

# Skin Deep

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Ian Andrews has researched the characteristics of gold tooled decoration on leather bindings and his findings show that one is able to make relatively precise estimates of the date of a binding by detailed examination of certain aspects of its gold decoration.

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Did Nigel Jury (recent editor of the Society of Bookbinders Newsletter) bite off more than he could chew when he attended a village hall for a talk on bookbinding?

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# Tsbook (Tigrinya for Good)

- The Gospel of Abba Garima

by Mark Winstanley



“He is very jumping,” said Abba Welda Howareyouat. A black-faced Guereza monkey is interrupting Lester Capon as he repairs a page from Abba Garima’s Gospel. A small troop of these long-tailed monkeys daily visit the olive trees that surround the grass compound of the treasury of the Abba Garima Monastery. They are not the only visitors. A troop of baboons forage on the cactus fruit, a grey hornbill calls loudly, a family of Augur’s buzzard often throw their shadows over our bindery in the sun. A pair of starlings, but not ordinary starlings, these ones have been caught in paint ball fight, chatter from the lintels of the church. The sky is an impossible deep blue, a cooling breeze threatens to scatter our work and the sun shines warmly here at 8,000 feet in the Tigrean Highlands. Beneath us the landscape is a patchwork of green and golden terraced fields. The rains have been plentiful this year. The shadow that hangs over this rocky, stony but beautiful land is the failure of the rains in the three successive years of 1982, 83 & 84 which lead to the famine.

## Who, what, where, when?

- Who?      Lester Capon – Bookbinder  
             Mark Winstanley, assistant to Lester  
             Jacques Mercier - French scholar of Ethiopian art  
             Abba Daniel, Ethiopian monk from the Patriarch  
             Sam Fogg, an English collector.
- What?      The illuminated pages of the 6th century Gospel of Abba Garima need urgent attention.
- Where?    At the Abba Garima Monastery near Adwa, Tigray, Northern Ethiopia
- When?     Early October 2006

## Background details

In about 400AD, legend has it that Nine Syrian Saints converted the Abyssians to Christianity. They introduced a much more Judaic version than the Roman, Greek or Coptic, a version that has remained unchanged to this day. The language is Ge'ez and the writing is in Ethiopian script. The Nine Saints also started a monastic movement that has many echoes in Mount Athos. An aversion to the female sex includes cows, mares, nanny goats but not hens. This exclusion still runs and so prevents faranji women from entering the sacred ground of the monasteries. One of the Nine, Abba Garima came to Adua. He founded the monastery where it stands today. Here in Northern Tigray one of the world's most extraordinary miracles has happened. Not that in one day, according to legend, he wrote all 350 pages on sturdy goat's vellum and illuminated the first 12 pages on both volumes. Not that it has survived the destruction of the monastery twice once by Queen Judith, a Falasha queen in the 10th century and second in 1570's by Mohamed Gagn, a Somali Moslem who swept all aside with his Turkish muskets. No, the miracle is that this is the only document of its kind in Africa. There are no known Ethiopian manuscripts older than 11th century. The illuminations are of stunning quality. The artist has used bright colours that retain their lustre. Fiery reds, deep blues and delicate greens suffuse the pages. The black text reveals a clear and confident hand with 23 lines in double columns to the pages. I will mention more about its condition later



I am not a historian. I was very happy to be Lester Capon's assistant. It was quite enough to fetch and carry while a real expert worked. As those of you who work regularly on such sumptuous books, know the constant judgement calls you must make. This was no different. However there were a few difficulties. Firstly the bindery was outside. We had to move three times a day to stay out of the sun. There was no space to store anything apart from two biers (empty of coffins) on which we dried the dyed Japanese paper and vellum strips. We were plagued by flies that seemed to take pleasure in exchanging bodily fluids

via our eyes and nostrils. The monks liked to join in. The abbot, Abba Menhr Tecklamaryat attacked the cord that attached the metal front with a scalpel. As the atmosphere lightened he borrowed Lester's paring knife to cut his nails, strewing his cuticles over page 4 of the manuscript. I lent him my 'Leatherman' as he needed a pedicure. Beside us renovations to a stone hut were in progress. At one stage a 'chippy' wielding his adze on a doorframe was sending showers of chippings over our bench. There were constant interruptions. A couple of donkeys would stroll by and take a few mouthfuls of grass. Ungulate damage wouldn't have sounded too good in the match report, but the hardest part was Lester's health. He had a chest infection that was just about kept at bay by pills. How he managed to complete a long day's work under these conditions is a tribute to his fortitude and doggedness.

## The Prelude in Adwa

Our journey out did not start particularly well as the loading bay of the Ethiopian Airways jet wouldn't open. We decided to fly on the next flight. At least we had three seats to ourselves so we were well rested as we sat in the hot sun in Addis Abba Airport awaiting a connecting flight to Axon. We board the plane with Jacques Messier and Daniel, a monk from Hayk. We both took the chance to soak up the views of the mountains and green and black chequered fields of rural

Tigray. I was only mildly upset to find my luggage, including two small presses, had stayed in Addis (they turn up the following day).

On our way to Adwa in a springless 70's Toyota van we climb over a pass of 9,000 feet. A grand view of extinct volcanoes punctures the horizon. The tiny terraced fields fringed with acacia trees are green with tef and barley. We check into the Tefare Hotel. Its better days were long ago but at least the bed bugs weren't solely to blame for the sleepless nights. They were aided by our first tasting of injera and goat titbits of vindaloo strength, the continual music from the bar, the muezzin's calls to prayer and the chanting from the local church were fairly effective.

We awake to Abba Garima's Saint's Day. We are swept up the hill to the new church by a procession of 5,000. The streets are filled with shamma-shawled pilgrims, the women singing and ululating. In the churchyard ten monks are singing and dancing to the beat of a couple of drums. Their routine may have inspired the Morris dancers. The steps of the church are covered with carpets. In front stand monks crowned with 18<sup>th</sup> C crowns and helmets shaded by highly coloured umbrellas. Some hold silver and bronze crosses. A metal studded Bible is carried on the shoulder of one monk.

The Pope made his entrance. He is wearing a white beehive bonnet, his robes are a white raiment shot with gold thread. He is flanked by a retinue of black coated, black bearded bishops, who wear black satin caps like judges about to pass the death sentence. The crowd joins in singing with a cantor who after fifteen minutes of plainchant, is cut off in his prime by a papal flunkey. The Pope and his entourage move off slowly downhill followed by the procession of monks with crosses, umbrellas and bibles. We walk down to the marketplace where the crowd forms a hollow square. The Bishop of Mekele makes a rousing speech, the crowd eager for every word. The Pope's homily is, by contrast, greeted with restlessness and general chat. Probably because he congratulated the crowd on their spiritual wealth as opposed to West's material wealth. As we head back to our salubrious hotel the Popemobile, a white Toyota Land cruiser passes. A straggle of boys chase with outstretched hands. A papal palm is tossing out what seems to be Bassett Liquorices Allsorts. In fact they are tiny black Aksumite crosses. With Jacques and Daniel we again eat a challenging meal. Lester has a particularly disgusting concoction of chicken and entrails. He is not well.

## The Grist of the Trip

As the Pope is in town the monastery is closed. There is also an issue with the paperwork. Letters from the Patriarch, the Diocese, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the EU have to be presented together with the contract to start the repairs on the Bible. Lester and I are blinded by the glow of the 6<sup>th</sup> C. Eventually we drive up in the afternoon to the hills. Grand scenery unfolds as we climb out of Adwa. The bulbous outcrops of rock look like the dental record of a battered giant who boxed above his weight. Beneath these towering igneous rocks nestle the farms of the peasants. The pre-school children watch over herds of sheep, goats, cows and donkeys.

The Monastery is made up of three churches, a treasury and about fifteen square and circular cells in which the monks live. The ground is very steep. The rough cliffs are covered with cactus and shrubs. The roofs are painted green. The window frames and doors are painted green, red and yellow. Very Bob Marley. Of course it's the other way round. Everything looks well cared for. The entrance to the treasury is a stone portal with steps. Inside this round building a glass cabinet as wide as the room, is filled with crosses, helmets, chalices and manuscripts. From cow horns embedded in the wall, hang leather bible satchels ready for a monk to take on his travels to the outlying villages.



The talking starts. Jacques and Daniel after three hours persuade the Abbot to let us see the Garima Gospel - or rather volume 1. A hush and then an awed sigh falls on Lester and me as we see the metal board opening to reveal the first 6 pages of text. A 2mm wide vellum thong runs through the text about 4mm in from the gutter. We turn to the illuminated pages. Blues, reds, with birds and curtained columns lie before us, bright and clear defying the 1600 years between its creator and us.



Another thong is stabbed right through these damaged and sometimes creased pages, preventing a decent opening. I marvelled at the strength of the vellum used to survive such a battering. The rest of the book of 300 pages has been gathered into sections of around 8 pages and the Caterpillar technique has been used. So called, because on removing the strips the holes left, look like the tracks of a bulldozer. Many of the pages are creased and damaged but most are in good condition if one overlooks the odd creepy crawlly that emerges from time to time. Although I can't read Ge'ez I found the script very beautiful. A wonderful strong black line that is clear and flowing. At this point Lester wants a bit of peace and quiet. A scrum of monks is peering over his back. It doesn't come out often and this is Abba Garima's own hand. This is a Sacred Book written by the saint's very own hand. The light starts to soften. Its time to return to Adwa. Lester has another meal on the wild side. This time it's a cabbage soup with stale bread. It's disco night at the Tefare. And the muezzin's sermon starts at 4.30am.



It's Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> October and we still have not started work. Before Jacques leaves for Aksum and Addis today, he has three hours to persuade the monks to let us see volume 2, remove the front boards, change the order of the pages in both volumes. He is successful. Lester starts to cut the threads that attach the metal cover. The abbot joins in using a spare scalpel. Lester looks aghast. But there is no stopping our abbot. He helps as the first five pages are de-thonged and even more exciting for him is the releasing of the illuminated pages. However he is very unhappy when we want to number the pages in pencil. So we photograph them. It's going well.

Jacques and Daniel leave for Aksum. Now we are on our own. No translator - so we start on a Tigregina course. Tsbook – good; ah'oui – fire; yakanyeahly – thank you; wa'aag – monkey; sir lester – three!

We start to flatten the pages. Out comes the parchment glue, the Japanese tissue. The Dryad presses are put into service to nip the repaired edges and to make up the new sections. As we are the new kids in town there are constant interruptions, monks, visitors and moving our "bench" out of the hot sun.

By 5.30 we are ready for our taxi back to the delights of Adwa. We heard that the Pope decided not to stay in his old monastery but rather at the Holiday Hotel. Civilisation at last. On the cheating side of town in a modern concrete block, clean loos (I'd had to buy Vim at the Tefare) lights that work, but best of all after four days of indigenous nosh we have steak and chips rice and spinach washed with several St George beers. We're happy.

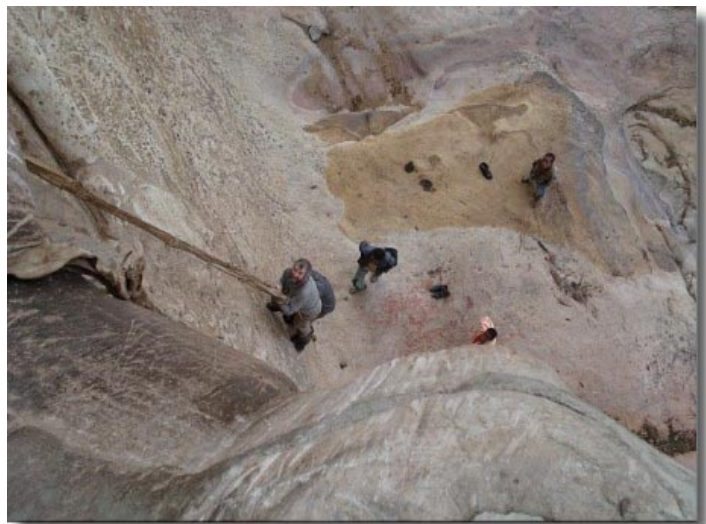
Rather too early Jacques appears to retrieve his computer and then catch a flight to Addis. I'm not happy at missing my breakfast, especially as we have a long day paper repairing. Steady she goes. As the monks become used to us the atmosphere is now relaxed. I find an old pottery beer cup and play the drunk and then do the burning hand trick with Lester's magnifying glass. We rely mostly on sign language which gets us very sweet tea. We wander down to the fields at the end of the day to bird watch. I'm looking out for the family of Augur's buzzard that live in a tall eucalyptus and almost by mistake spot the grey hornbill sand bathing. A flock of green parrots rouse on the branches of a cedar. Weavers and widow birds with their extravagant tails flit from bush to bush. Meanwhile Lester spotted on his hillside walk a family of baboons having a shouting match with the capuchin monkeys. On our return to the Holiday Inn, we receive a worrying call from Jacques that there is a gap in the paperwork. We spend a nervous evening suspecting that the whole endeavour may be curtailed. The prospect of a jobsworth official from the Ministry of Culture & Tourism threatening us with detainment is not the best nightcap. Saturday is market day. We have the compound to ourselves. In spite of the threat from the Ministry, we continue to separate the pages in volume 1. We also manage to move an odd loose illuminated page from vol.2 without any problems. It also gives a chance to examine the book more closely. The book block is in a pretty awful state. Loose pages everywhere in spite of the caterpillar method; for Lester it is a burst mattress. But the silver boards are really special. Of course it is still just about attached to the 14th century manuscript, by three very worn threads. The book is about 14 inches thick. The glass case is 8 inches deep; so it stored opened, with a piece of pottery under the board as a support. Nevertheless the vellum is of such durability and strength that it still opens reasonably well. We spend the rest of the day repairing the broken edges, nipping the pages using our makeshift wooden Dryad presses.

### Like a bird on a wire

As Sunday is a day of rest and the monks are busy celebrating Mass, we have arranged to take the taxi on a three hour drive to Debre Damo. Unfortunately our early morning start is delayed by a power cut. The petrol pumps didn't work! But by mid morning we are bouncing our way over the dirt road in bright sunlight through the grand scenery of Tigray. Volcanic peaks pepper the skyline. We are in the capital of the terraced field. The tef is just coming into maturity, waving in the breeze like a silken carpet. The wheat fields are being harvested by rows of squatting peasants wielding sickles.

The Chinese are supervising the rebuilding of thousands of culverts and bridges along this mountainous road. We turn off onto a very bumpy road. Occasionally we have to push the Toyota. We drive through a beautiful village built with exquisite stonewalls, reminiscent of the Cotswolds. Now we can see the ambo. We approach on foot.

Arigawa, one of the Nine Saints, founded this monastery in 4th century. One feels that he may have been a Stylite with ideas of grandeur. As the ambo has absolutely vertical sides of at least 80 feet, Arigawa needed the help of a sleepy python up whose body he climbed. This image is found in many of the bibles, icons and paintings. Many other church builders in Ethiopia have developed these Alpine instincts and further a-field the Health and Safety precautions of Debre Demo are not matched in such a faranji friendly manner. One such church visited by Pete Marsh has a terrifying approach





along a sloping path above a 200 foot drop. An overhanging chain of 40 feet was left un-ascended. Unlike Arigawa who was given wings by God when the devil took against him Pete thought a length of rope and few carabineers might be necessary. It starts to drizzle. We pause in a talla tavern to eat a snack and to wait for the rain to stop. At the base a couple of pilgrims have just completed their descent, so I am attached to the hauling strap. I grab the plaited rope of goatskin. It's almost vertical and the wall is worn smooth by 1600 years of bare flailing feet, so it's a strenuous ascent. And after 80 feet I'm pleased to heave myself up over the polished wooden portal. The monks salaam me and have a good laugh at the faranji. Lester has quite a struggle. After being landed he has a good breather.

Of course the church is a cracker. I'm slightly reminded of Italian Alp chalets. The stonework is so crisp, the wooden ends of the beams protruding through the walls is so unlikely and the marvellous Aksumite biscuit coloured pillar in the entrance is stunning. We walk through the village where the monks have their cells, halls of residence and banqueting. There is wonderful dissymmetry. Large cisterns have been dug in the rock to provide water. We skirt by the sheer sides of the ambo and peer at the tiny caves dug high into the sides of the rock where particularly Garboesque monks withdrew often for years and until death allow another soloist to occupy this tiny room with a view. And all too so we have to leave. Lester is helped by our guide as he is descended down the serpents tail. I rather enjoy the abseil. By the time we reach Adwa, after 3 hours of driving, the taxi is full of peasants happily chatting. Back at the hotel I eat an ambo of lasagne, a truly vast helping.

Monday morning sees us back in our bibliophile's idyll. However our peace is interrupted as we make our first acquaintance of Fissela Zibola, the man from the Ministry of Culture & Tourism.

"Your permit from the Ministry"

"Here's the letter that Jacques left"

"That Jacques has been avoiding me. You have no permit. Stop all work now"

"But the pages are loose"

"You will leave now. I will take back to your hotel."

We spend the afternoon at a coffee ceremony. The waitresses are cock-a-hoop to have a faranji or two to entertain. We drink our three cups of spleen bursting strength coffee amid much laughter and coquetry from the girls. I have time to hire a Chinese mountain bike. Given the steepness of the hills, it is surprisingly difficult to find one with brakes.

In spite of my forebodings we are cleared later that evening to return the next day but with an escort from the ministry. We are now under the sharp eye of Moulou, the Ministry representative. His life is typical of so many Tigreans. He has an Eritrean father and Ethiopian mother. In 1984 to escape the famine, their parents carried him and his sisters 300 miles to the Sudanese border. A UN truck took them to a refugee camp in the desert where they stayed for six years. Schools, hospitals and churches were established. On return the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia started. The family was separated. He has not seen or heard from his father since 1999.



We work on toning down the repairs. Soon we are ready to sew the first four sections on vol. 1 and the six sections on vol. 2. It's a two-man job sewing Coptic. Lester has worked out a really neat way of guarding the sections with a vellum strip that allows the pages to turn and open freely. We pass the needle through the section, but require the help of the pliers to draw the needle through. The extra pair of hands is needed to hold the section clear of the book. Lester is very happy at our day's work. We have been lucky that competing parties of patriarch and ministry have let us get on.

And my bike ride down the gravel road is glorious. The dodgy brakes enhance the view of the mountains and sunset. A puncture 2kms from the hotel slows me down a bit.

### Scenic Interlude

We do have some peaceful days that were flushed by an intense happiness and excitement. The wonderful manuscript of course is pretty inspiring. So are our surroundings. The al fresco bindery, the indigo-blue sky, the monkeys in the trees, the breeze and fluorescent birds are entrancing. We take our lunch, shaded by olive trees on the flat roof of a monk's cell. And the view from Bistro de la Terrace is stupendous. Our diet is sardines with or without sardines on bambasha bread with bananas and oranges. Our digestion is helped by the vista that spreads a thousand feet below. The terraced fields of green tef, the yellow wheat edged by rows of dark green acacia trees form a patchwork of peasant farming unchanged for a millennium. The horizon is pierced by steep, volcanic peaks. The smell of Africa blows over. Dusty, dungy and decidedly addictive. Peasants carrying water drive their flocks of brown sheep, goats and cattle up the stony paths leading their donkeys laden with wood. We stroll up pass the church where the monks are reading the gospel and chanting their song. In the early morning they sit wrapped in their shammass waiting for the warming sun. We salaam and kiss their crosses. Field birds of incandescent colours are chattering in the bushes. Above us a family white-chested Augur's buzzards perch in their cedar tree. Soon the thermals will rise and their shadows will flash across our workbench as they cruise down the valley wheeling and swooping in the soft easterly breeze. An enviable commute.

### More binding

We now have three days to complete the work. The pressure is mounting. We need to attach the boards, tone down the guards, trim the vellum guards and reinstate the caterpillar stitch on the vellum linings. And that's just vol.1. Lester and I work away only occasionally interrupted by the monks trying to ride my bike in the compound. Just once do they ride into our bench. A bit of fish wife from me sees them off. Again my ride back is special as I manage to beat the taxi.

Only two days left now. We attach the gilded bronze boards to vol.1 with a series of whippings and kettle stitches. By midday vol.2 is progressing well. The fly leaves of vellum are now dyed down with a mixture of tea and coffee and are spread-eagled on the bier that serves as our secondly bench. Lester has decided to reinforce the sewing on vol.2. We repeat the Coptic Twin Method. It was one of those great moments in my binding life. As we shuttled the needles, all four of them, through the sections of yellow vellum with their black Ge'ez letters still legible, still read and still turning after 1,600 years, the touch and feel of those pages is still with me. I was warmed by the breath of history on my neck.



What a pleasure, what a thrill and what an honour these humble monks had given us. How lucky we were to have the chance to preserve a part of Abba Garima's Gospel. Now with the folded section and vellum flies fitting sweetly, we thought it looked a picture.



When we met Jacques and Daniel, their tales of intrigue from the Diocese, the Patriarch, the Ministry of Culture sounded tough. But not as tough as the chicken that night. Jacques thanked the waiter for the “food” he had eaten. I promised the Frenchman a “meal” back in England. Or at least a bowl of shiro and injera!

As our last binding day is dawning, we start early. It's Saturday so the people going to market are in full flood. I see a boy carrying four skins of goat looking like very fresh slunk vellum. With him his mother carries on her head a load of wood with a cockerel balanced on the top. I walk down the stony path past the fields emptied of peasants. Only the very young and very old are left to tend the animals. Occasionally the path is lined with flowering aloes. The acacia trees are flushed with their spring growth. In the background there is the hum of a million unseen bees. A hornbill with drunken flight pattern screeches loudly as it spars with our family of buzzards. I reach the valley floor where forty eucalyptus tree trunks lie scattered by the stumps of a once shady grove. By the river in the reed beds are lots of weaver nests. Plenty of them flit about including a red and black one with an 18 inch tail. I turn to meander back up the path. A steer face of volcanic rock looms behind the monastery. The shoulders of the hills are covered with green shrubs with spiky white flowers. A white bell tower, clear against the sky, is perched high on the cliff beside the green round roofs of the monastery. The valley is now filled with the chattering voices of the returning peasants. The married women loaded with wheat, their hair is braided on their foreheads and on their necks is fluffed out in two pom-poms. Often the women attach gold ornaments to their braids. To my salaams they stop, smile, and then firmly shake my hand. Often they slide their shawls off their heads as a sign of respect. The shouts of “faranji” are absent. But my bright shirt and white skin is a sharp reminder of the alienness of my appearance. My face and arms must glow for miles. Just beneath the monastery the peasants stop to bow to and to kiss a large boulder beside the path just as they would the walls of the church.

Our work for this trip is finished. The monks have gathered in the treasury. Daniel, Jacques and Momlou are ready with cameras. Lester and I have brought a tea set with 12 glasses as a present for the monks. With Daniel doing the translation we thank the monks. I offer the Abbot Teckla Maryam on bended knee our gift. This causes some consternation and some amazement, as they are not used to a “faranji” bowing before a monk in the position of a suppliant.

Abba Teckla Maryam stands to say prayers, including the Pater Noster, which I say in English and they say in Ge'ez. Sorry no recording. They use the joint of their fingers to count the number of times they repeat the name of Jesus with their thumbs running along their cupped hands. Just the way my father showed me the Nepalese shepherds count their animals. The oldest monk, rheumy eyed with an open sore on his forehead gave thanks, wished us a safe journey and blessed our families. He said the pictures in the Gospel were of Roma. Did he mean Constantinople?

During the team photos the mood was lightened by a good deal of horseplay that involved a lot of tickling and arm-twisting. Apparently these affairs are usually a bit serious so it was a real joy to have so many smiling faces.

Back at the hotel a local band is playing. Yamaha organ, lead guitar and vocal. Great stuff. Where are you Andy Kershaw? As it is the evening before the Sabbath, our nearest church is broadcasting not only the service and but also especially the fine voice of its priest. I can hear his alleluias sung a Judaic pre-Gregorian chant. For half an hour this melody, unchanged for sixteen hundred years, washes over my balcony.

Next morning we drive up to the monastery for the last time, with my bike and a sheep on the roof of the taxi. There is a long conversation about the photographing of the finished pages as a letter has emerged from the Patriarch forbidding such activity.



Ever so slightly bored by the chat, Sueravia, a young monk, and I climb up to a spring initiated by Garima's spit. As it still seeps minutely in three places, it is a holy spot where shoes must be removed. We climb higher and I spot a couple mountain goats, grey, horned and extremely fleeting.

On our return we manage to take the shots with only token protest. I wander down to the cliff. In some cactus below I hear the low cough of a monkey. In amongst the spikes I notice a brown animal. At the same time from the undergrowth emerges a male

baboon with red nose and a hairy face. He eyeballs me for a second or two, grunts loudly and from the bushes five more bound out and scamper towards the safety of the cliff, exposing their familiar red bottoms. The thought did cross my mind that you don't want to be Lester's apprentice for too long.

I head back to the treasury where a Mamluk Sultan's tray of 14<sup>th</sup> C is being shown. One metre across with gold and silver inlays of phoenixes, the Kufic lettering spells out praise for the Sultan. We are about to see their most prized treasure, a 15<sup>th</sup> C silver chalice with engraving both on the outside and inside when another party arrives. It never appears!

Sadly we say our goodbyes and I mount my bike for the last time and head off into the sunset. The only deflating moment is yet another puncture.

**Mark Winstanley** *As the son of a Gurkha officer he spent most of his childhood in Malaya. At 8 years old he was sent to Stoke House, a boarding school in Seaford. After five happy years leaning Latin, Fives and playing rugby in the rain he went to Eastbourne College where his only distinction was winning the Fives Cup four years in a row. Luckily his three very mediocre A Levels let him squeeze into the Army. He was commissioned in the Royal Corps of Transport in which he served for four years. The dreary years in Germany were enlivened by a couple of tours to Ulster. He then travelled in the Americas for a couple of years. In 1977 while working in Hay on Wye in one of the many bookshops, he was lucky enough to get a place on Arthur Johnson's Craft Binding course at the London College of Printing. At the end of year show he met John Rose who offered him a job, where he began a belated apprenticeship at Keypoint Francke Bookbinders.*

*During those 5 years he learnt so much about trade binding and especially about finishing from Bert Knight. He then went to Collis Bird & Withey. Another happy 5 years passed with Nick CB working on the forwarding side.*

*In 1990 Hannah More, Rosie Gray and Mark decided to start the Wyvern Bindery in Clerkenwell. From a tiny studio they set out to bind in the craft tradition using the best materials making bespoke books. They managed to survive the early years and in 1994 opened a larger bindery on the Clerkenwell Road with a double shop front. After five years of happy partnership, Hannah and Rosie decided that life in the countryside was more appealing than slogging through Hackney. So after a shaky start, he is now the fortunate owner of a bindery that binds all sorts of interesting and beautiful books with an eclectic mix of forwarders and finishers all passionate about the craft. As middle age spreads its greying tentacles he still manage to ski tour, ride, play squash and tennis and take the odd trip to Ethiopia to admire their manuscripts and birds.*

# Product & Company News

## Zenith Paper Punch - Spare Bits

5.5mm spare bits for our popular Zenith Paper Punch are now available to purchase.

Price: £4.40 each

## Padding Mull

The specification for our Padding Mull is changing. The new roll size will be 128cm width by 50m length.

Prices:

1-49 metres - £1.28 per metre  
50-249 metres - £0.68 per metre  
250-499 metres - £0.64 per metre  
500+ metres - £0.60 per metre

## The Designer Bookbinders Competition 2006



The annual Designer Bookbinder Competition was judged at the end of November and the award ceremony was held on the 8th December at the British Library at St. Pancras. The standard of design and the quality of binding seems to improve year on year. We are very pleased to announce that the 2006 J. Hewit & Son prize for 'The Interesting Treatment of Leather' was awarded to Kate Holland, a binder from Somerset.

The prize was very well deserved for her beautifully bright and 'sunny' binding of Elizabeth David's *A Book of Mediterranean Foods*, published by The Folio Society. Our warmest congratulations go to Kate.



## Calf and Goat Vellums

We are very pleased to announce that we will now be stocking Vellums from William Cowley Parchment Makers. Initially, we will be stock three types:

**Classic Calf Vellum** - Creamy coloured, full grain Calfskin. Traditionally used for bookbinding and for covering furniture, etc., but can also be used for painting and calligraphy. Calligraphers will need to abrade the smooth surface before writing to form a good key.

Average Skin Size: 0.67 - 0.91m<sup>2</sup> (7¼ - 9¾ft<sup>2</sup>)

Approx. Cut Size: 70 x 60 cm

Average Standard Substance: 0.3 - 0.4 mm

Grades: Run Selection

Cost: £123.00 per skin

**Creamy Goat Vellum** - Is for covering panels and books. It is softer than Calf Vellum, with a cloudy creamy grain that varies in intensity across the surface. The backbone is usually visible as slightly darker line.

Average Skin Size: 0.55 - 1.00m<sup>2</sup> (6 - 10¾ft<sup>2</sup>)

Approx. Cut Size: 70 x 60 cm

Average Standard Substance: 0.3 - 0.4 mm

Grades: Run Selection

Cost: £94.00 per skin

**Natural Goat Vellum** - Is the same as above, but has an unbleached surface that gives a honey/light brown colouring and greater surface variation. The skins are more 'interesting' to look at, but each skin is more individual in appearance than the Creamy Goatskin Vellum.

Average Skin Size: 0.55 - 1.00m<sup>2</sup> (6 - 10¾ft<sup>2</sup>)

Approx. Cut Size: 70 x 60 cm

Average Standard Substance: 0.3 - 0.4 mm

Grades: Run Selection

Cost: £94.00 per skin

*All prices are subject to shipping charges and VAT where applicable.*

# The Dating of Gold-Tooled Bindings

by Ian Andrews

Recent research indicates that significant variations, can be distinguished in the gold-decoration on Western European book bindings, which correlate with the date of binding. The nature of these correlations extends far beyond mere associations with contemporary fashion and appears to be consistent throughout Western Europe. The research, on which this article is based, covered the

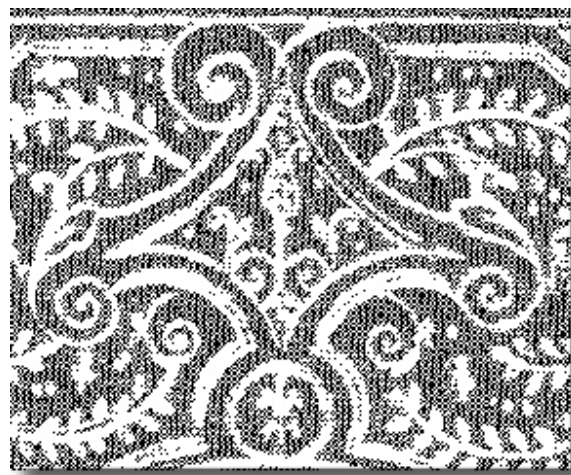


*Arabic Motif from a Parisian binding of 1540c. The base of the motif is essentially formed from a pair of circular elements and rises at the centre like an onion to a point which is usually embellished with a lotus head. A pair of stems emerge from the embryonic life-form in the base and sweep outwards and on this example are terminated with leaves in the 'Fantasy' style.*

bindings of Western Europe from 1500 to 1800 and extends from the early phase of major book production to the beginning of the Victorian era when the major enthusiasm in book decoration was nostalgic recreation of previous styles. Prior to the sixteenth century, decoration tended to be based on three main formats. Firstly, rectangular frames, either nesting sets of concentric rectangles or in the style of a 'noughts and crosses' game. Secondly, designs based on either a lozenge or saltire and thirdly, centre and corner designs. Rectangular patterns of repeated small stamps were essentially a Spanish style while the lozenge and saltire constructions are seen on early Coptic bindings. The centre and corners design appears to have been uniquely Christian and is frequently observed on books of the early catholic church where the decoration was achieved with five large cabochon stones mounted on the cover. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, these three styles were well established and the general features of each were

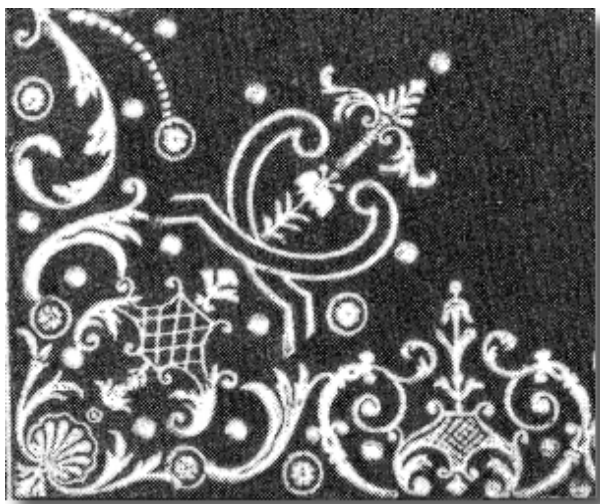
the major influences in contemporary design layout. Throughout the sixteenth century, the overwhelming design influence on European bindings is Arabic/Islamic which is perhaps scarcely surprising since it is considered most likely that the use of gold tooling on leather book bindings originated in Italy, carried there by immigrant Jewish craftsmen following their expulsion from Spain at the end of the fifteenth century. At that time too, European trade with the Middle East was the province of the merchants of Italy. Thus Italy was uniquely able to produce books decorated with gold-tooling and was also most thoroughly aware of the styles Arabic art, architecture and textiles.

*'Round Window' a small section from a Parisian binding of the early seventeenth century. It shows a small compartment with 'pawls' ornamenting its outer extremities and a pair of 'snails' at the top and with a 'round window' feature at its base which also serves to link this element into the main decorative field.*



The major realization from this research has been that in every aspect or feature of a design style or motif, there are subtle changes in its use or appearance that change systematically with time. Thus in such major design styles as 'strapwork' which was one of the most significant design formats from the middle of the sixteenth century right through until the middle of the eighteenth, a span in popularity of two hundred years, seven phases can be distinguished, each being precisely characterised by specific attributes and mutually distinguishable though the phases do not always occur sequentially. Two other overall

'styles' can be similarly resolved into time-variant phases though neither might previously have been thought of as a particular 'design style'. These are Lace and Foliage. The description 'lacy' has, in the past, occasionally been applied to describe the decoration of a particular binding but not only does the description 'lace' appear to be a very appropriate classification for binding decoration but the representation of a great many specific lace design styles in the gilding of bookbindings is often extraordinarily precise. This accuracy of representation extends back virtually to the beginning of the sixteenth century with detailed portrayal of entrelac, cutwork and embroidered lace patterns. It may be therefore that such bookbindings are actually valuable repositories of the patterns of braid, metallic and reticello lace of that time. The precision with which some of the high quality laces such as Brussels, point de Sedan, gros point de Venise and the appliqué laces of Milan and Turin have been represented in the gold-work of bookbindings is particularly astonishing since there is such a difference between the materials employed in the two craft areas, the very fine thread in lacework and the use of heavy metal tools with gold leaf and adhesive on the bookbinding. In the third quarter of the seventeenth century, English and Italian binders captured the ethereal nature of the flimsiest Flanders lace. Designs that portray the characteristics of lace are observed from the beginning of the second quarter of the seventeenth century with the period of greatest usage from 1650 to about 1685 after which it continues at a lesser level and declines rapidly after the middle of the eighteenth century.



*Pincers from a French binding of c1766. This shows a number of datable motifs including a scallop shell, strapwork 'pincers', 'swag tailed acanthus leaves and a section of basket weave in the 'Meissen' style.*

By considering the use of flowers and foliage in the decoration of bookbindings in general, it is possible to identify and define many stages in the appearance of leaves, stems and individual flower heads and in addition, the way in which foliage has been used often provides indications of the chronological period of a design. For example during the eighteenth century designs frequently included borders of foliage, usually incorporating many small flower heads. These 'herbaceous

borders' appear in very stylised form in the first quarter of the century but are more natural after 1730. From about 1750 to 1780 a very luxuriant form of foliate border is seen that includes some very stylised forms that are very characteristic of this period and may best be described as 'candlestick'. The sixteenth century is a period during which plants and flowers tend to be portrayed in very stylised ways, with the exception of the second half of the century, from 1550 to about 1610, when leaves quite often had the appearance of 'oak leaves' with lots of internal veining, which was unusual for that time. In general the occurrence of small plant forms was most common in the eighteenth century, especially between 1730 and 1790.

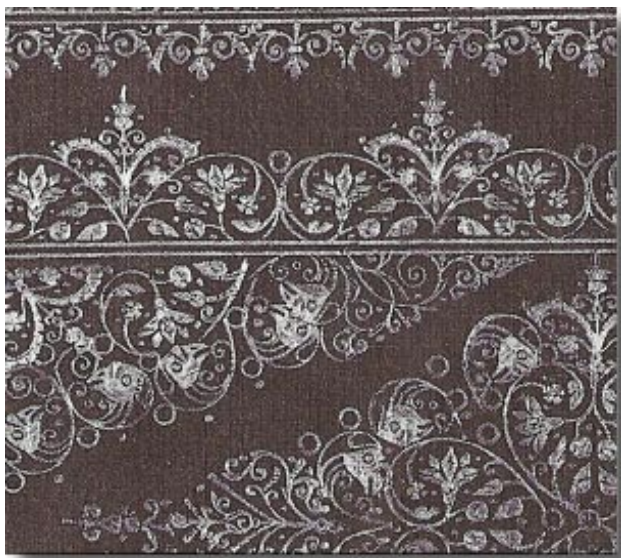
*Tulip - from an English binding of c1682. This is from a Cottage Roof style binding and shows a very realistic tulip head on a stylised stem.*

Certain flowers experienced periods of particular popularity; daisies for example between 1650 to 1710 and again from 1750 to 1790. The classical 'anthemions', based on the honeysuckle, were popular throughout the eighteenth century but especially so from 1740 to 1780. Acanthus too, was increasingly popular from 1700 and reached a peak between 1740 and 1765 though an earlier





version is often observed on sixteenth century bindings. Fantastic leaf shapes were in vogue from 1540 yet had effectively disappeared by about 1565. Amongst all the various flower heads by far the most prolific was the lotus. The lotus head was so widespread, as a decorative motif in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that numerous 'standard forms' can be distinguished, the 'Fat' lotus, the 'Paisley lotus, heads with three or five petals, lotus buds on stems, round-bottomed lotus heads and several fork-leaf versions. The similarity of these motifs with those on Islamic architecture strongly indicates that they were acquired from contacts with Arabia through Italian merchants.



*Lacy from an English binding of c1670-75 with extremely delicate goldwork giving the appearance of Flanders lace.*

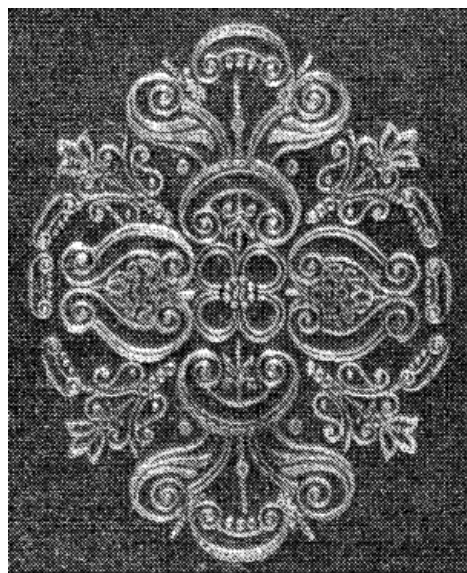
In the first quarter of the sixteenth century, a distinctive border decoration was comparatively common and based on a traditional Persian motif consisting of a repeating pair of circles embellished with palm leaves and lotus buds. Designs of the middle of the century, from 1540 to 1565-70 are characterized by the presence of a complex structure that has been described as 'the Arabic motif'. Its presence in book decoration during this time is so prevalent that five distinct versions of it can be defined, all of which occur in much the same time period.

These are distinguished as being essentially:

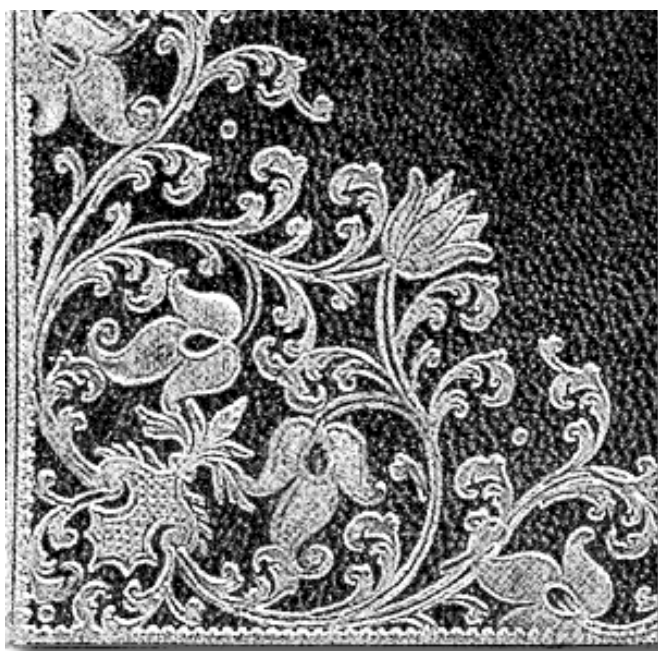
geometrical, foliate, 'relaxed' or degenerate types, tall, pinched forms and forms carefully defined within a lotus head outline. From the shape of the Arabic motif and in view of all the details that are included in its complete form, it appears distinctly likely that its design is based on female anatomy and this would coincide with the frequent indication of a tiny new, 'embryonic life' at the centre of almost every bud used in book decoration. This too, links with the eastern mythological connection between life processes and the lotus plant. It is intriguing that the fundamental form of the lotus head has, elsewhere, been described as being 'tulips' despite the fact that the tulip plants were not known in Europe until the early seventeenth century whereas this motif had been in common use for a century before that. In any case, the Turkish tulip which was the origin of the modern tulip was of an entirely different shape and had long slender petals whereas the form that was developed from it in Holland and resulted in the 'tulip mania' of the early seventeenth century were of the same appearance as the modern tulip. Following the European tulip frenzy, very realistic flower heads appear on bookbindings that are unmistakably representations of tulips.

*Lacy Dolly - from a Dutch eighteenth century binding showing a central feature constructed by the imaginative use of four different 'Drawer Handle' tools, pawls and several lotus heads.*

Most often, indications of chronological variation are apparent in the smaller items of a design. Leaves on bindings of 1540 to 1570 often exhibit pronounced notches at their tips. The lotus and the scallop shell are both motifs that are relatively ubiquitous throughout almost these entire three centuries and whose form is constantly changing. Another is a small motif that looks like a tiny vase with two circular handles. The vase appears in the second half of the sixteenth century and continues with numerous variations until the late eighteenth century. The appearance of 'space-filling' treatments, such as snowflakes, triple dots,



floating rings and rosettes, akin to the practice known as *manière criblée* in memorial brass work also convey dateable indications. In strapwork designs for example, very significant sequential evolutions can be distinguished by analysing the precise forms of the linkages and cross-overs. 'Pincer' and 'scissor'-like constructions may often be observed where the strap meets the outer frame. From 1580 to about 1600 a 'round window' is often observed between them and the main strapwork whereas by the later part of the first quarter of the seventeenth century it had become a cross-over linkage. Some motifs appear only for very short periods: the 'spanner lotus' for example in the 1550s, cobwebs in the 1750s, garden path designs and exceptionally long straight stems in the first quarter of the eighteenth century. Another aspect of tooling decoration that shows change with time is the quality of the decoration, meaning the calibre as it were of the draughtsmanship rather than the quality of the gold-tooling. The appearance for example of fan corners and knot-work linkages at the beginning of the eighteenth century are crude as compared to those of the end of the seventeenth.



*Lace 'Applique' - from a Roman binding of the early second quarter of the eighteenth century. The goldwork on this binding closely resembles the style of lacework made at that time in Milan and Turin*

In an essay as short as this it has not been appropriate, or possible to attempt to provide detailed examples nor to explore the intricacies of occurrence of each feature, style or motif. Rather, I have endeavoured to provide an insight into the generalities of what can be achieved by precise analysis of the gold tooling on bookbindings. I have not been able to mention everything and I have frequently tended to 'state' some of the major findings rather than provide a fully detailed perspective of each entity over the entire period of its usage. Each assertion given here is however, based upon the detailed findings of fastidious analysis. As is

probably apparent, I have found this entire subject fascinating both in the ultimate realizations that the fashion for a particular style of book decoration had connections with the most costly fashion fad of the time and secondly the discovery that there are a very significant number of indicators in every design that are surprisingly sensitive to the date when it was bound yet relatively independent of the location where it was bound. In conclusion, I have been able to show that it is not only possible to deduce chronological indications, purely from analysis of the binding decoration, which in favourable circumstances may be to within ten years, but further, that this provides a framework against which it is possible to question, and perhaps revise, the dating of bindings where certain aspects depart from the expected norms.

**Ian Andrews** *Previously qualified in physics and experienced in many areas of scientific research, Ian became very interested in the techniques of fine bookbinding. He attended courses at West Dean College and specialist courses in gold finishing and restoration. His particular interest has been the development of styles of decorative gold design. This article presents a brief summary of some of the results of a major research study on which he has been engaged, to investigate the nature of changes in decorative gold designs with respect to the date when a book was bound.*



# Study Opportunities

## Courses

### Designer Bookbinders & The Society Of Bookbinders Weekend Workshops 2006-7

#### **Onlay, Inlays and Scarf Joints with Peter Jones**

Sat & Sun, 17-18 March 2007 - 10am-5pm

Kelly Street, London, NW1

Course Fee: £100 (£5 materials payable on the day)

In this workshop Peter will share his approach to the various techniques used for decorating with leather. Together they give the artistic bookbinder a range of choices for embellishing leather covers, and are essential skills for the production of successful design bindings.



Onlays, inlays and scarf joints give different tactile and visual results to the finished surface of the leather, and necessitate mastering the precise steps involved in planning and execution so that the desired result is achieved. Peter will begin with a discussion of how to choose the appropriate method, both aesthetically and in regard to its position on the book.

Working on prepared plaquettes, students will learn how to prepare the board for decoration, the correct working order needed for each technique, and how to design, cut out and apply the leather accurately in position. Emphasis will be given to the use of the specific tools involved - a paring knife and spokeshave, scalpel and paring machine. Please note that this workshop will be of most benefit to those who are confident paring leather and using edge tools.

**Peter Jones** studied Economics at Bristol University before moving to London and working in furniture restoration, leather lining of desktops and retail management. In 1985 he moved to Brighton, took up carpentry and joinery, and started learning bookbinding at evening classes. Since 1988 he has been self-employed as a carpenter, bookbinder and teacher of bookbinding. He was elected a Fellow of Designer Bookbinders in 1995 and President in 2005. He has exhibited internationally and his work is held in numerous public and private collections.

#### **Registration**

Clarisse Simon

c/o The Congregational Chapel

Kelly Street

London

NW1 8PH

Tel: (0788) 543 0245

Email: ClarisseSimon@Yahoo.co.uk

#### **For further information please contact**

Clare Prince Tel: (020) 7937 9198 - Email: [clare.prince@britishlibrary.net](mailto:clare.prince@britishlibrary.net)

Dominic Riley Tel: (015395) 31161 - Email: [rebound@onetel.com](mailto:rebound@onetel.com)

Karen Vidler Tel: (020) 8893 4086 - Email: [karen\\_vidler@hotmail.com](mailto:karen_vidler@hotmail.com)

Copies of this brochure and workshop booking forms can be downloaded from the SoB and DB websites:

[www.societyofbookbinders.com](http://www.societyofbookbinders.com)

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



## Cirencester Bookbinding Workshops 2007 at Cirencester College.

Regular monthly workshops designed for SoB members and others who take the craft seriously. Follow the demonstration or pursue your own project with help and guidance. Practice finishing. Equipment available for use. Laying press, finishing press, sewing frames, nipping press, etc

Venue The Art Block, Cirencester College, Fosseway Campus, Stroud Road, Cirencester

Start Time 9am onwards Finish 5pm Demonstration starts around 10am

Cost £25 ; SOB members £20

The programme for the day is.....doors open at 9am.....problem solving.....demonstration at 10am.....lunch when you feel like it!.....shutting up shop 5pm

**14th April 2007 - Demonstration tooling for the terrified! Use of gold foil.**

**12th May 2007 - Demonstration vellum binding over boards. Part 1 - Forwarding processes.**

**9th June 2007- Demonstration vellum binding over boards. Part 2 - Covering.**

*For further information or to book, please contact John Jameson on +44 (0) 1285 770 458 or [john@cotswoldbookbinders.co.uk](mailto:john@cotswoldbookbinders.co.uk)*

## Short Courses by Tracey Rowledge

### Gold Tooling

Dates: 24 April – 19 June 2007

Day & time: Tuesday, 10.00 – 16.30 Location: City Lit, Keeley street, Covent Garden, London WC2B 4BA

Enrolment: 0207 831 7831 Email: [info@citylit.ac.uk](mailto:info@citylit.ac.uk) Website: [www.citylit.ac.uk](http://www.citylit.ac.uk)

Course description: This structured course is an introduction to the technique of tooling with gold leaf on leather. You will plan and execute a design for a book, possibly incorporating titling with handle letters. Can also be taken as a refresher course for those with previous experience. Basic materials included.

### Unfolding Thought: Experimental Bookmaking

Tutors: Liz Ellis and Tracey Rowledge

Dates: 14/15 & 28/29 April 2007

Location: Tate Modern, Bankside, London SE1 9TG

Enrolment: Phone: 0207 887 8888 Email: [information@tate.org.uk](mailto:information@tate.org.uk) Website: [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)

Course description: This four-day workshop is a practical introduction to experimental book-making where participants have the rare opportunity to handle modern and contemporary book art from the Tate Collection. The tutors discuss trends in book-making techniques and demonstrate a number of practical skills. Participants are then helped to produce a finished book in response to ideas generated and their own interests.

### Making Finishing Tools for Bookbinders

Dates: 22 - 24 June (ability: a/b/c/d)

Reference: WE 251 (CC) Location: □West Dean College, West Dean, Chichester West Sussex, PO18 0QZ

Enrolment: 01243 811 301 Email: [shortcourses@westdean.org.uk](mailto:shortcourses@westdean.org.uk) Website: [www.westdean.org.uk](http://www.westdean.org.uk)

Course description: Apply yourself to making two simple brass finishing tools, for use on leather, paper and cloth. Using basic metalworking and woodworking techniques, students can reshape old tools or create new tools from a length of brass.

### Making a Finishing Tool

Date: 7 July

Location: City Lit, Keeley street, Covent Garden, London WC2B 4BA

Enrolment: 0207 831 7831 Email: [info@citylit.ac.uk](mailto:info@citylit.ac.uk) Website: [www.citylit.ac.uk](http://www.citylit.ac.uk)

Course description: Brass finishing tools are used for impressing lettering or decoration on surfaces such as leather, paper or wood. Come and learn how to make a tool of your own simple design. Please request a list of necessary materials and equipment. An additional £5 fee for materials will be payable. Basic materials included.

### **Gold Tooling**

Dates: 9 - 13 July 2007

Location: Book North, Top of the Town Farm, 17 The Village, Barkisland, Halifax, West Yorkshire. HX4 0AQ (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)

Times: 9.30 - 16.30. Cost: £180 for the five-day workshop (The cost will include most materials and buffet lunches. Details of local accommodation can be provided).

Contact: Hilary Henning on 01932 787268, or email [hilary.henning@britishlibrary.net](mailto:hilary.henning@britishlibrary.net) (for further details or to book a place)

Course description: Most courses on gold tooling teach the traditional method of finishing a binding. Tracey has developed a very different method for tooling her speciality of 'gestural' images on a cover, a method which she will be teaching her students. She is also planning to spend one day on making tools from lengths of brass or old tools.

### **Unfolding Thought: Experimental Bookmaking**

Dates: 16 – 20 July

Location: City Lit, Keeley street, Covent Garden, London WC2B 4BA

Enrolment: 0207 831 7831 Email: [infoline@citylit.ac.uk](mailto:infoline@citylit.ac.uk) Website: [www.citylit.ac.uk](http://www.citylit.ac.uk)

Course description: This exciting course brings together two disciplines, fine art and bookmaking. We will focus on the concertina book form as a container of ideas. A willingness to experiment is more important than previous experience. Basic materials included. Tutor(s): Liz Ellis, Tracey Rowledge

### **Gold Tooling - Gold Leaf Lettering on Books**

Dates: 3 – 6 September 2007 (ability: c/d) Reference: 3D 365 (CC) Location: West Dean College, West Dean, Chichester West Sussex, PO18 0QZ

Enrolment: 01243 811 301 Email: [shortcourses@westdean.org.uk](mailto:shortcourses@westdean.org.uk) Website: [www.westdean.org.uk](http://www.westdean.org.uk)

Course description: Hone your gold tooling technique as you plan and execute the lettering of a title and author on at least two book spines. Students learn about typefaces and their sizes, as well as the tools and techniques for lettering on a curved leather surface.

### **Leatherwork Courses with MacGregor & Michael, Tetbury. UK**

MacGregor & Michael are professional designer-makers of hand-stitched leathersgoods with more than 30 years experience. Their short course builds upon the techniques described in 'The Leatherworking Handbook' by Valerie Michael. The maximum number of students is five, so each person receives individual tuition. All tools are provided for use on the courses.

Provisional Dates for 2007 and further information on the whole range of our courses, including courses on:

- Decorated Leather
- Moulded Leather Flowers
  - Leather Carving
- Leather Boxes and Containers
- Design and Construction of hand stitched bags
  - Wallets-Organisers-Purses

can be found on our website at [www.leathercourses.co.uk](http://www.leathercourses.co.uk) or by contacting

Val Michael at MacGregor & Michael, 37 Silver Street, Tetbury, Gloucestershire, GL8 8DL, UK  
e-mail: [info@leathercourses.co.uk](mailto:info@leathercourses.co.uk) Tel: ( 0044) 01666 502179

## **Society of Bookbinders, London And South Region - Mastercraft Classes Spring 2007**

**24th March (Saturday) - Tony Ward Various Ways To Bind A Single Section.** Tony Ward served a six-year apprenticeship in hand bookbinding and during the 1960's worked at the British Library Bindery. He was appointed Head Bookbinder for the Royal County of Berkshire library service in the mid 70's and ran their bindery in Reading. He also taught bookbinding part-time at Berkshire College of Art and Design and is a former national Chairman of the Society of Bookbinders. In this Mastercraft Class, Tony will look at the archival approach to preserving catalogues, pamphlets and similar material. His demonstration will include, among others, the 'returned guard' method, which allows a single section book to be bound with a rounded and backed spine and so to be gold lettered.

*The class will be held at the Congregational Chapel, Kelly Street, Kentish Town, NW1. See above for directions.*

**28th April (Saturday) - Glenn Bartley Gold Tooling Techniques, Hints and Tips.** Glenn Bartley is a Fellow of Designer Bookbinders. He has won both the DB Silver Medal and the SoB International Competition and has been binding for more than twenty years. His bindery in Culham, Oxfordshire has clients from major institutions to private collectors both nationally and internationally, including Europe, North America and South Africa. His work includes bindings in traditional and contemporary styles, restoration and boxmaking. As Glenn points out, for many binders the actual process of gold tooling is seen as such a difficult skill to acquire that, often, a secondary emphasis is placed on the suitability of the typeface, the size of the tools and the layout of the tooling/lettering in relationship to the style of the book being bound. With his wealth of experience, Glenn will first demonstrate the techniques and processes that he has developed to tool the variety of material that passes through his workshop, utilising methods that better suit the environment in which most individual binders now work. He will then explore the sorts of problems that arise and discuss ways of overcoming them. If you have been daunted by, or are experiencing difficulties with this aspect of binding, this Mastercraft Class will be an ideal opportunity to put your queries to an experienced professional. The aim is for the participants to go away armed with good basic principles and to confidently achieve, with practice, successful gold tooling and lettering.

*The class will be held at the Congregational Chapel, Kelly Street, Kentish Town, NW1. See above for directions.*

**26th May (Saturday) Paul Delrue An Approach to Booker Binding: The New 'Tudor' Style.** Paul Delrue started binding in 1959 and served an apprenticeship at University College London bindery (1961-64). He set up his own bindery in 1971 at Leagrave, Bedfordshire, later moving to Chester after a two year period binding in Wales (he is currently back in Wales, at Ruthin). He was elected a Fellow of the Society of Bookbinders in 1981, having founded and served as chairman of the Chester and North Wales branch in 1979. He has gained numerous awards and honours, including a Silver medal and three other awards in The Bookbinding Competition in 1991. In the same year he was elected a Fellow of Designer Bookbinders. In 1992 he was awarded two Bronze medals in the prestigious Prix Paul Bonet. Each year Fellows of DB are selected to create bindings for the short list of books chosen to compete for the Man Booker Prize: Paul has often featured among those selected. In 2006 he bound 'Carry Me Down' by M J Hyland. This was bound in a new style developed by Paul which he calls his 'Tudor' style. Paul will give a slide presentation of bindings in this new style and will then demonstrate how he goes about doing it, with many hints and tips.

All Mastercraft Classes start at 10.30am and finish at 3.00pm with a break for lunch.  
The fee for each class - £6.00 for Society of Bookbinders members, £25.00 for non-members.

Further information on these Mastercraft classes available from:  
Dave Perry, Treasurer S.o.B., 42 West End Avenue, Pinner, Middlesex, HA5 1BJ



## Canadian Bookbinders and Book Artists Guild In-studio Workshops - Winter-Spring 2007

### **Bookbinding I**

Instructor: Rose Newlove

Location: CBBAG Bindery

Duration: 6 Sundays: Jan. 28, Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25, Mar. 4, Hours: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Course fee: \$480 members/ \$540 non-members\*

Materials fee: \$30 payable to the instructor

This course introduces the variety of tools, materials and constructions fundamental to hand bookbinding. The course will start with the making of a simple pamphlet and proceed to the binding of two hard cover books. This class prepares participants to explore bookbinding on their own or continue with more advanced studies.

### **Cloth Binding Restoration**

Instructor: Brian Maloney

Location: CBBAG Bindery

Duration: 5 days: Mon. - Fri. Mar. 12 – 16, Hours: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Course fee: \$400 members/ \$ 460 non-members\*

Materials fee: \$30 payable to the instructor

Prerequisite: Bookbinding I & II or permission of the instructor

This five day workshop introduces the techniques commonly used to repair or restore cloth bound books. The course will discuss various alternative solutions and will cover typical treatments, such as recasing, rebacking, and reattachment of loose plates, sections, spines and boards. Participants should bring several examples of representative problems to work on under direction.

### **Artists' Books Update**

Instructor: Mira Coviensky

Location: CBBAG Bindery

Duration: 1 day: Sunday, Mar. 17, Hours: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Course fee: \$95

Materials fee: \$10 payable to the instructor

Show your artists' books and works-in-progress, get feedback, problem-solve together, and figure out where to go next in your work. Share new techniques and conceptual ideas, new publications and websites on artists' books, and get updated on the artists' books scene and latest resources from Mira's recent travels. This workshop is for all levels of experience in artists' books.

### **Leather Workshop**

Instructor: Betsy Palmer Eldridge

Location: 24 Castle Frank Cres., Toronto

Duration: 2 days: Sat. & Sun., March 17, 18, Hours: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Course fee: \$160 members/ \$220 non-members\*

Materials fee: \$10 payable to the instructor

This two-day workshop will be a comprehensive introduction to the different types of leather and paring techniques used in bookbinding.

### **Printing Basics - Lead Ain't Dead!**

Instructor: Brian Maloney

Location: CBBAG Bindery

Duration: 2 days: Sat. & Sun., Mar. 31, April 1, Hours: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Maximum: 6 students

Course fee: \$160 members/ \$220 non-members\*

Materials fee: \$25 payable to the instructor

A crash course in the simplest elements of letterpress printing, participants will garner a brief history of printing, some basic elements of composition and design, typesetting skills on a small scale, and finally pressmanship by printing some fun postcards in short runs.

### **Paper Engineering**

Instructor: Brian Maloney

Location: CBBAG Bindery

Duration: 3 Saturdays: April 14, 21, 28, Hours: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Course fee: \$240 members/ \$300 non-members

Materials fee: \$25 payable to the instructor

This workshop will explore cams, wheels, gears, levers, string, and elastics to add kinetic elements to a number of moving paper models. These fun constructions will show how you can add motion to your books or create whimsical and playful objects that stand alone.

### **Japanese Stab Bindings**

Instructor: Louise Granahan

Location: CBBAG Bindery

Duration: 1 day: Sunday, Apr. 15, Hours: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Course fee: \$95

Materials fee: \$20 payable to the instructor

This workshop will teach 4 variations on the traditional Japanese Stab Binding. This elegant binding is a wonderful way to bind single sheets of paper. Few tools are needed to continue making this structure at home.

### **Bookbinding I Intensive**

Instructor: Rena Whistance-Smith

Location: Studio, 14520 - 84 Ave NW, Edmonton, Alberta

Duration: 6 days: Mon. - Sat., April 23 – 28, Hours: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Course fee: \$480 members/ \$540 non-members\*

Materials fee: \$40 payable to the instructor

This course introduces the variety of tools, materials and constructions fundamental to hand bookbinding. The course will start with the making of a simple pamphlet and proceed to the binding of two hard cover books. This class prepares participants to explore bookbinding on their own or continue with more advanced studies.

### **Introduction to typesetting and letterpress printing**

Instructor: Margaret Lock

Location: 231 Johnson St., Kingston, Ontario (Accommodation information will be sent after registration)

Duration: 2 days: Sat. & Sun., May 5,6, Hours: 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Maximum: 3 students

Students must register at least four weeks before workshop begins.

Course fee: \$185 members/\$245 non-members\*

Materials fee: \$15 payable to the instructor

Participants will learn basic typographic design concepts, how to set lead type by hand and print on a proof press. Setting type, letter-spacing capitals, registration and printing on handmade paper will be addressed. Participants should bring a 10 to 20 line poem or short piece of prose.

### **Paper Decorating with Bookbinding in Mind**

Instructor: Sigrid Blohm

Location: Japanese Paper Warehouse, 77 Brock Ave. (two blocks west of Dufferin, north of Queen St. W.)

Duration: 1 day: Sunday, May 6, Hours: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Course fee: \$95

Materials fee: \$ 20 payable to the instructor

Using readily available water-based media (including fabric dyes and paints, acrylics and screen-printing inks) on Japanese paper create samples of richly coloured papers suitable for use on covers and as endpapers. Patterning techniques will include direct brushing-on, 'monoprinting' from textured surfaces, fold-dyeing and other shibori techniques. Emphasis will be placed on colour use and layering; the use of "konnyaku" for strengthening paper will also be covered.

### **Bookbinding III Intensive**

Instructor: Dan Mezza

Location: CBBAG Bindery

Duration: 6 days: Mon. - Sat., May 7 - 12 Hours: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.,

Course fee: \$480 members/ \$540 non-members\*

Materials fee: \$30 payable to the instructor, plus cost of leather

Prerequisite: Bookbinding II & Leather Workshop, or permission of the instructor

This course introduces the advanced techniques used for traditional leather covered, fine binding structures. Participants will make two models, both with sewn headbands, attached boards, and covered in half leather. The first model will be sewn on recessed cords with a hollow tube construction; the second model will be sewn on raised cords with a tight back construction.

### **Ebru - Watercolour Marbling**

Instructor: Pam Belshaw

Location: CBBAG Bindery

Duration: 2 days: Sat. & Sun., May 27, 28, Hours: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Course fee: \$160 members/ \$220 non-members

Materials fee: \$30 payable to the instructor

This workshop presents the fundamental techniques of marbling and covers the following topics: a short history of marbling, materials, tools and equipment, patterns and styles and understanding what constitutes good or poor results.

### **The Stitched & Painted Book**

Instructor: Martha Cole

Location: CBBAG Bindery

Duration: 5 days: Wed. - Sun., June 13 – 17, Hours: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Prerequisite: Bookbinding I

Course fee: \$500 members/ \$560 non-members

Materials fee: \$30 payable to the instructor

Using traditional wheat paste techniques in contemporary ways, workshop participants will create a book structure in which both all the painted interior text sheets and the cloth for the cover are created simultaneously. We will then sequence and explore a variety of multi-media options to integrate stitching, collage, text and imagery throughout the book and on the cover. The focus will be on combining stitching/collage/multi-media with paper and fabric to create and sustain a concept through the length of a book.

### **The Girdle book**

Instructor: Renate Mesmer

Location: CBBAG Bindery

Duration: 5 days: Mon. - Fri., June 18 – 22, Hours: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Number of students: 8 - 10

Course fee: \$550 members

Materials fee: included in the course fee

Prerequisite: Bookbinding I, II, III or permission of the instructor

The traditional medieval girdle book has an extended covering of soft leather (doe or deer) that ends with a Turk's head knot. The book is bound in such technique so that the knot could be tucked under a girdle or belt and be swung up for reading. The class will start with a brief introduction into the history and variations of the girdle book. The practical in-class work will include: sewing an endband, preparing and attaching the wooden boards, paring the deer skin for covering, making the Turk's Head knot as a finish on the extended covering, and a pair of simple brass clasps. The participants will get written instructions on how to prepare the textblock they need to bring to the class.

### **Paper Conservation Treatments Intensive**

Instructor: Betsy Palmer Eldridge

Location: 24 Castle Frank Crescent, Toronto

Duration: 5 days: Mon. - Fri., June 25 - 29 Hours: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Prerequisite: Bookbinding III, or permission of the instructor

Course fee: \$ 400 members/ \$460 non-members\*

Materials fee: \$25 payable to the instructor

This five day course covers the basic treatments used to solve the paper problems that binders frequently encounter in printed book materials. The course includes topics such as mould, pressure sensitive tape, minor tears, tide lines, localized staining, cockling, acidity and



discolouration. Washing, drying, and flattening methods will be taught. Participants should bring examples of paper problems (preferably unbound) to work on, under supervision.

### **Bookbinding I Intensive**

Instructor: Dan Mezza

Location: CBBAG Bindery

Duration: 6 days: Mon. - Sat., June 25 – 30, Hours: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Course fee: \$480 members/ \$540 non-members\*

Materials fee: \$30 payable to the instructor

This course introduces the variety of tools, materials and constructions fundamental to hand bookbinding. The course will start with the making of a simple pamphlet and proceed to the binding of two hard cover books. This class prepares participants to explore bookbinding on their own or continue with more advanced studies.

### **Printing Intensive**

Instructors: Crispin and Jan Elsted

Location: Barbarian Press, Mission BC (Accommodation information will be sent after registration)

Duration: 6 days: Mon. - Sat., July 9 – 14, Hours: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Maximum 5 students

Course fee: \$540 members/\$600 non-members\*

Materials fee: \$30 payable to the instructors

This six day intensive workshop will be an introduction to hand composition, letterpress printing & design. It will begin with a brief introduction to type and typographical history, with special attention to the private press. Participants will be guided through design, handsetting, printing and sewing of a 4- or 8 page pamphlet in an edition of a dozen copies, with detailed instruction in all the skills required. Although no prerequisite is required, those who have had previous printing experience will find the course useful, since instruction will be tailored to individual capabilities and needs.

### **Artists' Books Intensive Foundation Class II: A Stack of Overlapping Pages**

Instructor: Mira Coviensky

Location: CBBAG Bindery

Duration: 5 days: Mon. - Fri., July 16 – 20, Hours: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Course fee: \$400 members/ \$460 non-members\*

Materials fee: \$35 payable to the instructor

Prerequisite: Artists' Books Foundation Class I (Alternative Structures for Book Artists) or permission of the instructor.

The codex, the standard book form, is so familiar as a container of information that it's hard to see its other qualities. In this workshop, participants will create artists' books looking at the codex in two new ways: as a stack of overlapping pages and as a sculptural form. Conceptual and technical issues will be addressed through both experimentation and creating finished artists' books.

### **Bookbinding II**

Instructor: Mercedes Cirfi Walton

Location: CBBAG Bindery

Duration: 6 days: Mon. - Sat., Aug. 13 - 18

Hours: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Course fee: \$480 members/ \$540 non-members\*

Materials: fee \$30 payable to instructor

Prerequisite: Bookbinding I or permission of the instructor This course introduces intermediate techniques, such as rounding and backing and sewn endbands, necessary for traditional binding structures. Participants will sew two models, completing one as a German case binding and the other as either a Bradel or split board binding.

Further information and applications form are available from [www.cbbag.ca](http://www.cbbag.ca)

## 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)

**Spring Courses at Paper Dragon Books, Brooklyn, New York, offering both introductory and master bookarts courses.**

### Evening Courses Starting in March

ISLAMIC CODEX Taught by Gavin Dovey - March 1st - May 24th - \$450 - all costs include materials running over 12 Thursday nights students will complete a folding Islamic binding in goatskin, sewing sections with a chain link stitch, sewing chevrons, and paring leather to a professional grade . Early Arabic Design will be demonstrated, and techniques such as tooling in

gold/blind, and leather onlay/inlay, will be employed. For those interested in historical binding and getting more exp. refining bookbinding skills, this has proved extremely useful.

**FINE BINDING** Taught by Gavin Dovey - March 9th -May 30th - \$450, all costs include materials running over 12 Wednesday nights (6-9) This course is geared towards people looking to develop there skills as a fine bookbinder, and complete fine bindings to a consistent and professional level . Books will be sewn gilded, covered in goatskin, and completed with traditional titling and book decoration, in gold leaf. Simply a must for those interested in making a living!!

**BASIC BOOKBINDING** Taught by Gavin Dovey - March 7th - May 21st - \$450 - all costs include materials running over 12 Monday nights(6-9) need a refresher on case binding? Want to case in your books without getting glue on the pages, make a case with neater corners ?? Then this is it , No bookbinder can be in business and not know how to complete case bindings quickly easily, and without blemish . We will also cover non-adhesive binding and some simple enclosures...

**JAPANESE WOODBLOCK PRINTING** Taught by Takuji Hamanaka - March 27th – May 29th - \$450 - all costs include materials Running over 9 Tuesday nights Learn the basic techniques in the Japanese tradition of woodblock printmaking passed on from the earliest Ukiyo-e masters. All aspects of the process will be introduced: proper care and use of the carving tools, preparing and carving the wood, color registration,use of paper, and hand printing using the baren. Limited to six students.

**WEEKEND COURSES HOT TOOLING** Taught by Gavin Dovey - March 17th - 18th - \$275 all costs include materials This previously successful class is a simple intro. In the sometimes fickle world of gold leaf finishing. Students learn on the first day simple procedures in covering goatskin plaquettes with a gold tooled border design . The next day students will learn a simple technique to complete a run-up full gilt spine in calfskin . I found this information useful in my prof. development , and with a good grounding, experimentation and practice are the secrets that will make you competent finisher.

**LEATHER REBACKING** Taught by Sophia Kramer - March 24th - 25th - \$275 (Practice materials should be brought in) Repairing damaged leather books can be a challenging task for bookbinders. Learn rebacking of leather books on a hollow and the tricky tightback in this weekend intensive, which will cover spine cleaning and relining, inner joint repairs, and corner consolidation and repair. We will discuss issues relating to leather, dyes, consolidants, adhesives, and tools for lifting and paring. Come with your questions and books to practice on. Students should bring to class four old leather bindings with loose boards and/ or spines, or cracked joints. The books should have intact sewing and sound leather (no red rot). Remember that these books are intended for practice, and shouldn't have any real value. Prerequisite: previous experience working with leather

**CASE BINDING INTENSIVE** Taught by Gavin Dovey May 5th - 6th - \$275, all costs include materials This intensive weekend course covers the basics of bookbinding in easy to learn steps. Students will learn tricks of the trade and complete single section, flat-back and rounded backed case binding to a professional quality.

## **The Teachers**

**GAVIN DOVEY** started bookbinding in `98 under the guidance of designer bookbinder, and fellow of Designer Bookbinder UK Mark Cockram. He studied at the London College of Printing, part of the London Institute, for 3 years. Whilst at school, Gavin worked as a bookbinder at the Wyvern Bindery until 2002, learning a great deal about the practicalities of running a succesfull bindery, under the guidance of proprietor Mark Wynstanley. Since then he has worked in a number of binderies across the UK, in all types of capacities, and was lucky enough most recently to work alongside designer binder and fellow of DB Paul C.Delrue. Today Gavin,founder of Paper Dragon Books in NYC, works as a bookbinder, and continues to promote the use and teaching of the best design and techniques Modern and Historical Bookbinding has to offer. He teaches courses in historical binding, modern design binding, forwarding, and finishing at Paper Dragon Books in New York City and other places around the United States.



SOPHIA KRAMER is a bookbinder, printmaker, and conservator. She holds a BFA from Pratt Institute in Printmaking and Book Arts and an MA from Camberwell College of Arts in Book Conservation. She has taught workshops on the rebacking of books at Shepherds Bookbinders in London, where she worked for four years as a book conservator. She currently is a book conservator at Cornell University in Ithaca, NY.

TAKUJI HAMANAKA is a teacher and freelance printer. He was an apprentice at the Adachi Woodblock Printing Studio in Tokyo, Japan. He learned printing methods by reproducing prints of old Japanese masters such as Hokusai, Hiroshige, Utamaro and others. He has worked at the Water Print Studio in Tokyo and at the Watanabe Studio in Brooklyn. Organizations he taught includes Manhattan Graphic Center, Connecticut Graphic Arts Center, The ink shop printmaking and Pyramid Atlantic. [www.takujihamanaka.com](http://www.takujihamanaka.com)

Further details from: [info@paperdragonbooks.com](mailto:info@paperdragonbooks.com)

## **Garage Annex School for Book Arts Easthampton, MA, USA**

### **2007 Programme**

Apr 28 - Apr 29 **Looking at the Details Using Historical Techniques in Modern Bookwork**  
Pamela Spitzmueller  
May 5 - May 6 **Miniature Bookbindings** James Reid-Cunningham  
Jun 2 - Jun 3 **The Book Restructured—Wire Edge Binding** Daniel E. Kelm  
Jun 25 - Jun 29 **Letterpress Printing & Composition** Art Larson  
Jun 30 - Jun 30 **Adhesives** Daniel E. Kelm  
Jul 21 - Jul 22 **Concertina Spine Sewn on Tapes** Daniel E. Kelm  
Jul 26 - Jul 27 **The History of the Book for Book Artists** Martin Antonetti  
Aug 4 - Aug 5 **Leather Onlay & Inlay** Daniel E. Kelm  
Sep 15 - Sep 16 **Simplified Binding** Laura Wait  
Sep 29 - Sep 30 **The Clamshell Box for Limited Editions and Rare Book Storage** Linda Lembke  
Oct 20 - Oct 21 **Stationery Departures** Hedi Kyle  
Nov 3 - Nov 4 **On the Surface: Surface-Altering Techniques for Expressive Effect** Donald Glaister  
Nov 9 - Nov 11 **Material Image: The Paper Tells It All** Suzanne Moore  
Dec 1 - Dec 2 - **Dyed Limp Vellum** Mark Tomlinson

2007 - Workshop Schedule - Please visit the Garage Annex web site at [www.GarageAnnexSchool.com](http://www.GarageAnnexSchool.com) for full workshops descriptions, instructor bios, and many images.

Further information on the above workshops is available from:

Greta D. Sibley  
One Cottage Street #5  
Easthampton, MA 01027  
Tel: 413-529-0070  
Fax: 413-529-0071  
e-mail: [greta@garageannexschool.com](mailto:greta@garageannexschool.com)

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

### **Workshops 2007 – 1st Saturday of Every Month plus a special one-off weekend of bookbinding in Dartington in September**

#### **Saturday 7 April 2007 - Fine Binding Techniques With Royston Haward**

This ESSENTIAL course is for everybody both novice and experienced alike. You will learn the fundamentals in order to produce a beautifully bound leather book. Royston is exceptionally well matched to teaching traditional techniques being an apprenticed trained bookbinder with many years of experience. You will learn what you need in order to pare your leather, how to sharpen your tools if necessary and the best methodology. This course is a flexible one and the content is dependant on the attendee's interests and experiences in bookbinding.

#### **Saturday 5 May 2007 - Paper Repair in the Conservation of Books with Donata Santorini**

This course is an extremely hands on course in which all participants will learn how to repair torn pages in books in situ, how to repair holes in pages and how to do in fills. Donata is a very enthusiastic user of the leaf caster. Participants will see a slide show demonstrating it's use at Warwickshire Record office and will get to try leaf casting using a portable vacuum table and a wet and dry vacuum cleaner. This course is a MUST DO for beginner and experienced alike as it incorporates much of what is necessary to know in the effective repair of paper. It is also great fun and those that attended last year became very involved in their individual projects.

#### **Saturday 2 June 2007 - Gold Finishing With Steve Orriss**

This one day course will throw you straight into the deep end! You will immediately be using real gold leaf on real leather. You will practice using rolls and fillets to create lined and patterned designs on pieces of calf and goat. You will also have a chance to practice using a type holder to create titles on false book backs. This is a fun day with the emphasis on enjoyment and learning. You will be given a list of future reading and resources in the furtherance of the craft of gold finishing and although after a day of gold finishing you will not leave a master of this particular craft, you will go away with a good idea of how to go about gold finishing and with all the necessary knowledge to take your new found skill further. Please be aware that it is necessary to purchase gold leaf for this event, which you can do on the day at the bindery if you wish. The overwhelming advice from experienced gold finishers is practice so if you have attended courses before then do attend another for the practice.

#### **Saturday 7 July 2007 - Bookbinding with Royston Haward**

Grab the chance to experience a workshop with a guru of the bookbinding world. You will pick up tips and subtleties of the craft, which would otherwise pass you by. You will be working with leather and will be required to bring a book along. Please email [marysa@otterbookbinding.com](mailto:marysa@otterbookbinding.com) for details of what would be needed. Royston is very keen to have flexibility during this day to match the course to the participants so please write, express your interest and your experience and what your particular wont is and Royston will endeavour to meet the needs of those that attend.

#### **Saturday 4 August 2007 - Book Conservation Surgery With Donata Santorini**

Innovative book conservation surgery with an emphasis on board attachment of quarter leather books from the turn of the 19th Century to the beginning of the 20th century but with a discussion on different styles. Participants should bring a variety of small books to work on which need board attachments. These techniques can be applied to bigger books as well as smaller ones.

#### **Saturday AND Sunday 1st and 2nd September 2007 - 10am-4pm WEEKEND OF BOOKBINDING With Mary Bartlett and Marysa de Veer at Dartington Hall, Devon 12 maximum**

Bring a book to bind, make a book from Scratch or learn to bind. Whether you are an experienced bookbinder or a novice, there is something for everyone in beautiful surroundings. You will have guidance from expert bookbinders that will cater to all levels. Whether you wish to bring your book and work in a guided environment or you simply want to immerse yourself in a weekend of bookbinding escapism this is the course for you. Please write to [marysa@otterbookbinding.com](mailto:marysa@otterbookbinding.com) and express your interest in attending and let us know your area of interest. This course will be very much defined by what our students would like to do. There is space and two teachers so we

can accommodate a wide range. Please note the weekend does not include accommodation. A list of bed and breakfasts will be provided on request.

### **Saturday 6 October 2007 - Box Making With Royston Haward**

This one day workshop is devoted to The Box. Drop Back box making is a skill which once mastered becomes easy. With the expert tuition of Royston Haward you will learn to become proficient in box making. Royston is an enthusiast in the double walled drop back box because of its strength and durability.

### **Saturday 3 November 2007 Gold Finishing With Steve Orriss**

This one day course will throw you straight into the deep end! You will immediately be using real gold leaf on real leather. You will practice using rolls and fillets to create lined and patterned designs on pieces of calf and goat. You will also have a chance to practice using a type holder to create titles on false book backs. This is a fun day with the emphasis on enjoyment and learning. You will be given a list of future reading and resources in the furtherance of the craft of gold finishing and although after a day of gold finishing you will not leave a master of this particular craft, you will go away with a good idea of how to go about gold finishing and with all the necessary knowledge to take your new found skill further. Please be aware that it is necessary to purchase gold leaf for this event, which you can do on the day at the bindery if you wish. The overwhelming advice from experienced gold finishers is practice so if you have attended courses before then do attend another for the practice.

### **Saturday 1 December 2007 - Bind a Book With Marysa de Veer**

Bring a book to bind or restore. This day is aimed at those wishing to progress their knowledge and I will gear the course around the abilities and interests of the attendees. Please write to [marysa@otterbookbinding.com](mailto:marysa@otterbookbinding.com) and let me know your particular interest.

### **Saturday 5 January 2008 - Begin a Book With Marysa de Veer**

Bring a new book or an old book to transform. You will learn how to dismantle the book, split it into its individual sections and re-sew it. I intend to take this course at a slightly slower pace in order to attend to sewing, making made endpapers, rounding and backing, hand sewn silk headbands and cutting the boards. Do NOT expect to leave this course with a finished book. This day is a preliminary for the February course, which will be with Royston and will involve paring the leather and covering the book

### **Saturday 2nd February 2008 - Forward a Book With Royston Haward**

In this course you will need to bring an already hand-sewn, rounded and backed book with 'made' endpapers and hand sewn headbands. You will be lacing in the cords or tapes, paring the leather for covering and then covering it. You will need to bring leather for covering, a spokeshave and a paring knife. For further details on where to obtain tools and materials please email [marysa@otterbookbinding.com](mailto:marysa@otterbookbinding.com) If you do not have leather, you can purchase a small piece on the day.

**VISITS** There are other visits planned. To keep up to date please check the website [www.otterbookbinding.com](http://www.otterbookbinding.com) or write to [marysa@otterbookbinding.com](mailto:marysa@otterbookbinding.com) and ask to be put on our mailing list.

### **Tuesday March 13 2007 - Cost £15.00 - SURREY HISTORY CENTRE, WOKING. 2pm for a one and half hour visit.**

You will be taken on a guided tour of the centre which contains Surrey county archives. Sally Jenkinson will show you some of the more historically interesting books housed in the collection and talk about the conservation considerations that are taken into account in the maintenance of such a large collection of historically important documents and books. You will also have a chance to visit the conservation department where the head conservator, Jeff Dowse will show you around the studio and you will be amazed at the size of the light box used for the repair of very large maps and documents. Parking is limited so if you are driving please let me know on [marysa@otterbookbinding.com](mailto:marysa@otterbookbinding.com) so that we can co-ordinate cars to share passengers.



**Wednesday 6 June 2007 - Cost £FREE - THE OTTER BINDERY – OPEN AFTERNOON**

.[www.otterbookbinding.com](http://www.otterbookbinding.com) 4.30pm for one hour and a half hours

Marysa is an experienced bookbinder and book conservator as well a practising artist. Marysa will put some examples of work out on display and will be happy to answer questions on all aspects of the craft. Wednesday

**August 8th 2007 - Cost £15.00 - BRITISH LIBRARY, EUSTON 2pm for one and half hour visit**

Please allow extra time in case this tour goes over the time limit. You will have a chance to go behind the scenes and enjoy rarely viewed documents and books undergoing treatment in the conservation studio at the British Library.

**Wednesday September 26 2007 - Cost £15.00 - GUILDHALL LIBRARY 2pm for one and a half hour visit – no more than 8 visitors**

A visit to Guildhall Library conservation will consist of talks by the Manuscript, Printed books and Prints & Maps conservators with a chance to see what they are working on at the time. There will also be an opportunity to see various "interesting" bindings that are in the collections.

**Saturday October 13 2007 - Cost £15.00 - TREVOR LLOYD [www.trevorlloyd.co.uk/](http://www.trevorlloyd.co.uk/) 2pm for a 2 hour visit**

Trevor Lloyd is an experienced bookbinder and highly skilled gold finisher. His bookbinding shop is right in the heart of historic Ludlow. Trevor will have a selection of books on display and will be happy to talk to you about all aspects of gold finishing and restoration.

**Wednesday December 12 2007 - Cost £FREE - THE OTTER BINDERY – OPEN AFTERNOON 4.30pm for a one and a half hours**

Marysa is an experienced bookbinder and book conservator as well a practising artist. You will see photographs of work undertaken as well as work currently in progress. This is also a Christmas shopping opportunity with various hand bound gifts on display.

To download an order form for one of these courses please go to [www.otterbookbinding.com](http://www.otterbookbinding.com) and click 'Learn to Bind' \*please also check website for details of organised visits to binderies and conservation studios

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.otterbookbinding.com](http://www.otterbookbinding.com) e-mail [marysa@otterbookbinding.com](mailto:marysa@otterbookbinding.com)

**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  
Tel: +44 (0) 113 297 6438, e-mail [m.mcgregor@lct.ac.uk](mailto:m.mcgregor@lct.ac.uk) or

Student Services: tel +44 (0) 113 297 6481.

## 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 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  
(The London Institute becomes the "University of the Arts,London" in May 2004)

### **Oxford Brookes University - Evening Classes**

These non-vocational classes provide 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.

For further information, please contact:  
Ian Ross - Tutor and Organiser, Bookbinding Evening Classes  
Oxford Brookes University, School of Arts & Humanities, OXFORD OX3 0BP

Tel: +44 (0) 1865 793083 or e-mail : [binding@ianaross.f2s.com](mailto:binding@ianaross.f2s.com)

### **American Academy of Bookbinding**

Founded in 1993, the American Academy of Bookbinding program brings serious professionals and amateur bookbinders together to improve their skills and benefit from top-level instruction without having to study abroad. The academy holds intensive courses in the fine art of leather binding and related subjects. Join the American Academy of Bookbinding in 2007 with two campuses in Ann Arbor, Michigan and Telluride, Colorado for top level instruction. On offer are intensive courses for beginner to advance students in conservation, fine leather binding and related subjects. Degree programs are also available. For more information visit [www.ahhaa.org](http://www.ahhaa.org) or contact AAB coordinator, Margaret Cruzzavala on (970) 728-3886.

#### **2007 Course Offerings - Ann Arbor, Michigan Campus**

March 12 March 16 - Book Conservation: Restoration of Cloth & Leather Binding with Don Etherington

March 19 - 30 - Book Conservation: Forwarding & Covering of Textblocks with Don Etherington

September 17 21 - Alternative Decorative Techniques with Monique Lallier

September 24 October 5 - Intermediate French Technique Binding with Monique Lallier

October 8 19 - Book Conservation: Treatment of Textblocks & Sewing with Don Etherington

#### **2007 Course Offerings - Telluride, Colorado Campus**

April 16 27 - Beginning Bookbinding with Monique Lallier

April 30 May 10 - Book Conservation: Treatment of Textblocks & Sewing with Don Etherington

May 14 25 - Book Conservation: Forwarding & Covering of Textblocks with Don Etherington

May 28 June 1 - Alternative Decorative Techniques with Monique Lallier

June 4 - 15 - Advanced French Technique Binding with Monique Lallier



# Don't Tell Me I'm A Bookbinder

by Nigel Dury

Somebody told me that an evening talk on bookbinding was advertised at a nearby village hall, by coincidence just a couple of weeks before my own initiation with a WI audience. It struck me that valuable pointers to technique could be had, so I booked a seat. As the speaker was not in the SoB register, I also prepared for some subtle recruitment.

The lady unpacking books when I arrived had the demeanour of someone used to giving rather than taking instruction, too busy to discuss the benefits of SoB membership. Besides, I sensed from her nervous behaviour that revealing myself as a fellow binder might disconcert her. How wise that decision was. If kept...

The hall filled with ladies, their easy familiarity and disjointed chatter revealing them all as village-family. Fleeting glances in my direction noted the stranger in their midst, and, I was sorry to note, the only male - until one such arrived with his wife who instructed him sternly to sit. Determined to merge into the background I smiled politely when greeted and took a seat at the back, beginning to think that on the whole, I would rather be in Philadelphia.

*"I think you know our speaker tonight, most of our children have attended her school over the years. Now retired she has taught herself to bind books: please welcome...."*

*"Does anyone here know anything about bookbinding?"*

the speaker immediately enquired, her gimlet eye piercing me for an aeon of agonized indecision: should I admit my slight grasp of the noble craft and possibly embarrass the speaker, or keep quiet? I averted my gaze and said nothing amid general exclamations of

*"No, but I've always been absolutely fascinated by books".*

The speaker began a presentation rather in the middle of a logical sequence, her clearly unrehearsed performance necessitating several realisations of: *"Ah, I'd better show you how to do that bit first..."* and soon she experienced some of those irritating problems which only manifest themselves in front of an audience:

*"Now where did I put the mull: can anyone see it? What is it? Well, it looks a bit like coarse muslin"*

*"No I don't know why it's called mull"... to be followed later by*

*"Oh dear, the piece of buckram I cut earlier is actually too small to case this book, but I didn't bring any spare"...*

*"What? No I'm afraid I don't know why it's called buckram, it's just book cloth"*

Several paperbacks were neatly cased and labelled in a colourful variety of materials, the speaker ably proving that she could teach herself technique, but one puzzling difficulty had somehow been imposed: PVA was used straight out of the tub. The speaker explained how quick one had to be in gluing the cover or board, and how accurately the two pieces positioned as the glue was utterly unforgiving. That's odd. Had she not encountered paste or mixture? Again I agonized: Should I offer her advice and appear the (always unpopular) smart-arse or keep quiet and let her suffer? I will try and let her know privately I decided.

Instead of joining the chattering throng at the counter during the tea break, I approached our speaker in some trepidation. She was busy sorting out her workplace. I didn't think she really wanted any

advice just then, but short of finding out her address and writing later (anonymously?) I should tell her now and save her much future anguish.

*"Lovely bindings!"*

*"Umm"*

*"jolly hard work using PVA though"*

*"Umm"*

*"Have you ever tried other adhesives?"*

*"No"*

*"Not even traditional paste?"*

*"No"*

Oh well, here goes. Into the deep end:

*"Do you know, a little starch paste added to the PVA slows the tack and allows some lateral adjustment"*

*"Oh does it. And how would you know that?"*

Confession time. My explanation of sensitivity to her position appeared not to mitigate entirely my earlier mute deception, but my grilling was brief: it was time for the speaker to start the second half.

*"I have been informed by a very kind gentleman that mixing starch paste with the PVA makes things easier"*

Her announcement flashed down a laser-gaze shrivelling me across the hall, a dozen other lasers ensuring a crisped finish: there was no mistaking the target. For the remaining time every choice of approach was elaborately checked with 'the very kind gentleman,' her answer to every question referred for my comment until mercifully the session closed. As I looked around I realised Philadelphia was not far enough, the expressions on the ladies' faces said it all: nobody likes a smart-arse. Particularly a visitor, a male visitor.

The single local gentleman seemed anxious to express male solidarity when he approached poised to put a question, but was tartly recalled by his wife before uttering a sound. The village-family gathered around the speaker with their many questions and congratulations. Well deserved praise. Undaunted, I sought to realize my secondary objective.

When most of the audience had departed, I offered the speaker a current Newsletter, explaining it contained all sorts of helpful advice and an application form for SoB membership, should she be interested.

*"I am retired and do not belong to societies"* came her lofty retort, laser-gaze even more searing at short range. Goodnight

*Reproduced by kind permission, from an article that appeared in the Society of Bookbinders Newsletter, Autumn 2006*

**Nigel Jury** - After engineering training in RN, he spent entire working life in large industrial companies persuading disinterested colleagues to adopt new methods generally based on computer systems. Having witnessed the birth of successive new technologies, he is old enough also to have seen their demise, and the unforeseen problems arising from serial obsolescence. We may read books printed 500 years ago, but cannot read archives taped in 1980. Technology has long since overtaken him, and now retired he eschews the incessant intercommunication and impatience of the working place to enjoy bookbinding for friends, and helping people fend off aggressive bureaucracy.

# Dates for your Diary

**29<sup>th</sup> April 2007**

**\*Bookbinders Fair Belgium**

at Municipal Halls, Sint Niklaas (near Antwerp)

Further details are available from the organisers Web Site @ [www.boekbindbeurs.nl](http://www.boekbindbeurs.nl)

**9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> August 2007**

**\* The Society of Bookbinders' sixteenth biennial Education & Training Conference  
University of York, UK**

List of Presenters

Julie Biggs (USA)

James Brockman

Paul Delrue

Mirjam Foot

Edwin Heim (Switzerland)

Robert Holroyd

Derek Hood

Paul Johnson

Peter Jones

Hedi Kyle (USA)

Trevor Lloyd

Douglas Mitchell

David Pearson

Clare Prince

Eleanore Ramsey (USA)

Lori Sauer

Alain Taral & Sün Evrard (France)

Michael Wilcox (Canada)

Bleaching The treatment of iron gall inks

Forwarding techniques including paring & covering

'My Tudor style'

'Skilled hands & inventive heads': binders at work

Bindings in acrylglass, polycarbonate & acetate

Edge gilding

'Methods of Trade & Tabletop': inlays and onlays

Book arts for schools

Book structure: a personal exploration

Unlimited Structures for Artists' Books

Finishing an Eighteenth Century spine

Endbands within a conservation context

The interest of 'ordinary' bindings

Japanese paper: technique & variations

Making a box with a magnetic clasp

Stub sewing

Wooden bindings

Making and using one's own finishing tools and blocks

Further details are available from the SoB Web Site @ [www.societyofbookbinders.com](http://www.societyofbookbinders.com)

**18<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> October 2007**

**\*The Guild of Bookworkers Standards of Excellence Seminar, Dallas, Texas**

Further details will be available soon from their web site at: [palimpsest.stanford.edu/byorg/gbw](http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/byorg/gbw)

**3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> November 2007**

**\*UK Fine Press Book Fair**

Saturday 11.00 – 18.00

Sunday 10.00 – 17.00

Oxford Brookes University, Gipsy Lane, Oxford, UK

Specialist fair for collectors of private and fine press books; includes exhibitors from the Fine Press Book Association, plus binders, paper makers, suppliers, etc.

