



MINIATURE BOOK SOCIETY

June 2020 Newsletter

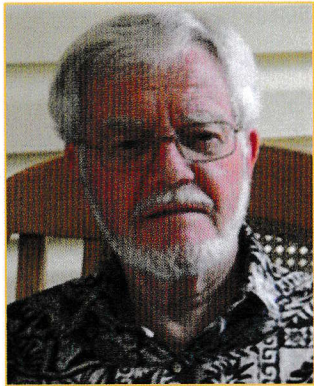
The Book of Shadows



By Barbara Raheb ca 1984

From the collection of MBS member Karen Nyman.

See "[3 Questions for...](#)" inside for story and more photos.



From the President

Greetings! I am pleased to report the MBS is still working, even though we won't have a Conclave this year. Usually about a quarter of the membership attends the Conclave and learns the latest news first; the remaining members learn the news a little later by way of the Newsletter. Well, this year we will all learn the news from the Newsletter.

And there will be news, beginning with the results of this year's election - the Nominating Committee has produced a slate of candidates for you to vote on, and the ballot is included with this Newsletter.

The Awards Committee is also at work selecting winners for this year's Anderson-Yarnell Award for significant contributions to the MBS, and for the Norman W. Forgue Award for outstanding contributions to the world of miniature books. The Glasgow Cup will also be awarded. I'm sorry we won't be able to make the awards in person, but they will be given!

The annual Miniature Book Competition is also underway as usual. This year it is in the capable hands of Rob Fleck. The entries are in, and the judges are making their decisions even as we speak. Of course, we cannot have the usual Exhibition of entries without a Conclave, but we will retain the books until we do have a Conclave in 2021, when this year's entries will be combined with next year's entries for a bigger and better Exhibition. And although there won't be an Exhibition this year, you will receive a Catalog.

By now you also most likely know that our intrepid new VP Ron Wood is organizing a virtual Book Fair. Instead of a

single Sunday it will be in effect for the month of August, and will be conducted online. See details elsewhere.

Meanwhile, let's all keep making, collecting, and reading miniature books!

Regards,

Tony Firman
MBS President
828-279-0737



MBS on Facebook

When was the last time you visited our Facebook page? Whether you are a social media maven...or allergic to all the "noise," the MBS page is reason enough to venture a visit. News, photos, and member stories are added almost every day. *Check it out!*

VOTE!

This mailing includes a ballot. **Please use it!**
Votes are due 31 July.

Classifieds

Help Wanted

Coming in Spring, 2021, we will have an opening for the post of MBS Newsletter Editor. It's your turn!

Contact Donna Knoell to discuss. There is no pay, but the benefits are limitless. Training and support provided.

For Sale

LIVRES D'HEURES

Color facsimile of an illuminated book of hours held in the Vatican Apostolic Library. Edition of 1000, Zurich: Editions d'Art Ebory, 1964. Gold stamped leather boards, hand marbled endpapers, all edges gilt. 3-3/4 x 2-7/8 inches. Recessed in a tan velour box w/pull ribbon. Includes French text Commentary by chief conservator of Ancient Manuscripts, Bibliotheque Nationale. \$350 + p/h. Contact Caroline Brandt

A Miniature Book Romance

Caroline Y Brandt

Sometime in 2004, after attending a meeting at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, I stumbled upon an exhibition titled “Landscape Miniatures: The Finger Paintings of Mary Ann Brandt.” As a lover of anything miniature and a lifelong collector of miniature books, I was intrigued. I had never published a miniature book, but after viewing her work I knew I wanted to produce one about this very talented artist and her amazingly beautiful tiny paintings.

However, life intruded, time passed, and I almost forgot my publishing ambitions. Then in 2007 I read in the paper that Mary Ann Brandt had died. I had never met her, although we had both sung for many years with the Richmond Symphony chorus. I regretted that I’d procrastinated on my publishing plans, and I felt her death put an end to them.

But fate smiled on me when I met Dave Clinger, a printer. He had worked with Mary Ann’s

widower, Paul Brandt, at Reynolds Metals, and he introduced us in late 2007. I told Paul of my miniature book hobby and how seeing his late wife’s work had fueled my ambition to produce a tiny book that would include color illustrations of her work. He was very excited about my plan and offered to write a foreword – very heartening news!

Dave also introduced me to Eileen Mott, a fine arts consultant in Richmond, Virginia. She agreed to write the text to include some background on the artist and her life. Dave agreed to print it



letterpress and he arranged for the Dietz Press, an old and very reputable company in Richmond, to print the color illustrations in their original sizes. And my longtime friend, the very talented book binder John Field of Monterey, Virginia, did the covers. So the book came together and we published it in 2008 under my Cyclone Press imprint. It soon became a sellout.

Paul was a very attractive and interesting man. A native of Ames, Iowa, he was an aeronautical engineer, and during World War II had served in the Navy on an aircraft carrier in the Pacific. A man of many interests and talents, he was a skilled craftsman who built not only airplanes, but also 14 harpsichords, and in his backyard a 38-foot aluminum ketch that he sailed for a number of years on the Chesapeake Bay. He was also a poet, philosopher, and musician with a vast knowledge of classical music. A devoted father of 3, Dave was also a beloved friend to many for his gentleness, kindness, and gift for listening. I was smitten!

Our friendship grew rapidly and quickly became love. Despite our advanced ages (well into our eighties), we married on May 22, 2010. But Paul was suffering from cancer and our marriage was short-lived. He left us on June 30 of that year.

I am eternally thankful for our time together and for my love of miniature books, which brought us together.



Photo Credits

Cover Photos + “3 Questions...”
Courtesy of Karen Nyman

“Almanacs and Calendars”
Courtesy of Nina Mazzo

“Miniature Tea Party”
Courtesy of Jocelyn Stoodly

Competition on Bookbinding of Tiny Books*

Courtesy of Yaroslav Kostyuk
(who served as a juror for the competition)

*See related story elsewhere in this issue.

The Student Competition for Miniature Book Binding at the Moscow Publishing - Polygraphist College of the Name of Ivan Fedorov*

Submitted by MBS member Yaroslav Kostyuk (Moscow)

The college—known as MPCC—was organized in 1929 as the “Moscow polygraphist technical school.” This competition was opened to international students in 2008; in 2020 it attracted students from Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan. The jury was chaired by Tatyana Otroshchenko, head of the art binding group of “First Model Printing House.”

The First Place award for *Best Miniature Book* was made to Kamila Hasanova (Moscow) for the A. Blok book “**Diary: Narrative.**” (See Photo 1) It is part of a series commemorating the 140th anniversary of the death of Alexander Blok (1880-1921), a Russian poet, writer, publicist, playwright, translator, literary critic. He was a leading light of Russian literature of the 20th century, one of the best representatives of Russian symbolism. The prize-winning

entry includes the first part of the diary, which the poet began to write in 1902. The book has black leather binding and four ornamental metal corner inserts. In the center is an oval insert with a photo portrait of the poet, framed by a metal liner surrounded by flowers and artificial blue stones. The book is presented in a black leather box with a cover embossed

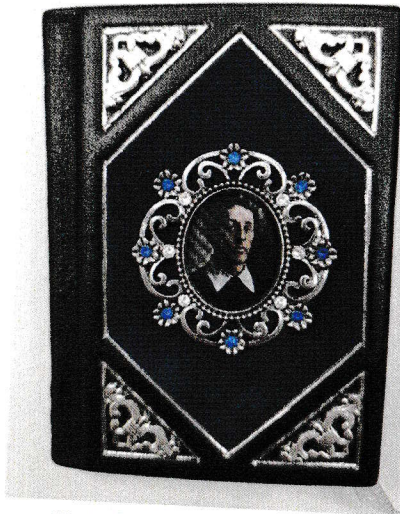


Photo 1

with silver. The edition is 20 copies, size 60x84 mm, 112 pages, black and white illustrations. (Photo 1)

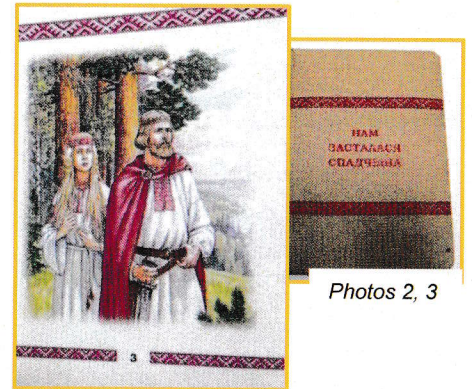
Second Place was awarded to Anna Pashina (Minsk) for “**Our Heritage**” (Photos 2, 3)

Isaac Asimov’s “**Nightfall**” was a popular subject:

First Place for *Best Polygraphic Execution* was awarded to Margarita Guseva (Moscow) for Isaac Asimov’s “**Nightfall.**” (Photo 4)

And Ekaterina Shumilova (Moscow) won First Place in the *Best Decorating* category for the same title. (Photo 5)

First Place for *Originality* was awarded to Olga Churikova (Moscow) for 2-volume “**Claude Monet, Life and Work.**” (Photo 6)



Photos 2, 3

Photo 4

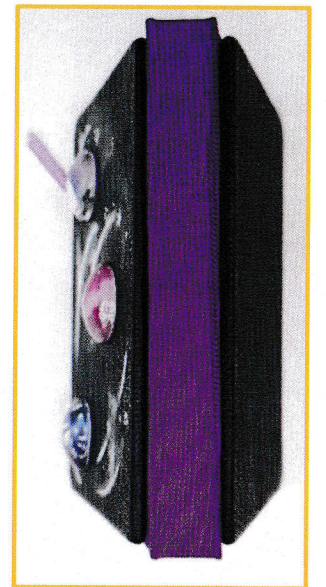


Photo 5, (right); Photo 6 (left)



Thoughts on Almanacs and Calendars

Shared by Nina Mazzo

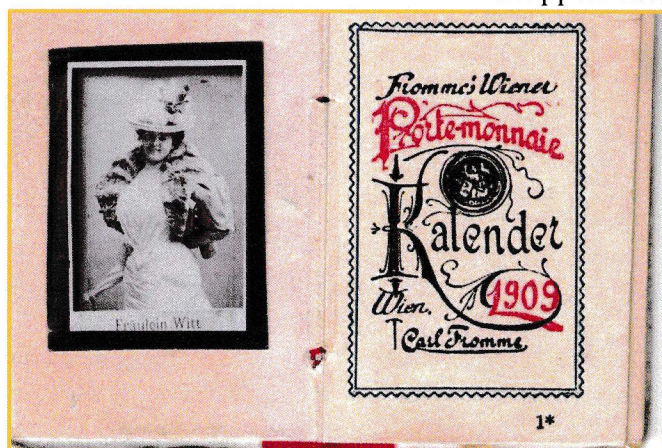
I am intrigued with almanacs and calendars. They often hold a story within their thin pages. Recently I bought a German almanac – **“Fromme’s Wiener Porte-monnaie Kalender 1909.”**

Inside the front cover was pasted a photo of (I assume) the owner, Fraulein Witt. She was dressed in a lovely period dress, fur stole, and what I would call a statement hat! The almanac is in great condition considering she obviously used it as there are several notes and dates marked in ink.



These days, by contrast, my smart phone is my almanac but each day there are additions and deletions, but as the year progresses those notes and special occasions disappear into the cloud. No

one will one day hold my smart phone and chuckle at the selfies or funky notes placed there – hmmm – perhaps that is for the best.



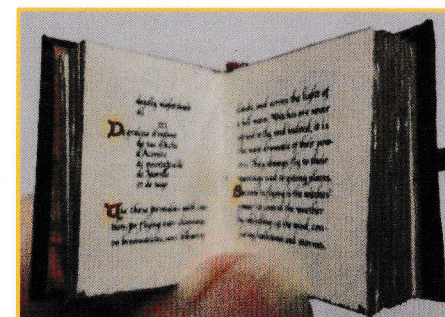
Three Questions for... Karen Nyman

Karen Nyman of Carlsbad, California, has been a member of MBS since 2005. In that time, she has held the posts of Treasurer, Website Coordinator, Conclave Host (twice! In 2008 in San Diego and 2012 in Asheville), and Conclave Silent Auction coordinator. She received the Norman Forge Award in 2010 and the Glasgow Cup Award in 2012. She is the owner of the online store Karen Nyman Miniature Books.

Q: Karen, how did you come to start a business selling miniature books? Were you a collector? And how has the COVID pandemic affected your business - if at all?

I have always loved and collected books and had a library in my house. I bought my first miniature book in 2005, was completely entranced by it, and began buying all I could find locally here in San Diego. I met Bob Massmann at my first Conclave in July of that year

and that changed everything. He had a table at the Book Fair and sold me several books. When he mentioned he was selling his collection of 10,000+, I asked if I could visit him in Connecticut. He invited me and I flew to his home in October of 2005 and bought about 200 books! When I got home, I couldn't stop thinking about the ones I didn't buy!



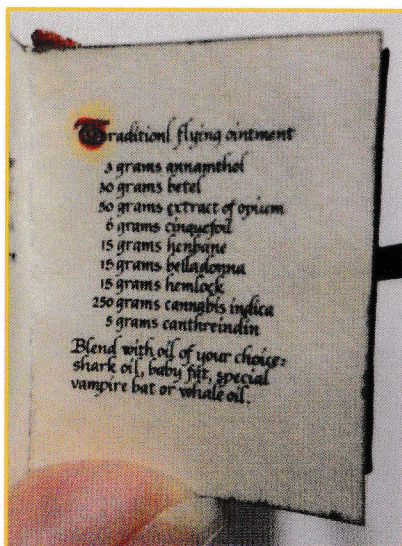
“...Use these formulas with caution; for flying over chimneys on broomsticks, over billowing clouds, across the light of a full moon...”

At the time, I owned a store and we sold books so Bob agreed to mail me books by the boxful and I kept some for my new collection and sold

the others in my shop. Six months later, I issued my first catalog and the rest is history. I sold my store in 2010 and now miniature books are my only business. To date, I have issued 85 catalogs and sold more than 15,000 books. The COVID-19 pandemic has not hurt my business at all. I am selling more books than ever.

Q2: What is the most unusual book you have owned or sold? Is it hard to sell - are you sometimes tempted to keep your collection?

At the moment, I own about 1,400 books. There are about 150 that I consider “my collection,” such as my Thumb Bibles and other antiquarian marvels. I tend to keep beautifully printed and bound books such as French children’s books and English almanacs. But almost every one of my catalogs offers one or two really special items from my own collection. There are many modern publishers I admire (such as Poole Press, Catharijne Press, Hillside Press, Dawson’s, Barbara J. Raheb) but they are all offered on my website. Quality is everything to me whether the book is old or not.



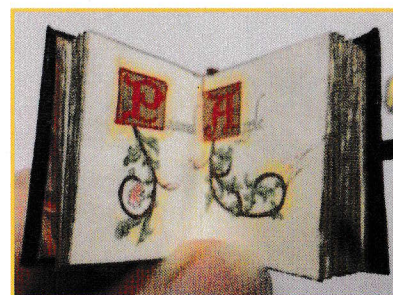
One of the most beautiful books I have was made by Barbara Raheb in 1984 “**The Book of Shadows.**” My copy is #5 and I believe she only made a few. It is bound in black leather and has a gilt red leather spine label. There are 72 gorgeous pages, a red ribbon page marker and marbled endpapers. The calligraphy text (photographically reduced) and hand-painted illustrations throughout are by Barbara. The capital letters and a few of the illustrations are illuminated in gold. It is a book of spells, rituals, and recipes. This is one of Barbara’s larger books – at 1-3/8” tall!

See cover and next page



Q3: Do you read any/many of the books in your collection? What are you reading now?

I try to read all of the ones with legible type and in English. The most recent miniature I read is “**The Great Fire of London**” by Samuel Pepys and published by Poole Press. A beautiful and important book by one of my favorite modern publishers. I just sold it so decided to re-read it before mailing it to my client!



News of MBS and the Global Pandemic

Jere and Kathleen Wilson reported that... In January, my wife Kathleen and I finally committed to placing many of our best miniature books in a display for a month at our local library, the Terryville Public Library in Plymouth, Connecticut.

Having retired in 2018, we finally had the time to design a display of our best and/or representative miniature books. The display was scheduled for March.

While Kathleen and I are by no means miniature book authorities, we felt our collection of 300+ had sufficient depth and quality to present a thorough overview of the state of the historical and current miniature book world.

We laid out the four-level display by giving each level a different theme, i.e., 1) Representative Examples of Old and Modern Miniature Books, 2) Quality Examples of Miniature Book Types, 3) “Artistic” Miniature Books,

and 4) Miniature Book Society & Conclaves.

We also planned an in-person presentation of the display, with significantly more detail than we could provide in the display. This was planned for the end of March, just before removing our treasures.

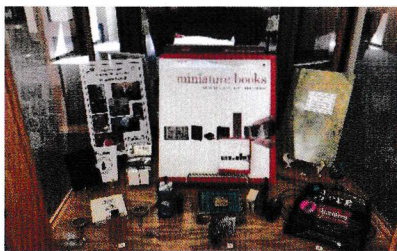
And then the pandemic happened

On March 16, Connecticut declared its state of emergency and called for a lockdown of undetermined length for all businesses, and local and state government services, including our public library.

On May 20, Connecticut began the first phase of its re-opening. However, it appears that it will be at least June 20 before public libraries will be allowed to open by appointment, and probably July 20 before they can open in general.

We trust our collection is in good hands, and we hope to give our presentation. However, only time and this pandemic will tell.

We'll give you an update in the next month or two, including more details on some of the books, presses, and authors exhibited. Meanwhile, does anyone have any miniature books for sale about prior pandemics?!



Larry Siedman is a pediatrician in Virginia. He has been working overtime making live presentations on Facebook. The sessions cover a range of topics, from the importance of masks to simple coping skills. Find Larry Facebook @ *Nova Pediatrics and Young Adult Medicine*.

Tell us about "your" quarantine. Please share your stories – our global membership is interested in your experience!

A Miniature Book Tea Party

By Karen Nyman

Jocelyn Stody was a lucky gal. She was very close with her grandmother, Virginia Stody, an avid miniature book collector. When Virginia passed away in 1984, Jocelyn inherited the collection. For 36 years, the beautiful books from around the world graced Jocelyn's home.

In April 2016, a friend of Jocelyn's requested a "miniature book tea party" for her birthday. Friends and relatives enjoyed tea and cake (and tiny doughnuts), then explored the collection.

Jocelyn reported that it was delightful to host a group of women ooh-ing and aah-ing over her cherished collection. Later, I was fortunate to be able to purchase the entire Stody collection. Virginia Stody would be delighted to know that her books are being enjoyed by other appreciative collectors. They are available on my website.



Wall-hung cabinets over the sofa held the collection of more than 500 antiquarian and modern miniature books

Miniature Book Society

Board of Governors 2019

President: Tony Firman
 VP: Ron Wood
 Secretary: Gail Faulkner
 Treasurer: Kim Herrick

Members-At-Large

Christina Amato
 Erika Clew
 C. Darleen Cordova
 Todd Sommerfeld

Membership is open to all individuals, organizations, and institutions with an interest in miniature books.

Membership dues (U.S. dollars)

United States:

\$40-Personal/Family
 \$50-Business

Canada:

\$45-Personal/Family
 \$55-Business

Other Countries:

\$55-Personal/Family
 \$65-Business

Membership inquiries and dues payment contact:

Membership Coordinator

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 San Francisco, CA 94110
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Newsletter

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Consulting Editor

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Issued in February, June, September. Items for publication must be family friendly and related to miniature books and should be sent to the editor, Donna Knoell.

MBS, Inc reserves the right to refuse any item deemed inappropriate. Submissions should be made electronically by email. MS Word is preferred (PDF only if no alternatives). Images should be JPEGs and include complete copyright/permissions/credits.

Deadline for the next issue:

August 1, 2020
 Please send **articles for review** to dmknoell@gmail.com

Please send **inquiries regarding ad rates and print-ready ads** to dmknoell@gmail.com

Printer

Alliance Printing & Mailing
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We May Not Have a Conclave, but We Can Still Have a

Virtual Book Fair!

As you saw in a recent announcement, several book sellers expressed an interest in participating in an online book sale in lieu of the sale that takes place during our Conclave.

The concept is still being finalized, but here's what you need to know

... if you are a seller:

- ✓ Submit your list of up to 20 titles (photos optional) in a 1-2 page Word document – not a PDF.
- ✓ There is NO CHARGE to the MBS member sellers to participate in this event.
- ✓ **The deadline for submitting the list of books is July 1.**
- ✓ If you are interested in participating in selling, contact Ron Wood; ronminishoe@gmail.com.
 Cell: 347 870 5598 or Home: 760 451 6752

... if you are a buyer:

- ✓ The event will occur during the month of August.
- ✓ On 01 August, the virtual sale will open on the MBS web site.
- ✓ You will be able to download and review each seller's list and email or call them to complete the purchase and arrange shipping. We'll provide complete details as the time gets closer.
- ✓ MBS is not endorsing the sellers (For example: in the event there is a problem with a transaction); participation in the online Virtual Book Fair is voluntary.

From the Editor

The name of the university mentioned in Yaroslav Kostyuk's article was so intriguing, I had to know more. The Moscow State University of Printing Arts of Ivan Fedorov (MGUP in Russian) is Russia's largest university in the field of preparing specialists in printing and publishing. **Fedorov**, according to Russiapedia (www.Russiapedia.rt.com), *"...is considered one of the founding fathers of book printing in Russia and Ukraine. He was a fervent and, in all likelihood, self-sacrificing idealist with a vested interest in the history of the Russian book craft."*



Monument to Fyodorov, Moscow Print Yard

Voting for MBS Officers

Your ballot is included in this newsletter mailing.

Voting will close on 31 July.

Your vote counts – please participate!

You may mail the form to Gail Faulkner or send an email to fg6350bt@gmail.com