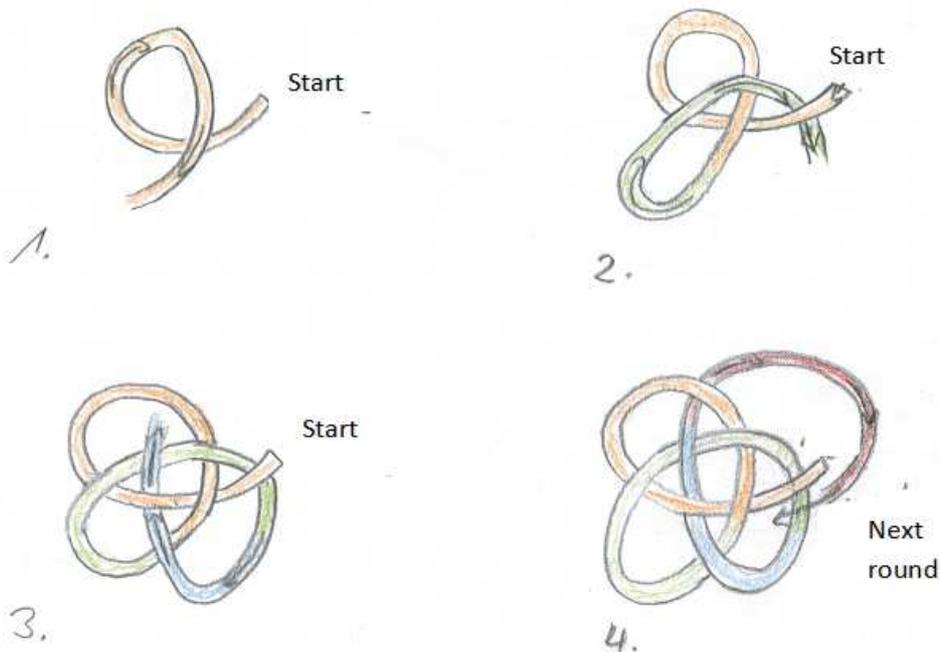
*The corners of the leather strap will be cut off. The strap is never cut along the clasp!*



### The Turk's Head Knot

Wrap some twine around the end of the extended leather tail. Use gelatin to keep twine from moving. Form a ball or oval shape end. Cut leather strips (approx. 2-3 mm wide). Length doesn't matter since you can easily add another piece on to it by beveling the ends and joining the two pieces with paste or PVA

Making the Turk's head knot will take some practice to get it right. Some people say it is easier to keep both ends long.



Once you got this 4-loop shape lay it over the ball spread it out evenly. Follow the pattern and cover the ball!

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*Renate Mesmer is Head of Conservation at the Folger Shakespeare Library in DC. Renate is an experienced book and paper conservator with more than twenty years experience in the field. She formally trained as a master bookbinder in Germany and has pursued further conservation training at renowned institutions throughout Europe and the U.S. She has held previous positions conserving and restoring books and manuscripts at the Munich State Archives; the University Library in Mannheim; the Speyer State Archives in Germany, and at the Centro del bel libro in Ascona, Switzerland.*

# Product & Company News

## Brass Folder & Creaser

A highly polished brass folder and creaser, ideal for working in fine detail. The tool allows you to work with curved or straight shapes and for applying all kinds of patterns from its fine rounded tip. It can also be heated to give more defined lines when working with inlays and onlays or when working with foil on leather, cloth or paper. You can also transfer designs through translucent paper, leaving a perfect clear line across the paper. The handle of each folder is covered in leather and comes with its own leather sheath (leather colours vary).

- Overall Length: 130mm
- Width: 11mm
- Exposed Blade: 64mm

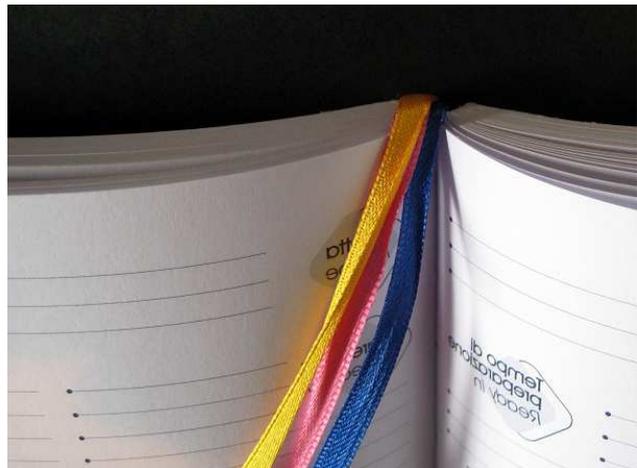


Price £36.00

## Unbound Book Blocks

We have added two products to our range of unbound book blocks. The first is an A5 landscape journal, with 96, 90gsm unruled cream pages. The second is a printed recipe book with 120, 100gsm white pages. It is fully printed (in dark blue ink) in Italian/English. Supplied sewn, with 3 marker ribbons, glued and ready to bind. 175mm x 240mm (approx. 6.75" x 9.5")

These new items may be viewed and purchased together with the full range of book blocks online



*(Prices are subject to delivery and VAT where applicable)*

## The Society of Bookbinders Competition, 2015

### The J. Hewit & Sons Award for Excellence in Design

Winner Yohana Doudou, (Avignon, France)

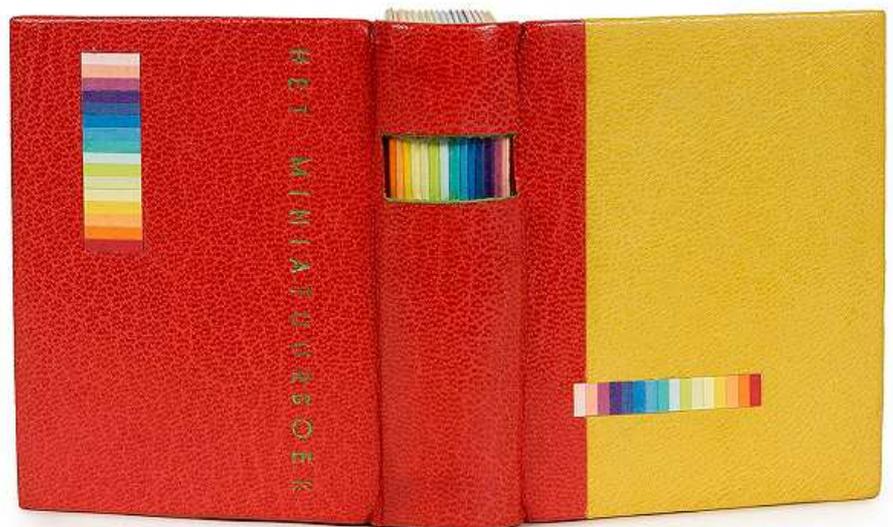


Hong Kong, Scenes of a Floating World by Kenneth White (1976)  
"In fifteen short poems, Kenneth White describes Hong Kong. The design represents the bay of Hong Kong 'floating' on the sea at dusk. I dyed the leather for the covering and the onlays using different techniques, including suminagashi for the sea and craquelé for the buildings. Gold-tooling for the windows and the title. The endpapers are made with suminagashi paper sprinkled with gold."

### J Hewit and Sons Award for Excellence in Design

Winner Françoise Vogelenzang (Heemstede, Netherlands)

Het Miniaturboek by Ben Engelhart (Philip Elchers 1999)  
Traditional French binding in three colours, board on board, open spine with visible coloured sections. Hand-sewn headbands. Title tooled by hand. Decoration of coloured paper the same as the sections in the front and back.



Our warmest congratulations go to Françoise and Yohana

A catalogue showing all of the entrants to the competition is available to purchase online

## Aura Metallic Buckram

We are delighted to be launching this new to the market product. Aura Buckram, is a contemporary and sophisticated 'metallic' finished cloth, based on the traditional Arbelave Library Buckram. The durable, wipeable and scuff resistant surface can be foil blocked, blind embossed and screen printed. These characteristics will make it very popular with designers, publishers, pattern book manufacturers, specifiers and stationery manufacturers. Aura is suitable for both hand and machine binding.

Aura is available in 7 stunning shades on a roll width of 1040mm.



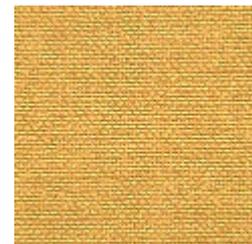
6650 - Silver



6651 - Argent



6652 - Gunmetal



6653 - Classic Gold



6653 - Rich Gold



6654 - Copper



6655 - Bronze

### Prices:

- 0-49 metres - £8.99/metre
- 50-249 metres - £6.91/metre
- 250+ metres - £6.63/metre

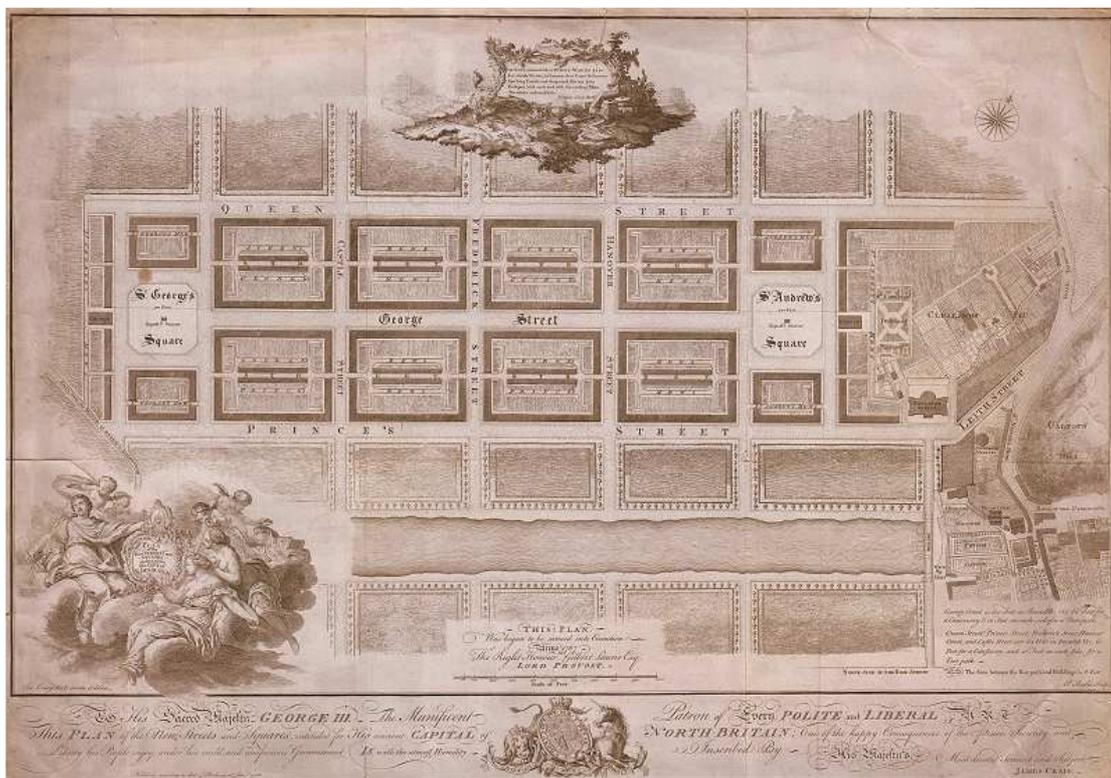
*(Prices are subject to delivery and VAT where applicable)*

# J Hewit & Sons: A Company History

Part 2 - 1864 - 1868

by Roger Barlee

Old Edinburgh is now a major tourist attraction with the quaint closes adding to the atmosphere. In the 1860's however the High Street of Edinburgh was certainly not on a visitors "to do" list. Until the building of the Georgian New Town in Edinburgh, which was completed in 1820, all the residents lived in the old town which consisted of The High Street and the surrounding roads.



Plan for Edinburgh New Town by James Craig 1768



As the move from a rural economy to urban increased at the end of 18th Century the population of Edinburgh exploded and between 1801 and 1841 it doubled to 165,000. There was however little room for growth of habitable properties as old Edinburgh was surrounded by a defensive wall, the Flodden Wall built after Scotland's defeat to England in 1513, small parts of which still exist today. The rich had moved to spacious residences in the New Town and what was left rapidly fell into ruin with whole families living in a room 14 x 11 feet with little or no sanitation - there were even examples of families taking in lodgers to earn a little more money. Water was delivered to the houses by a water carrier and when my father joined the company we still owned a property down North Gray's Close where water could be delivered through transfer troughs.

The Old and 'New' Town



*Transfer Trough*



*"Gardyloo!!!"*

Slops and the contents of chamber pots were thrown out the windows of the tenements to the cry "Gardyloo". As you can imagine the stench must have been dreadful and in 1861 the Builder Journal wrote

*"We devoutly believe that no smell in Europe or Asia.....can equal in depth and intensity, in concentration and power, the diabolical combination of sulphurated hydrogen, we came upon one evening about ten o'clock in a place called Todrick's Wynd."*

Todrick's Wynd was 200 feet (60m) from the tannery, the other side of the High Street. The richer people left in the old town lived in the tops of the tenements to stay away from the smells as much as possible. The conditions were ripe for Cholera and Typhus and in addition many of the buildings were in a dreadful state of repair being 2-300 years old. On the 25th of November 1861 the tenement at the top of Paisley Close, just down the hill from North Gray's Close collapsed killing 35 people. There was one survivor, Joseph McIvor, and to celebrate his survival an ornate lintel with a carving of his head now adorns the top of the close with the famous phrase "Heave Awa Lads I'm no deid yet." This is what he was supposed to have shouted to his rescuers.



*"Heave Awa Lads I'm no deid yet."*

As a result the town councillors were finally shamed into doing something about the state of the Old Town and this led to the Edinburgh City Improvement Act of 1867. This legislation allowed the council to tear down anything that looked like it might fall down, and commission a series of major changes which would transform several parts of the Old Town. Narrow wynds were turned into streets and new tenements were built in order to improve access and improve sanitation.

As you can imagine a tannery in the heart of the Old Town was high on the list of properties to be torn down, and it might well have been the impending act that prompted Councillor Girdle to retire and sell his business to J. Hewit & Sons Ltd. in 1864.

At 10pm on the 10th October 1867 the tannery was all but destroyed in a major fire. From a historical point of view however, this has proved very illuminating as there was a tremendous amount of information regarding the layout and the work carried out published in the papers over the next few days as well as the conditions in the local area.

## GREAT FIRE IN EDINBURGH LAST NIGHT

### ----- DESTRUCTION OF A TANNERY OFF THE HIGH STREET -----

...The property of Messrs Hewit & Son, in which the fire broke out, was situated immediately behind the dense block of buildings between North Gray's Close and Morrison's Close. The upper or south end of the establishment, nearest to the High Street, consisted of the counting-room and warehouse - a brick building three storeys in height. Immediately to the north was the tannery, also a large brick building of three storeys, the lower flat being the tan-work, while the currying shop was on the second floor, and the drying-house occupied the upper flat. To the north of the tannery, and separated by a thick stone wall, was situated the bark warehouse and the japanning rooms - a building of two storeys.

On the west side of the tannery were the tan - pits, making a pretty large open space of ground between the tannery and North Gray's Close. On the east side of the tannery there was also a vacant space of ground, but lower down, opposite the japanning-rooms, the space became very narrow, the houses in Bailie Fyfe's Close being at that point very near the japanning rooms....

THE SCOTSMAN 11TH OCTOBER 1867

## FRIGHTFUL CONFLAGRATION IN NORTH GRAY'S CLOSE.

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...This district, crowded to excess with human dwellings, has nevertheless within its compass several works, including a large tanyard belonging to Mr Girle as proprietor, and occupied by Messrs J. Hewitt & Sons, tanners. It was in this large work that the fire, which soon assumed so menacing an aspect, originated. The building, which was about 90 feet in length, three storeys in height, and about 25 in breadth, was filled in the lower flat with tan - pits filled with hides and material used by curriers. The upper flats were both full of prepared leather. As the fire broke out with great suddenness, and without any premonition of its existence, it was evident from the very first that there was no prospect of saving the structure and its contents....

The only immediate access from the High Street to the burning premises was North Gray's Close, a steep, badly-paved alley, not over four feet broad, with tall tenements of houses on both sides....

....Morrison's Close in the middle. The last named close as a *Cul de sac*, going down only a short way, and having a populous tenement on the left hand going down, and the store of Messrs Hewitt & Son on the right....

...The tanhouse, as above stated, extended about 90feet from south to north. It was a brick structure, with, of course, a great deal of wood in the floorings, roofs, louvre windows, and ventilators. At the north end of it was a small two-storey house, filled with bark and undressed hides, and where the engine and boiler were situated....

...It is impossible to estimate the damage done. The stock and machinery were, of course, the most serious part of the loss: and only a small quantity of material can possibly be recovered from the *debris*. We understand that the premises and their contents were fully insured.

We sincerely hope that the Magistrates, through the powers conferred in them by the Provisional Order, will be able to purchase the site of the tan-yard and convert it into an open court where space is very much needed. It will greatly stultify the exertions being made for the improvement of the city if works of this inflammable character are allowed to continue in the heart of a crowded locality....

EDINBURGH EVENING COURANT  
11TH OCTOBER 1867

## THE DIASTROUS FIRES IN EDINBURGH

### DISTRESS AMONG THE IMPERILLED TENANTS

...The disastrous fire which on Thursday night made ruin of Messrs Hewit & Sons' extensive tannery, occurred in the very midst of some of the most dilapidated and pestilential buildings to be found off the High Street; and the alarm and panic spread by the disaster among the swarming tenantry, gave rise to scenes of disorder and destruction, of which the pitiable results were not fully known until the return of day, when there was no longer cause for any immediate apprehension of danger. The ill-fated tannery, of which but a very insignificant portion has been left standing, was surrounded by dwelling-houses - rising six, seven and eight storeys - on all sides but the north, which terminated in a large open space; and the nearness of these buildings made the prospect of saving them at one time all but hopeless. As it is, they are many of them much damaged - anomalous as that phrase is applied to property of such an all worth...

THE SCOTSMAN 12TH OCTOBER 1867

...The men in the employment of Messrs Hewit were yesterday employed in removing the stones from the pits, which were to a greater or lesser extent filled with hides, The inside of the building was a complete mass of charred wood and rubbish, the removal of which will necessitate a considerable amount of labour before the pits can be reached. There are twenty of these inside and twenty seven outside...

We beg to return thanks to Mr. Mitchell and Members of his Brigade and those gentlemen who kindly lent their aid in extinguishing the Fire on our Premises last evening, and have to inform our numerous Customers and Friends that in a few days we shall be able to carry on our Business in all its Departments as formerly.

J. HEWIT & SONS

EDINBURGH EVENING COURANT  
12TH OCTOBER 1867

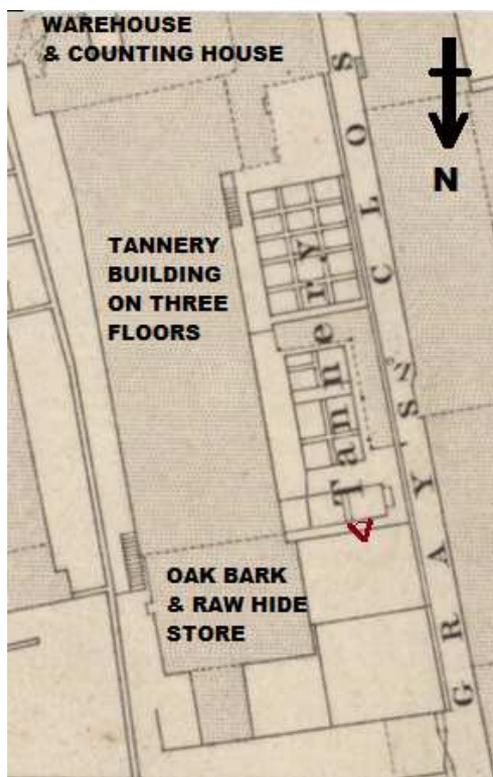
Despite the huge fire the leather in the pits would probably have survived to a large extent unscathed. The skins would have been completely submerged in either lime or tan solutions, and bar, the odd skin on the top of each pit that might have been damaged by falling masonry, most were probably still in good condition so a large amount of the leather stock would have been undamaged. The Company still had their currying premises in Niddry Street, so as a result they would have been able to continue production to a degree relatively quickly. The advert in the Evening Courant stating that business could carry on as normal within a few days was therefore not fanciful.

As you can see from these newspaper articles conditions in North Gray's Close were not far behind those in Todricks Wynd with ramshackle multi-storey tenements cheek by jowl with the tannery. I love the phrase from the Scotsman - "dilapidated and pestilential buildings" as this shows how run-down this part of Edinburgh had become. Any tannery worth its salt would have ensured that good hygiene practices were carried out within if they were to produce saleable leather. Away from the main tannery however there would no doubt be rubbish piles of animal and other waste to combine with the household waste thrown from the tenements leading to good levels of rats and other vermin in the area. Surprisingly, considering the packed conditions, with the close only 4 feet wide, and the large quantities of highly flammable barrels of pitch and dried oak bark, the fire brigade managed to control the fire and stop it spreading too far. With the help of heavy rain and three hoses the fire was brought fully under control by 2am. The damage however was extensive. The warehouse appears to have survived however the west wall of the main building had collapsed across the tan pits and the bark house was completely destroyed. Although none of the neighbouring properties appear to have burnt down many were damaged through fire, smoke or water damage. The local residents however lost most of their possessions through fear. When the fire started *"beds, chairs, clocks and all kind of things were torn out of rooms and flung down in the closes among the crowd, where they were accidentally trodden upon or used by people as platforms from which to get a*

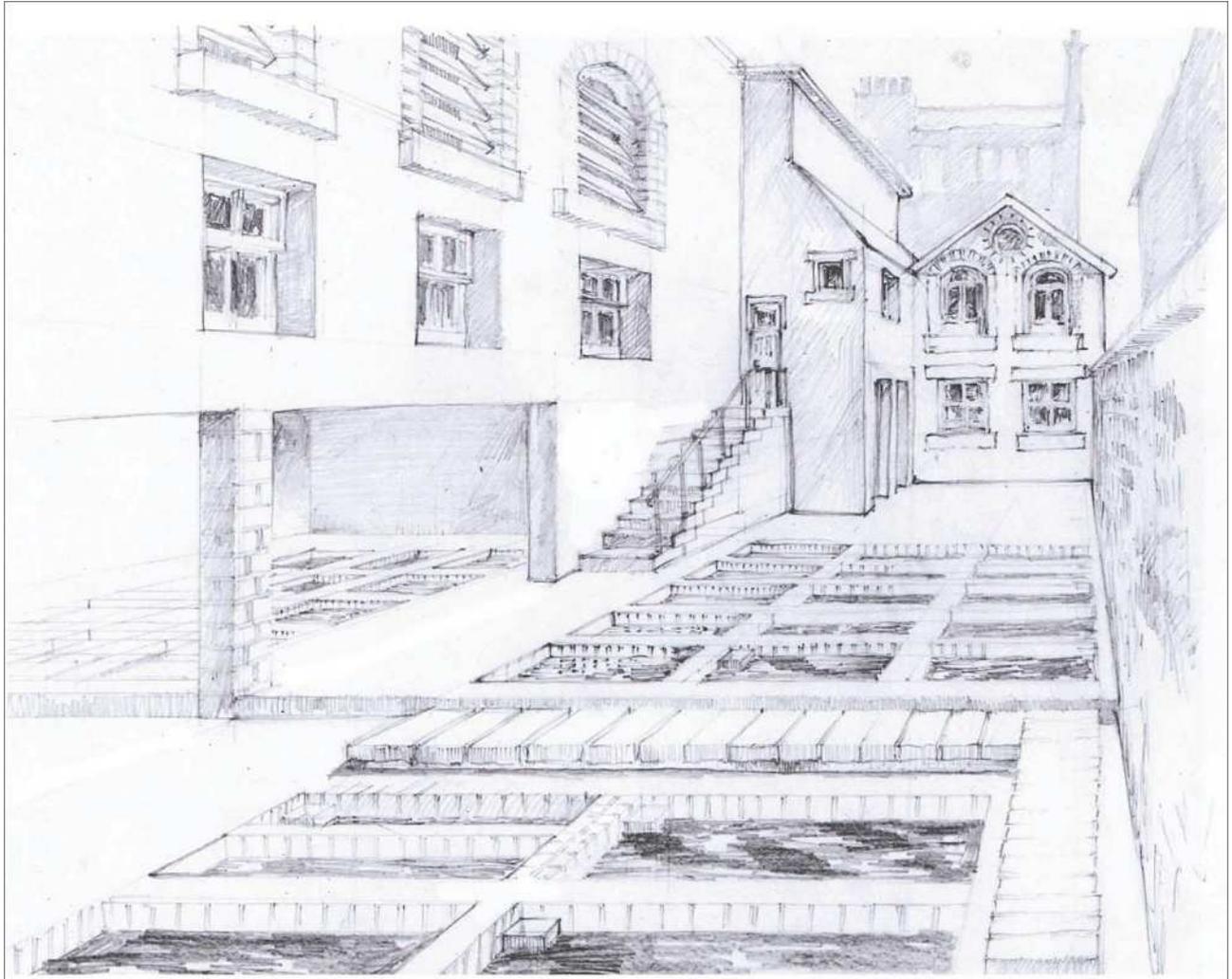
*better look...*" Much was damaged beyond repair and other items were stolen. It is unclear from the newspaper articles whether Hewits compensated these poor residents for their losses.

**THE FIRE AT THE CITY TANNERY, -** The poor people who inhabit the closes adjoining the site of the demolished tannery of Messrs Hewit & Sons, are still many of them in the same wretched condition that was described by us a week ago, Very few of the missing articles of furniture have been recovered, and so distressing has been the loss sustained by some of the tenants that they are almost entirely deprived of all means of comfort. Inquiries have been made by the authorities with the view of ascertaining the extent of the distress, and in due time relief will no doubt be administered. The sad calamity in the Canongate that preceded this disaster was yesterday made the subject of discourses in several of the City churches and collections were made for the relief of the sufferers.  
THE SCOTSMAN 21ST OCTOBER 1867

The description of the building very much follows the typical tannery of the time with tan pits and closely matches some of the illustrations in Diderot's encyclopaedia published in the mid 1700s. The industrial revolution had largely bypassed the leather industry until the mid-1800s. The reason for this is that leather production had been very strictly regulated, partially to protect the integrity of the different guilds (skinners, curriers, cordiners etc) and partly to control hygiene. In Scotland the first act passed into law in 1592, and as I mentioned in my previous article the tanning and currying of leather in the same premises was banned until the 1820s. Leather was also heavily taxed and the duty for leather manufactured in Edinburgh in 1778 amounted to £1,100. This duty was finally removed in 1830 and, over the next 50 years, the modernisation and expansion of the leather industry was phenomenal as a result. From the detailed description in the newspaper articles the tannery had a large building on three floors consisting of tanning on the ground floor, currying (dyeing and oiling of leather) on the 1st floor with a drying room above with louvered windows. In addition there was a large area of tan pits outside along with a separate bark store and warehouse.



I am indebted to my friend Bill Robb for a lovely sketch of what the tannery possibly looked like. His picture is taken from the north end of the tanning pits looking back up the hill towards the High Street of Edinburgh with the ill-fated tannery building that collapsed into the pits on the left and the warehouse and counting house directly in front. The tanyard was separated from North Gray's Close by a wall.



Surprisingly the City Council, despite having the law behind them and with the tannery burnt to the ground, failed in their attempts to remove the tannery from North Gray's Close. Quite how this happened with the Council desperate to clear the slums and both the newspapers very much in favour of removing the tannery cannot really be explained. Somehow the three brothers dug their heels in and put such a high value on the property that the Council baulked at the price. In the end the Council purchased a mere 2 foot strip down North Gray's Close for £72 to widen the close to 6 feet. One thing that might have helped the brothers was a letter from George Girle that was published in *The Scotsman* on the 19th of October defending the presence of the tannery. Despite this, Councillor Girle decided to sever his links with North Gray's Close and the following year he sold the tannery lands to Hewits. I finish this article with Mr Girle's delightful letter.

## TANYARDS IN TOWN

**3 Baxter Place, October 18, 1867**

Sirs, - I am afraid your readers will be almost tired of the subject of tanyards; still, as having conducted the work at the City Tanyard so long, and having been the proprietor of the property, I cannot let the subject pass without a word; and, further, being now perfectly unconnected with the High Street, what I say may be more relied upon.

From the great noise about the noxiousness of a tan work, and the maudlin talk that has been indulged in by many, there must be a great ignorance existing as to the materials used, and the *modus operandi* in such undertakings.

The hide is in the tanner's hands long before the parts of the carcass are cooked for food. Legs of mutton and roasts of beef may be kept in the larder of the experienced cooks days, or even weeks, after the skin of the animal is in the disinfectant lime. The tanner works on sweet and fresh material. Any approach to the "high", he knows, damages the appearance of the hide, and reduces its weight and value. From the lime, the finer kind of leather is washed through pigeon dung and water, occupying a very short time, and a very small portion of the tan-yard. This trifling process, so very limited both in time and space, if really an objection, is the only one that can be made to work. Certainly, after towns such as Cambridge, Oxford, Bristol, Bath, and indeed every town in England, have borne so long with the reputed smell - absolutely mythical - of a little pigeon dung, it ill becomes Edinburgh to murmur, where excreta are still profusely poured out in every wynd, but where the pouring out has been justified and supported even by medical authority. The hide is then put into a decoction of oak bark; and it is the smell of this decoction, and this alone, that offends the nasal organs of the parties so terrified with the tanyard.

If they would only make themselves acquainted with what it is that so frightens them, like many other bugbears the thing would be at an end. When the Parliamentary inquiry took place in London a few years since, the Commission reported that, so far from tanyards being noxious, the disinfectant lime being so largely used, and the open spaces being of such immense advantage to dense and populous neighbourhoods, they were rather to be encouraged than otherwise. I have carried on business in the City Tanyard for between thirty and forty years, and have never known a case of fever - I may almost say illness - amongst my men. My humble neighbours, instead of complaining, seem always pleased and interested in seeing the robust and healthy looking men at their work. Comparisons, as Mrs Maleprop says, "are odorous", but I cannot but remark how much more agreeable is their lot than that of hundreds of men and women in various works situated in dismal wynds in the High Street - ay, and lawyers' offices in the New Town too - with nothing but gas light to labour by. We have often laughed at the sailor's opinions of landsmen -

"While yon and I are upon the deck are comfortably lying, Lord, how the tiles and chimney pots around their heads are dying"

Let some of those objectors to tanyards look at their own confined places of work and business, at the wan and sickly appearance of many of their workmen and workwomen, and then pay a visit to the City Tanyard, where they will see a fine broad expanse, the light of day, and healthy, strong, and stalwart tanners and curriers. Let them examine the spacious lime pits; let them take up a handful of tan liquor and smell it (even a taste might do them good), and they will be perfectly satisfied that they have been entertaining most unjust prejudices, and that their wish to perpetrate the removal of a tanyard is a very mistaken one, - I am, &c.

Geo. H. Girle

# Study Opportunities

## Designer Bookbinders & Society of Bookbinders Joint Weekend Workshops 2015-2016

### Lacunose Binding with Paul Delrue

**17th-18th October 2015**

Venue: The Farthing Press & Bindery, Sarnau Farm, Llanymynech, Powys, SY22 6QJ

'Lacunose', meaning furrowed or pitted, and is a technique that entails paring leather, applying it to a backing material as a montage, overlapping and puckering in a random way, sanding and coating with PVA, more sanding, more PVA, more sanding etc. etc. Over the weekend the technique will be explained and demonstrated with each student making a Lacunose plaquette and a plaquette on archival aid paper.

Basic materials will be provided but to make the most of this course it really is a requirement that you have your own Brockman/Scarfix paring machine and sharp paring knife

Basic Material cost - £20.00 (Payable on day)

*Paul Delrue is one of the UK's most respected and prolific traditional bookbinders, drawing on over 50 years personal experience. Today Paul continues to bind as passionately as ever and with the same level of skill and care that has seen him win numerous awards and competitions with his exceptional quality bindings, and gained him the twin accolade of being a Fellow of both the Designer Bookbinders and the Society of Bookbinders.*

### Edge Gilding with Julian Thomas

**14th-15th November 2015**

Venue: The Farthing Press & Bindery, Sarnau Farm, Llanymynech, Powys, SY22 6QJ

In this workshop you will learn how to gild solid book edges and also how to gild deckled edges. You will also learn how to prepare glair and sharpen the steel scrapers necessary for smoothing your book edges prior to gilding. You will be asked to bring along two or three of you own unbound books avoiding previously used books or volumes made from poor quality paper.

Basic Material cost - £15.00 (Payable on day)

*Julian Thomas began his career in the bookbinding section at the National Library of Wales in 1969. Up to his retirement in 2010, he had spent his entire career working in the library where he became Head of Binding and Conservation in 1981. He was elected a Fellow of Designer Bookbinders in 1996. He is now self-employed and undertakes book and paper conservation as well as commissioned private and edition fine bindings. In 2012 he was awarded an MBE for services to Bookbinding and Conservation Science in the Queen's New Year's honours List.*

### Alternative Box Making with Lori Sauer

**5th-6th December 2015**

Venue: The Daffodil Barn, Woodborough, Nr Pewsey, Wiltshire, SN9 5PF

A good binding without a container is like a painting without a frame - just somehow not complete. Well-bound books need a sturdy wrapper or box for protection from scuffing and the effects of sunlight and dust. The two containers made in this workshop are made from layers of heavy paper and the results are lightweight, robust and provide permanent housing for books. They compliment the binding and become a part of its overall presentation. These boxes are for all types of books: one is an elaborated slipcase with a self-locking lid and the other is a folder that incorporates head and tail bars and a magnetic closure.

Basic Material cost - £15.00 (Payable on day)

*Lori Sauer is a professional full-time binder and the founder of BINDING re:DEFINED, a programme of workshops specializing in alternative book structures. She is a Fellow of Designer Bookbinders and is currently serving as its president.*

### **Airbrush Technique with Glenn Bartley**

**30th-31st January 2016**

Venue: The Daffodil Barn, Woodborough, Nr Pewsey, Wiltshire, SN9 5PF

Airbrushes have been used for decades in all manner of ways in the arts and crafts. This workshop will explore this versatile tool and its many interesting uses in the bookbinding environment and is aimed at those with no previous experience of airbrushing. Basic materials will be provided but to make the most of this course it is a requirement that you have your own airbrush and compressor. (A dual action type airbrush, and an oil-less air compressor.) If you are looking to attend this weekend and would like some more information on what type of air brush and compressor to purchase please contact Glenn Bartley at glenn.bartley@tesco.net.

Basic Material cost - £5.00 (Payable on day)

*Glenn Bartley, a Fellow of Designer Bookbinders, has been binding books for more than thirty years. His bindery in Culham, Oxfordshire has clients from major institutions to private collectors, both nationally, and internationally, working with a variety of materials including bindings in traditional and contemporary styles, restoration and box-making.*

### **Traditional Gold Tooling with Trevor Lloyd**

**27th-28th February 2016**

Venue: Trevor Lloyd Bindery, 12 Old Street, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1NP

All good finishing starts from the ground up, anyone hoping to achieve exceptional results in what is one of the most difficult aspects of bookbinding needs to start the process with the choice of materials and the structure of the binding before they even consider any tooling. This two day intensive course will start from the very beginning, participants will learn about the different ways leather and binding structure affect tooling, then having prepared some sample boards and spines from the most appropriate materials the course will rapidly move onto all the tried and trusted techniques for achieving good quality and consistent tooling using traditional materials.

Basic Material cost - £30.00 approx. (Payable on day)

*Trevor has been a professional binder for nearly 35 years. After being introduced to the craft whilst at college in the 1970s, he went on to work for several binderies in York and then to Sangorski and Sutcliffe in London, before moving to the Welsh Marches. Working from a Georgian building in the centre of Ludlow, Trevor's company specialises in the restoration and the rebinding of antiquarian books and this has allowed Trevor to pursue his passion for gold tooling, his work is sought after from customers all over the world.*

### **Double Boards Binding with Rachel Ward-Sale**

**12th-13th March 2016**

Venue: The Daffodil Barn, Woodborough, Nr Pewsey, Wiltshire, SN9 5PF

This versatile technique for producing a robust binding with separately covered boards is particularly useful if you want to use decorative techniques such as impressing or piercing, which are harder to execute once the book has been covered. It is also ideal for producing bindings with different colours or treatments on the boards and spine. This practical workshop will cover the processes involved in forwarding and covering a book using the double boards method. Including preparation of the text block, choosing materials and preparing them for covering. It will be suitable for students with experience of forwarding as well as leather paring and covering.

Students may bring a prepared text block and their own materials or blank book blocks and materials can be provided at cost price, which will be over and above the Basic Material cost.

(Details will follow.)

Basic Material cost - £5.00 + see above (Payable on day)

*Rachel studied Art, Design and Bookbinding at The University of Brighton from 1977-1981. She became a Licentiate member of Designer Bookbinders in 1980 and in 2005 was elected a fellow. Since leaving college she has worked as a self employed bookbinder and teacher. In 1992 she co-founded Bookbinders of Lewes, a hand bindery undertaking a wide variety of projects. Although a large proportion of her work involves the repair and rebinding of old books, her main interest remains centred around the creation of designed bindings. She has bindings in collections in the UK and abroad.*

These workshops offer structured intensive tuition from established teachers and are designed to stress the 'hands-on' approach to learning where students complete a structure or technique following demonstrations from the tutor. The size of each workshop is limited to allow students to benefit from individual attention. We hope you will be tempted - but please remember that places on the workshops tend to be taken up quickly, so sign up early to avoid disappointment.

Workshops usually take place on a Saturday and Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm with suitable breaks. The fee for each workshop is £140.00  
A charge for materials provided by the tutor is payable 'on-the-day'.  
(N.B. If you apply for more than one workshop separate cheques should be sent.)

Joint Weekend Workshop Organisers: Alan Fitch & Claire Weaver. Copies of the brochure and workshop booking forms can be downloaded from the SoB & DB websites

[www.societyofbookbinders.com](http://www.societyofbookbinders.com) and [www.designerbookbinders.org.uk](http://www.designerbookbinders.org.uk)

### **Bookbinding class at Logie Steading, in the Highlands of Scotland**

Where: Logie Steading, Forres (in Whisky Country in the Highlands of Scotland)  
When: 2nd, 3rd and 4th November (a 3 -day class)  
What: Bookbinding, from beginners to special topic, 'LIBRARY STYLE BINDING' and Book Repair  
Cost: £235.00 for all three days  
Includes: All materials, course notes, use of tools and also lunch & refreshments throughout the day.

Booking and contact: - [panny@logie.co.uk](mailto:panny@logie.co.uk) or phone 01309 611 278

### **Southern Bookcrafts Club Training Days**

The following are available for the first second half of 2015. These are intended for all levels of experience and ability and so are limited to a maximum of eight students.

#### **Maureen Duke on Miniature Books**

**Saturday 17th October 2015**

Explore binding very small books  
Apply by 3rd October - £35

#### **Christine Gibbs on Paper**

**Saturday 21st November 2015**

The history, manufacture & properties of handmade paper found in old books.  
Apply by 7th November

There will be an additional charge of £5.00 per person payable at each session for materials etc. All courses take place at the club's bindery in Winchester and run from 10.30 to about 16.00.

More information, including Application Forms and detailed maps on how to find the bindery are available on the club's web site at [www.sbookc.org.uk](http://www.sbookc.org.uk), or please contact the Club's Treasurer/Course Registrar, Jack Walters on:

tel. 02380 266969 email [jwalters@care4free.net](mailto:jwalters@care4free.net)

## **Bookbinding with Megan Stallworthy in Southwest England**

Perfect Bindings Workshops in traditional and contemporary book forms at arts centres and book festivals in Devon, Cornwall and Somerset. New workshops for the Autumn:

### **Single-section case binding and Japanese books**

**Monday 9th November 2015**

10.00-16.00

Taunton Literary Festival

### **Handmade Books for Christmas**

**Saturday 21st November 2015**

10.00-16.00

The Plough Arts Centre, Torrington

### **Handmade Books for Christmas**

**Saturday 28th November 2015**

10.30-16.30

Exeter Phoenix

### **Handmade Books for Christmas**

**Monday 30th November 2015**

10.00-16.00

Truro Arts Company

Full details can be found on the website - [www.perfectbindings.co.uk](http://www.perfectbindings.co.uk)  
or by contacting Megan at [megan@perfectbindings.co.uk](mailto:megan@perfectbindings.co.uk) or on 07582 783965

## **Bookbinding with Arthur Green in Oxfordshire**

### **Paper Case Binding**

**17th-18th October 2015**

An elegant paper binding that originated in Germany in the late 18th century. On day one you will fold and sew the leaves of the the book on a traditional sewing-frame; day two, you will make the cover using paste-paper and print your own label.

### **Stub Binding**

**21st-22nd November 2015**

This binding lends its self perfectly to photograph albums. Day one you will fold and sew this clever book structure; day two you will make and decorate the covers.

Workshops are £70 per day, and run from 09.30-16.30 in the Bartholomew Rooms, Eynsham, just west of Oxford. Good hand-skills would be advantageous, but no prior bookbinding experience is necessary. Tea/coffee, and all tools and materials are provided.

Please contact Arthur Green for more details: [arthurfgreen@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:arthurfgreen@yahoo.co.uk)

## **Teaching Opportunities at the London Centre for Book Arts**

Come and teach at the LCBA! The centre is looking to add more workshops to their schedule. If you have an idea for a workshop to teach at the Centre, please let them know by filling in the form on their web site. You can see examples of their current workshops at [londonbookarts.eventbrite.co.uk](http://londonbookarts.eventbrite.co.uk)

Questions? Get in touch with Simon at [simon@londonbookarts.org](mailto:simon@londonbookarts.org)

## The Maureen Duke Educational Award

The Norie Trust is a small charitable trust based in the South West of England. The Trust funds various projects, many of which are associated with literature and the arts. The Trust also assists community-based projects which aim to improve the quality of people's lives.

The Trust have generously offered the Society funds of £2,000 a year for the next 5 years to fund an educational award to assist professionals in the book field. The Trust wishes to recognise Maureen Duke's inspirational teaching and dedication to education and the award will therefore be known as The Maureen Duke Educational Award.

The recipient of the award each year should be a bookbinder, book conservator, book restorer or book artist who has worked professionally in the U.K. for the last two years prior to the award. They should be intending to continue to work professionally, preferably in the UK.

SoB's Education & Training Task Force has been asked by the Trust to administer the award and after discussion it has been agreed that the award panel will consist of the Chair of the Society, Chair of E&T and Maureen herself. The applicant will be required to submit the following:

- Hand written letter of application
- CV
- A brief outline of the nature of study wishing to be undertaken, indicating how this will enhance their work, and their plans for the future
- Full Breakdown of costs - fees, travel and subsistence
- Images of work completed in the 2 years prior to application
- Two references

The recipient will be required to write a report of their study and experience gained for others in the field. Applications should be sent to: Claire Redfern, 21 Moat Way, Goring by Sea, West Sussex, BN12 4DR.

## An Introduction to Bookbinding with Mark Cockram at Studio 5, London

### Case Binding

Rationale - This module develops the students' ability to use basic materials such as cloth and a number of machine made papers. It will allow students the opportunity to explore differing adhesives and covering techniques in the production of case bindings.

#### Aims

- to develop hand skills related to paper and cloth work and hand foil work
- to enhance professional skills, awareness and responsibility
- to stimulate creativity in design
- to develop awareness of choice of suitable styles

Learning Outcome - On completion the student will be able to:

- select suitable styles of case binding
- fold sections
- be familiar with various sewing techniques
- forward the book to the required standard
- make a case binding including the use of modern design techniques

Assessment Strategy - Assessment will be in line with the STUDIO 5 criteria and will be evident through examination and discussion of 5 finished items of work. The student will demonstrate an ability to apply the techniques to a good standard and understand the reasons for their use. The Module is delivered over 6 days with all materials included. Fee £700

## **Bradel Binding**

Rationale - This module develops an awareness of strength and structure specific to this type of binding. It will give students the opportunity to work with leather and apply the relevant techniques involved in the production of the disappearing spine Bradel binding.

### Aims

- to introduce the student to leather binding and manipulation
- to identify the correct materials specific to the binding style
- to understand the need for and limitations of the binding style
- to apply the relevant techniques
- to assess the suitability of the binding style

Learning Outcome - On completion the student will be able to:

- select suitable text blocks in need of this structure
- forward the book to the required standard
- make a Bradel binding including the use of modern design techniques

Assessment Strategy - Assessment will be in line with the STUDIO 5 criteria and will be evident through examination and discussion of 1 finished item of work. The student will demonstrate an ability to apply the techniques to a good standard and understand the reasons for their use. The Module is delivered over 6 days with all materials included. Fee £700

## **Box and Enclosure Making**

Rationale - This module is intended to develop the students ability in making 3 styles of boxes for the books made during the 2 previous modules. The student will be able to select and use suitable materials and incorporate style and design ideas.

### Aims

- to identify the correct materials specific to the box style and use
- to explore design and material manipulation
- to apply the relevant techniques
- to understand internal measuring

Learning Outcome - On completion the student will be able to:

- select suitable box styles and construction methods
- apply the techniques for making boxes including a two tray drop back box
- apply techniques suitable for various uses

Assessment Strategy - Assessment will be in line with the STUDIO 5 criteria and will be evident through examination and discussion of 3 finished items of work. The student will demonstrate an ability to apply the techniques to a high standard and understand the reasons for their use. The student will be expected to be able to demonstrate and rationalise design, process and protection. The Module is delivered over 6 days with all materials included. Fee £700

## **Artist's Book or Complete Book (Option A)**

Rationale - This module is intended to develop the students' ability to explore print, book manipulation and creative journeys with the book.

### Aims

- to identify differing print techniques
- to explore the book as a means of artistic and social expression
- to apply the relevant techniques, working practices and mediums

Learning Outcome - On completion the student will be able to:

- select suitable print techniques and mixed media
- forward the book to the required standard and manipulate as required
- to understand the relationship of the artist and the book

Assessment Strategy - Assessment will be in line with the STUDIO 5 criteria and will be evident through examination and discussion of 2 finished items of work. The student will demonstrate an ability to apply the techniques to a high standard and understand the reasons for their use. The student will be expected to be able to demonstrate and rationalise working processes. The Module is delivered over 6 days with some materials included. Fee £700

### **Introduction to Contemporary Bradel Design Binding (Option B)**

Rationale - The Introduction to Contemporary Bradel Design Binding gives students the opportunity to make a Design Binding using contemporary and traditional techniques and materials.

Aims

- to expand existing skills and techniques whilst learning relevant traditional skills
- to explore Design Binding with contemporary arts practices
- to apply the relevant techniques, working practices and mediums

Learning Outcome - On completion the student will be able to:

- select suitable construction methods - forward the book to the required standard and manipulate as required
- to boldly go where no one has been before

Assessment Strategy - Assessment will be in line with the STUDIO 5 criteria and will be evident through examination and discussion of 2 finished items of work. The student will demonstrate an ability to apply the techniques to a high standard and understand the reasons for their use. The student will be expected to be able to demonstrate and rationalise working processes. The Module is delivered over 14 days with basic materials included. Fee £1,400

The STUDIO 5 BEGINNERS COURSE is delivered in 3 modules of six days each. Upon successful completion the student will be issued with a Studio 5 Certificate. The fee is £2,100.00 per person. The fee covers all tuition, hand tool use, workshop equipment as required and materials as outlined in the module information. A 50% non returnable deposit is required to confirm booking full payment being made no less than 2 weeks prior to the beginning of the course. The modules can be delivered in a block or days to suit the individual student. Two further modules, options A and B are individually priced.

To book a place or for more information please contact us at:

Mark Cockram

Studio Five

First Floor The Mews

46-52 Church Road

Barnes, London, SW13 0DQ

Tel: 0208 563 2158 e-mail: [studio5bookarts@aol.co.uk](mailto:studio5bookarts@aol.co.uk)

## North Bennet Street School, Boston, MA - Full-time Bookbinding Program plus Workshops and Short Courses

Established in 1986, this popular two-year program attracts students who share a passion for books and materials, problem-solving, the creative process and working with their hands to make, restore and preserve books and other printed cultural treasures. Students learn fundamental bookbinding techniques including tool use and modification, non-adhesive bindings, cloth and paper bindings of various styles, edition binding and an introduction to book repair and conservation. The second year provides a comprehensive examination of leather bindings, decorative tooling and finishing and re-backing and repair of leather bindings. Advanced paper treatments including washing and deacidification and other conservation procedures are covered. In addition to the full-time program, the school offers one-week and longer short courses in bookbinding, calligraphy, paper marbling and more.

For more information go to: [www.nbss.edu](http://www.nbss.edu)

## Handmade Art Workshops, London

Handmade Art Workshops design and deliver unique analogue art projects that encourage hands on creativity. We are artists, designers & craftswomen combining our experience and skills to teach drawing, printing and bookbinding to a range of ages and in a variety of community settings.

Get a Sketchbook is suitable for anyone over the age of eleven. It aims to engage its participants with the importance of sketchbooks in the creative process by enabling them to work with two professional artists and a bookbinder to make and use their own personalised hand-made, hardbound sketchbooks. These sessions can be booked individually or as a three session package.

Stages of the **Get a Sketchbook** workshop:

### Workshop 1

Relief printing a cover using an etching press for your own sketchbook with artist Rachel Thomson  
running time 2 hours  
numbers max 20  
price £250 includes materials & refreshments

### Workshop 2

Making and binding your own sketchbook with professional book binder Nicky Oliver  
running time 2 hours  
numbers max 20  
price £250 includes materials & refreshments

### Workshop 3

Introduction to use of sketchbooks, speed drawing and information gathering involving use of different media with artist Agnes Mitchell  
running time 2 hours  
numbers max 20  
price £250 includes materials & refreshments

Further details are available from [www.haccamoirai.co.uk](http://www.haccamoirai.co.uk)

## **Binding in Powys at The Farthing Press & Bindery with Alan Fitch**

There are available a variety of courses, which run throughout the year, offering the opportunity to learn in an idyllic location and relaxed atmosphere. With only a maximum of three people on any one course, tuition is on a very personal level, with each student having their own work station and all tools and materials supplied.

The courses run from Monday - Friday (9 - 5). Over the period of the course you will be guided through all the aspects of bookbinding, relevant to each course. There are at present four courses available:

**Basic Course** - This course has been designed for the beginner and covers all the basics of binding a book.

**Refresher/Repair Course** - This course is designed for the student who :

- Has completed the Basic Course but would like to spend more time developing their basic skills before moving on to finer things.
- Has had some experience in the past of binding a case bound, round and backed book but would like to refresh their skills.
- Would like to develop their skills in repairing old cloth cased books.

**Full Leather Course** - This course is for the person who wants to develop their bookbinding skills and progress to binding in leather.

**2 Day Bookmaking Course** - This course has been designed to allow you to spend two days making a variety of types and styles of book, none of which require any specialist equipment or tools.

Accommodation is available

For further detail please telephone +44 (0)1938 590733 or view the web site at [www.farthingpress.plus.com](http://www.farthingpress.plus.com)

## **Workshops & Short Courses at the Black Fox Bindery in North London**

Nicky Oliver offers a range of courses and workshops at Black Fox Bindery from beginners bookbinding and box-making to advanced book design classes such as leather dyeing techniques and onlay work. Nicky can also tailor classes to your requirements. All materials and equipment are provided.

Please contact her on [nicky@blackfoxbindery.com](mailto:nicky@blackfoxbindery.com)  
or 07929 549 140 for details and bookings.

## **The Artworks, Halifax, Yorkshire**

### **Printmaking and Bookbinding**

Please visit their web site for a full list of available courses.

"All of our workshops offer the highest quality tuition in a relaxed, welcoming, open and conducive atmosphere. Our workshops are structured, providing you with the necessary skills and techniques to master the craft and are flexible too, allowing you to work on different projects from traditional to contemporary. You can work at your own pace and all materials and tools are provided at the class to get you going."

Further information is available from [www.theartworks.org.uk](http://www.theartworks.org.uk)

## The School for Bookbinding Arts, Winchester, VA

The school is committed to providing quality training in the craft of hand bookbinding. Its ongoing series of two-day workshops is designed to teach techniques that are immediately useful to the student as well as to create a solid foundation of skills for further bookbinding study. The curriculum includes both basic and advanced courses that are geared toward the needs of book dealers, collectors and anyone interested in learning the art of hand bookbinding. Each workshop features demonstrations of the techniques being taught coupled with ample supervised practice time for the student. A complete package of printed notes accompanies each of the workshops to aid the student in assimilating the body of information being presented.

Workshops are taught in the studios of Cat Tail Run Hand Bookbinding near Winchester, Virginia. Cat Tail Run Hand Bookbinding is a fully operational hand bookbinding and book restoration facility established in 1991 by Jill Deiss. Instructors for THE SCHOOL FOR BOOKBINDING ARTS include Jill Deiss, Dee Evetts, Susan McCabe and Bill Deiss.

### Foundation Level Course

**Beginning Cloth Binding Restoration:** This course teaches a wide variety of skills that are immediately useful for the repair of cloth bindings and also serves as a foundation for later courses. Techniques taught include: repairing damaged corners, endcaps and joints on cloth bindings; toning of discolorations; and minor paper repair techniques. Limited to 9 students. \$235

**Beginning Leather Binding Restoration:** Students will learn various treatments for leather bindings including repairs for damaged corners, endcaps, and joints. Also included are techniques for polishing and improving the condition of leather surfaces. \$235

**Advanced Cloth Binding Restoration:** Learn the professional technique for restoring a cloth binding using original boards and spine. Requires Beginning Cloth Binding Restoration for participation. Limited to 7 students. \$235

**Advanced Leather Binding Restoration:** The leather reback is the companion repair to the cloth reback but for leather bindings. All portions of the original binding are retained in this professional restoration. Techniques for thinning and paring leather will be featured in this workshop. Requires Beginning Leather Binding Restoration for participation. Limited to 7 students. \$235

**New Cloth Bindings:** Two styles of new bindings will be taught to enable students to put covers on books that have lost their original bindings. Introduction to book titling will be featured as well as methods for endsheet attachment. Limited to 9 students. \$235

**Clamshell Box Construction:** Students will learn the craft of creating custom-fit clamshell boxes. Limited to 9 students. \$235

**Paper Marbling [Beginning & Advanced]:** Students will learn many traditional marbled patterns as well as how to set up their own marbling studios. Inquire for course fee.

Further information from:  
540-662-2683  
[www.CatTailRun.com](http://www.CatTailRun.com)  
email: [info@cattailrun.com](mailto:info@cattailrun.com)

## 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 of 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.

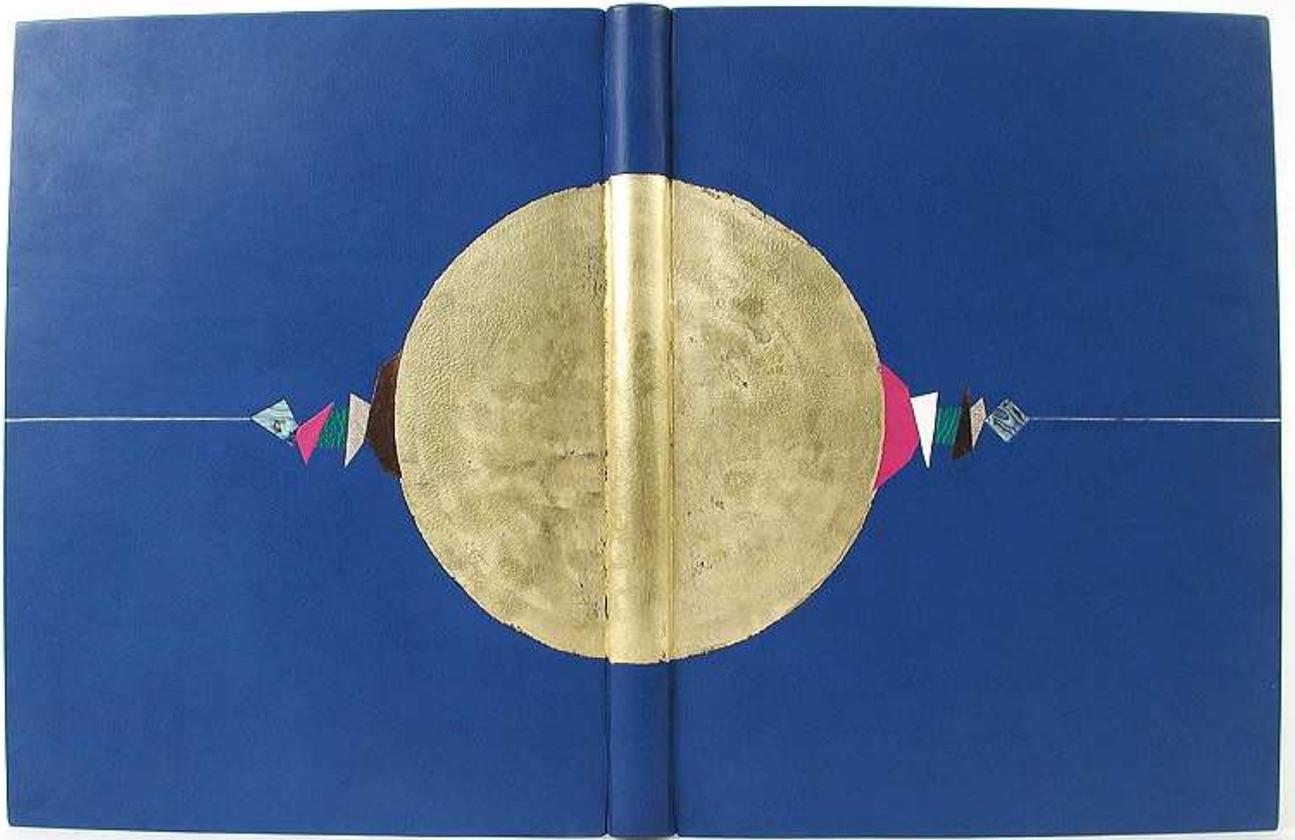
Further information regarding courses programs can be found on the schools web site at:  
[www.cbl-ascona.ch](http://www.cbl-ascona.ch)

If you have a listing that you would like included on this page,  
please let us know by e-mail to [sales@hewit.com](mailto:sales@hewit.com)

# Customers Recent Bindings

The House South of North

bound by James Reid-Cunningham

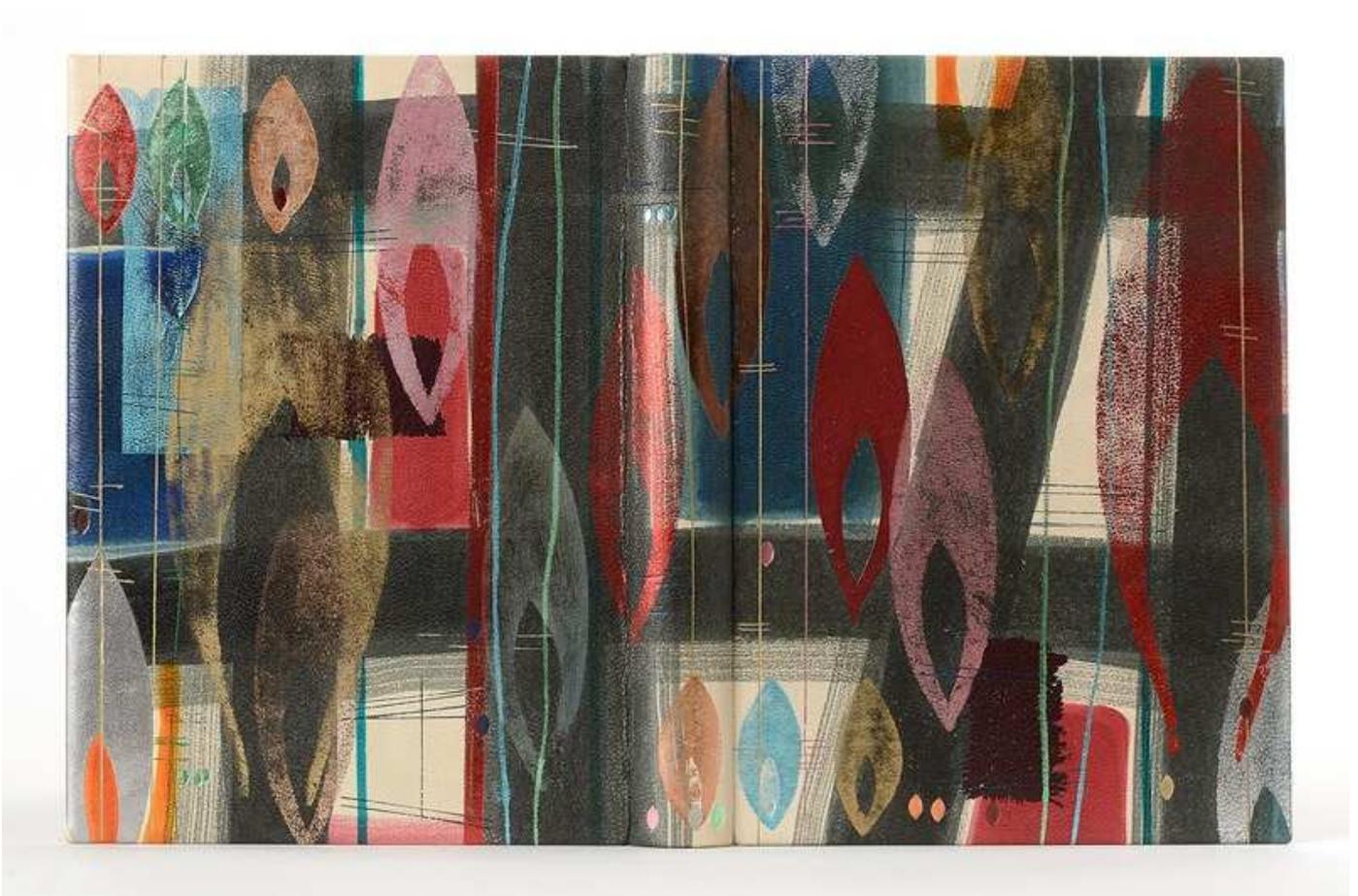


House South of North  
By Fritz Scholder, 1997

Full blue Hewit Bookcalf binding with a circle of gold leaf spreading from the spine onto both boards. Inset panels of kidskin, fishskin, goatskin, box calf, and abalone shell. Tooled in palladium leaf. Duotone photographs hinged on meeting guards. Red and white silk front bead headbands. Leather hinges. Egyptian Tow Flax paper doublures.  
32.5 x 24.5 x 2.5cm - bound in 2006.

James Reid-Cunningham studied bookbinding at the North Bennet Street School in Boston, and was president of the Guild of Book Workers from 2006 to 2010. He has worked in library conservation since 1984, first at the Graduate School of Design, Harvard University, then as chief conservator of the Boston Athenaeum. In addition to his conservation work, he is also the creator of design bindings and book objects that explore traditional bookbinding structures in conjunction with modern materials such as rubber, vinyl, and Formica. He has exhibited his books nationally and internationally.

For further examples of James's work please go to [www.reid-cunningham.com](http://www.reid-cunningham.com).



Periodic Table by Primo Levi  
Folio Society

The binding is an unsupported link stitch with a Fraynot hinge attachment and secondary sewing. Hand sewn silk end bands. Hand painted and printed flyleaves and doublures. Leather joints. Colour washed edges with foil tooling. Hand dyed with Hewit's aniline dyes on their Fair Goat with onlays, foil tooling and distressed foil stencil work. Finished with SC7400 (a wax emulsion finish for leather).

Idea behind the design - "The flame appears quite frequently throughout the book either in its symbolic form as light and hope or as the prospector or chemist's aide. The flame will react and change colour depending on the chemical or metal that it is introduced to. I have abstracted and simplified the flame and each of the colours I have used represents a metal or chemical compound."

You can see more of Nicky's work on her web site, [Black fox Bindery](http://BlackfoxBindery.com)

# Dates for your Diary

## **The Bookbinding Competition 2015**

The set book for the Competition in 2015 is Nineteen Eighty-Four by George Orwell. The Folio edition is 234 x 156mm, 304 pages, including 10 full-page colour illustrations by Jonathan Burton.

War is Peace, Freedom is Slavery, Ignorance is Strength

George Orwell's masterpiece, Nineteen Eighty-Four, is perhaps the most pervasively influential book of the twentieth century, making famous Big Brother, newspeak, doublespeak and Room 101. Winston Smith, drudge editor of historical records for the Ministry of Truth, writes a diary, and in that act lies his catastrophic rebellion. In many ways a grown-up Brave New World, Nineteen Eighty-Four was published in 1949 on the eve of the Cold War, and feels unbearably prescient in its portrayal of totalitarian systems of power.

To obtain a copy of the 2015 set book and entry details, send your cheque for £20 (to DB members) and £25 for non-members to include packing, postage and entrance fee. Cheques should be made payable to Designer Bookbinders and sent to Lester Bath, 25 Ffordd Ffrydlas, Bethesda, Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 3BL. Each entrant must bind the set book and we welcome open choice books and artist's books.

The annual Bookbinding Competition is sponsored by Designer Bookbinders and The Folio Society and is open to anyone resident in the UK except Fellows of Designer Bookbinders. Charity Registration No. 282018.

## **\*The Guild of Book Workers - Standards of Excellence Seminar in Hand Bookbinding 2015 14th-17th October 2015, Cleveland, Ohio**

Held annually at a different location around the country, participants attend presentations by leading experts in the fields related to the book and paper arts. Tours of binderies, conservation facilities, rare book libraries and papermaking establishments are regularly arranged in conjunction with the event.

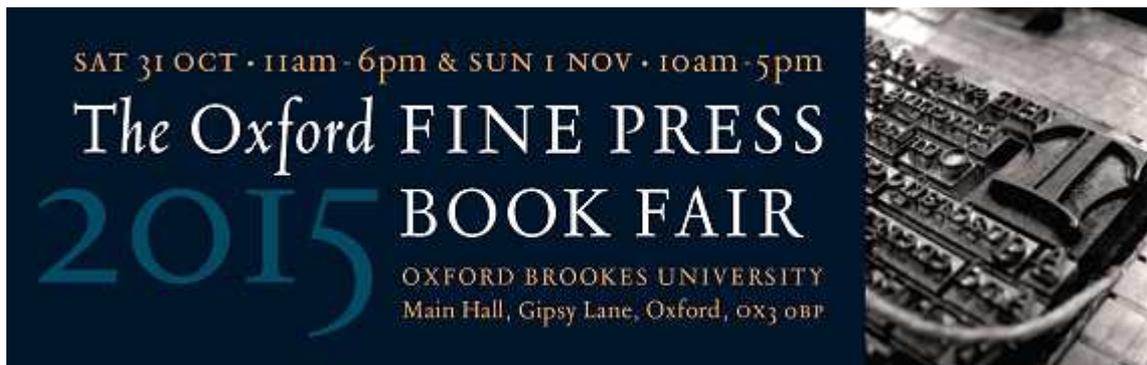
### **Presentations and Presenters**

- Andrea Peterson: The Paper Has Been Shipped!
- Bill Minter: The Meeting Guard: Its Use Historically and its use in Fine Binding, Conservation and ArtistBooks
- Christina Amato: The Devil is in the Details
- Discussions: Conservation - Bookbinding - Book Arts

**A supplier's trade fair will also be held throughout this event.**

Further details and booking information are available from the Guild of Book Workers web site at [www.guildofbookworkers.org](http://www.guildofbookworkers.org)

**\*Oxford Fine Press Book Fair  
31st October-1st November 2015**



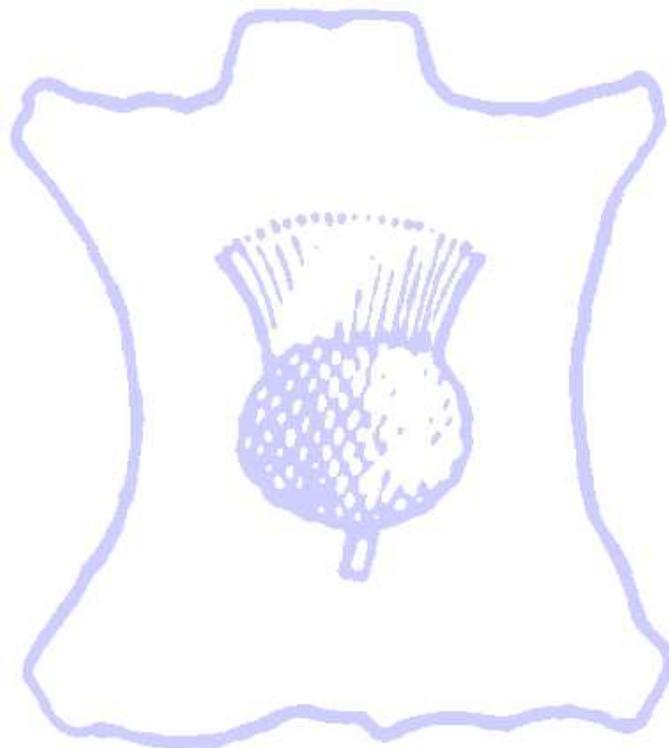
Plans are now well advanced for this prestigious fair, once again in its venue at Oxford Brookes University. We hope you will be able to come along. Around sixty presses from around the world will have their work on sale, alongside specialist book dealers, trade suppliers, and associated organisations. On the Sunday there will be the usual programme of lectures and the prize-giving. The FPBA will have a stand where back issues of Parenthesis will be on sale and new members signed up.

Further details are available from [www.fpba.com](http://www.fpba.com)

**\*The 16th Bookbinders Book Arts Fair, Pieterskerk, Leiden, Holland  
31st October-1st November 2015**

Always an inspiring exhibition and a cosy meeting place for hand bookbinders, restorers, paper artists, calligrapher and all other interested parties (amateur or professional).

For more info: go to [www.stichting-handboekbinden.nl](http://www.stichting-handboekbinden.nl)



## The OPEN • SET competition 2016



The Competition - The OPEN • SET competition is a NEW triennial competition that formed in response to the burgeoning interest and palpable momentum in finely crafted design book bindings in the United States. Sponsored in part by the American Academy of Bookbinding, it is designed to encourage both new binders and professionals. OPEN • SET offers prizes and acknowledgement in two categories: Participants may choose to bind the SET book or a book of their choice, the OPEN category. Entries are limited to one book per category. Binders from all levels and cultures are invited to participate, as the competition is not limited to citizens of the United States nor to students or affiliates of the AAB. All entries will be reviewed by a blind jury of three professional binders. Jurors will be announced in November of 2015.

The Exhibition - is intended to be a recognition of the beauty of the craft and a commitment to the public toward a better understanding of this art form. The exhibition will showcase 50 books and will recognize excellence in craftsmanship and design concept interpretation. Each venue may offer an Opening Reception as well as a People's Choice Award, encouraging viewers to cast their vote for the binding they find most intriguing in both the OPEN and the SET categories.

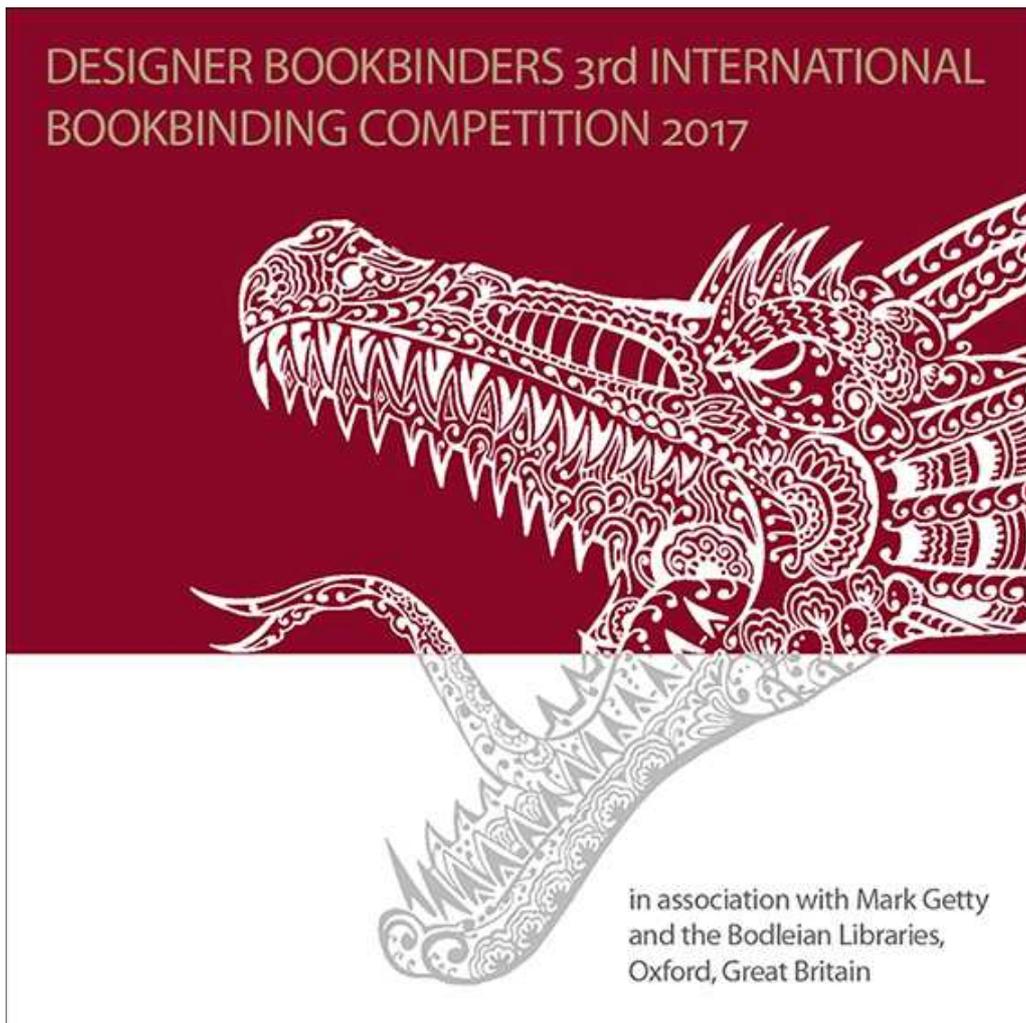
A bibliophile is a lover of books and everyone loves books! Bibliophiles recognize that working together as a community makes The Book more visible in the eye of the public. This competition and exhibition is an attempt to gather bibliophiles with the public and together celebrate finely crafted books. The exhibition will travel across the United States. Book enthusiasts who visit the exhibit will walk away with a better understanding and appreciation of a well made and artistically designed book.

Further information on prizes, registration, timelines, and entry information can may be found on the AABA web site at - [bookbindingacademy.org](http://bookbindingacademy.org)

or

for additional information and questions, please contact Exhibition Coordinator, Lang Ingalls at [lang@langingalls.com](mailto:lang@langingalls.com)

**Designer Bookbinders 3rd International Bookbinding Competition 2017**



**J. Hewit & Sons will have a stand at the event(s) marked '\*'. If you would like us to bring specific items for you to purchase, please let us know at least 4 weeks in advance of the event.**

# THE BETTER GRIPS

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City Tan Works, Edinburgh