



MINIATURE BOOK SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

NO. 97 - NOVEMBER 2014

INCORPORATING THE MINIATURE BOOK NEWS

2014 MINIATURE BOOK SOCIETY COMPETITION

*Young book artists win all three
Distinguished Book Awards*



Alana Baldwin
Less Than Human
University of Alabama

Caroline Anderson
Song of the Valkyrie
University of Alabama



Courtney Macklin
*Old Toledo's
West End*



Encourage your local College Book Arts Program to join MBS!

Exhibition of Designer Bindings Washington University's Olin Library St. Louis, Missouri



A stunning exhibition of the miniature designer bindings commissioned by Mel Kavin. Read about it on page 10 in the *Miniature Book News*.

President's Message



Stephen Byrne

My first pleasurable duty is to express sincere thanks, on behalf of all those who attended, to Fr. Joe Curran and his team for the wonderful Conclave in Boston. More about Conclave will be said later in this issue, and I leave it to others to pass on their thoughts. The issue of MBS membership dues was raised at Conclave. They have not been increased for several years, while postage and production costs have risen considerably. It was decided to keep membership dues at the same rate and ask for voluntary donations. I am pleased to say that to date we have received more than thirty donations, and I thank all those who have contributed towards helping to maintain the MBS in its work.

You should by now have received the latest MBS publication "Monsignor Francis J. Weber: The Old Country Priest" by Darleen Cordova. Thanks are due to Darleen, and to the members of the publication committee, for such a beautifully produced miniature book.

I was so pleased that one of our new members, attending her first Conclave, said that she had thoroughly enjoyed the whole event, and that the people there seemed just like a happy family. That sentiment was exactly how I felt following my first Conclave in Koblenz (1996). That we are such a welcoming society says much about the membership.

Arrangements for next year's Conclave began back in March, and we will be meeting in Amsterdam from the 7th to 9th August 2015, with an optional tour on 10th. I would encourage everyone to consider attending what promises to be another wonderful event in a thriving and beautiful city. More details will be available on the web site soon. Please do look at the site regularly, as it is updated every couple of months.

Please do feel free to contact me about MBS matters if you have ideas for events, suggestions about publicising the MBS or increasing membership, or any other thoughts about publicizing MBS.

Editor's Note:

Congratulations to our Conclave host, Father Joe Curran, on the Grand Conclave XXXIII! I received so many positive comments about it especially from first-time Conclave attendees. Read about Todd Sommerfeld's first experience at an MBS Conclave beginning on page 8. The Miniature Book Society is committed to attracting new miniature book artists, publishers and members. Three young miniature book artists swept the top Three Distinguished Awards for the 2014 MBS Competition. Two were University of Alabama college students enrolled in UA's Book Arts Program. UA is an MBS member. Read Tony Firman's article on page 7 for more details about the 2014 Competition.

The Conclave, the Freedom Trail, and the Gardens: Boston, 2014

by Patricia Caernarven-Smith

There was much to like about the Conclave in Boston. Students from the University of Alabama took two of the three Distinguished Winner Awards in the Miniature Book competition, a help to future MBS recruiting. Bromers' Bookstore has to be seen to be believed: picture a large living room with shelves and cases of nothing but miniatures. The seafood . . . I finally satisfied several cravings. We had a wild auction in which two collectors went head to head while Father Joe tried to keep up with the bidders. The three tellers made a great picture--all bidding simultaneously over a treasure going for eleven dollars.



Auction tellers have a bidding war



A view of Boston across from the Conclave hotel

the loss of so many longtime members in the last year, five of them charter members. Our president read their names, and I believe everyone was touched by our memories of them: Ellen Amstutz, Frank Anderson (Charter Member), Evron Collins (Charter Member), Carol Cunningham (Charter Member), Margaret Feldman (Charter Member), Jeanne Goessling, Jon Mayo, Duane C. Scott (Charter Member) and Hubert Silvain.

The gardens across from the hotel were in full flower. On the weekend, with thousands of tourists, local families, runners, vendors (alas no miniature book sellers in this group), and even weddings, the place was merry and colorful.

The keepsake bag featured a number of works commemorating Boston, including instructions on how to enjoy the Boston Tea Party in your own parlour, maps, short bibliographies, and Marian and Stephen Byrne's "All Hail to Massachusetts" (from their imprint, *The Final Score*). The hit of the keepsakes to my mind was a biography offered by Darleen Cordova of *Hezakah Usher, America's First Bookseller*, with its lush examples of Mr. Usher's typesetting.

The annual MBS General Meeting attendees were deeply saddened by

The General Meeting included healthy debate about some serious challenges. For some time now, the Society has faced a fork in the road: do we continue as an organization held together with paper and postage stamps, or do we seek new members by appealing to bibliophiles through social media? On Saturday morning, led by the imperturbable Stephen Byrne, we addressed a pair of problems that we must overcome: an increasing membership and associated increasing costs. We are aware that not everyone is comfortable with social media, has a Facebook or e-mail account, or even likes to go to the library to look up a reference. MBS currently has slightly more than 300 members. International mailing costs account for a significant portion of MBS' annual budget. This year, for example, our MBS dues enable members to receive the 2014 MBS miniature book about publisher Monsignor Francis Weber. This member-exclusive miniature book costs \$26 per copy to produce. We will also receive 3 MBS Newsletters and the Competition Catalog. The Catalog is produced by volunteer members who write, edit, photograph and provide graphic and layout services. The actual printing costs of the 2014 catalog is \$10 per copy, thanks to the cost containment efforts of Tony Firman. The international mailing costs of all these printed materials is significant. Members discussed increasing dues by \$5 or \$10 but it became clear that raising dues would not resolve the deficit. Member Joan Knoertzer wisely suggested that, rather than raise dues, that members be given an opportunity to donate to the support of MBS. That approach was welcomed. When you receive your membership renewal, you will see a special form for donations. Please consider helping MBS to continue to provide worthwhile products. The MBS Board determined that the MBS Yearbook will now be delivered via email with an attached pdf document. Members can make a special request for a printed copy. Institutions and businesses will continue to receive a printed Yearbook.

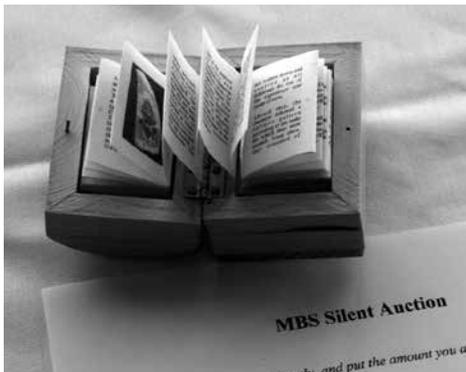
The after-meeting speaker on Saturday morning was Christina Amato, conservationist, who gave a fine PowerPoint presentation on how to treat and how not to treat elderly and honorable books that have fallen on hard times. Those include tape, too much glue, ripped pages, more tape, and other disasters. The presentation was not only entertaining but also useful to those of us deciding when to rip the covers off.

We followed that great morning with a hike to the Athenaeum and an unbelievable view of the conservation laboratory with its impressive metal stamps, great presses, and many works in progress, some of them page by page.

The Silent Auction on Friday night and the Saturday night auction raised a total of \$6,934 for MBS. Those who wanted a specific book at the Friday night silent auction mostly got their treasures. The Saturday night auction was even better with loud



Christina Amato, conservationist



Silent Auction

bidding and fierce competition for items. Father Joe had to work really hard to keep up with bidders. Bidding becomes more intense as bidders reveal their personal interests. One important element of the Saturday night auction was the wide variety of bibliographic material offered. These materials ensure that at least two collectors will settle down in front of the fireside to make themselves masters of the history of this Society and the fine work it has done.



Annual MBS Auction

On Sunday, every seller had trade, some of it good and some downright excellent. In addition, the public traffic was heavy, with both the traveling exhibit and the competition exhibit drawing much attention. At the Book Fair MBS signed up two new members. The Boston area public came out in force to learn about miniature books and purchase them.

In all, it was a weekend of sunshine, gaiety outside, serious business inside, all flavored with meetings of old friends and introductions to new ones. Amsterdam next year: bring your boots and your little books.



MBS Book Fair



Julian Edison and Miriam Irwin at the Book Fair.

The 2014 Miniature Book Competition

By Tony Firman

Once again this year the books submitted were very impressive. The 28 entries came from five countries: the Czech Republic, France, Japan, Spain, and the USA. Once again the judges faced a real challenge, but their comments in the catalog make it clear that they faced that challenge very thoughtfully – and surprisingly.

The new style of Competition Catalog that we came up with last year was very well received, so we used it again this year. The idea is that the Catalog provides representative photographs of both the outside and the inside of each book, together with a brief paragraph on the subject matter (in other words, the contents of the book), plus another on the format and binding (in technical terms, “the container”). Each entry receives an entire page of coverage. This year we also expanded the coverage for the three winners to two pages each, providing larger photographs, plus the judges’ comments.

As always, the entries covered a wide range of subject matter, both fiction and non-fiction. There was a corresponding variety in the formats and binding of the entries, including sewn, perfect, spiral, origami, tete-beche, accordion, and coptic bindings; fine leather inlays; elegant slipcases (one with a bloody dagger!); one book with a frame of 35-mm film embedded in the paper (almost invisibly!); one book that incorporates a drawer full of goodies; one book that includes paintings on an easel; and, from Japan, a microscopic book in a glass jar.



2014 Competition Exhibition at the Book Fair.

Members who want to see more young people in the Society will be glad to know that we received five entries from students at the University of Alabama. We must find a way to spread that word to other schools.

How the judges managed to select three of these wonderful books to receive Distinguished Book Awards is beyond me, but they did. Uniquely, all the winners were young book publishers entering the Competition for the first time. You can see the results in your Catalog, which you should have received by now. And there you can also see the judges’ comments, so I won’t repeat them here. However, here is a brief summary of the results. See photos of the three Distinguished Winners on the cover of the Newsletter.

Winner: *Toledo’s Old West End*; not only designed and bound, but also written by Courtney Macklin, and illustrated with her own intaglio prints. Courtney is an independent artist and bookbinder in Toledo, OH.

Winner: *Less than Human*; poetry written by Ivy Grimes, the book designed, bound, and published by Alana Baldwin. Both Ivy and Alana are students at the University of Alabama.

Winner: *Song of the Valkyrie*; an anonymous Old Norse poem with a parallel English translation, designed, bound, and published by Caroline Anderson – another student at the University of Alabama!

Furthermore, this year the judges voluntarily provided an honorable mention: *Lace*; entirely created by Courtney Macklin, who also won a Distinguished Book Award.

The results of this year's Competition tell us that miniature bookbinding is not only alive and well, but flourishing among young people. In particular, whatever they are doing at the University of Alabama must be praised, encouraged, and (if possible) spread to other schools. So if you know a school where there is a book arts program, please get in touch with them, tell them about this year's Competition, and encourage them to enter their students' work in future Competitions. One key to UA's success is that the University is a member of the MBS, and the University paid for the students' entries.

As always, the Competition and the Catalog are made possible only by the work done by my fellow committee-members: Ray Williamson, who was responsible for the outstanding photography; Barb Williamson, who retouched the photographs so they reproduced so well in the catalog; and Pat Caernarven-Smith, who assisted with research and proofreading.

My First Conclave

By Todd Sommerfeld

Hi. Let me start off by telling you a little about myself. I have been collecting miniature books casually since I was a teen in the late 80's but became serious only five years ago. Though familiar with the Society for 25 years, I didn't join MBS until December of 2012.

It all started Thursday with a late arrival and dinner at 75 Chestnut. There I met, for the very first time, miniature book collectors, dealers, and publishers that I've known by reputation for years. What a thrill! It was like meeting all your favorite rock stars at one time.

I used the Friday morning and afternoon free time to peruse Bromer Booksellers' stock. I then visited the Boston Public Library where I was able to see a *Wedding Ring*, the first miniature book printed in what was to become the United States, as well as the *Bay Psalm Book*. The *Wedding Ring* was in a display case but the



psalm book was handed to me and I was able to sit down and read it. In the evening, when I registered, I was handed a small tote bag full of wondrous keepsakes, an MBS tradition from the beginning. There was an open house at Bromer's followed by a fine dinner with a silent auction where I won two very nice volumes.

Saturday started with breakfast, followed by the Annual Membership Meeting where we had lively debate about several challenging issues facing the MBS. I think we found some good solutions for several pressing matters. My favorite was not to raise membership fees but to include on the renewal form a line, that I hope we will all use, for donations. We then had a presentation by member Christina Amato, "Adopting Conservation Techniques for Miniature Books", where I got several ideas that will be pressed into service in my library. We also saw a brief presentation developed by Barbara Williamson, who couldn't be with us this year, introducing miniature books to elementary school children. I hope I find a use for this presentation someday.

Then it was off to the Boston Athenaeum where we were given guided tours of the beautiful library and conservation labs. In the evening there was a dessert buffet and then... Auction time! Through the wit and perseverance of Father Joe we overcame poor lighting and acoustics to power through 128+ lots of miniature books and related materials. I picked up a few books but really cleaned up in the reference department, winning several lots of MBS back issues and dealers' catalogs.

Sunday was more leisurely, most of the day being occupied with the book fair. Oh, this is a fair like no other. I'm accustomed to book fairs with 40 dealers, finding maybe a dozen minis, and taking home two. At this fair were 20 dealers, all selling exclusively miniature books. This time my difficulty wasn't finding things to buy, but which ones could come home with me. I was also able, with several other members, to visit a local resident's home who just happened to collect miniature almanacs and was looking for experienced advice. Her collection is beautiful, having examples from the early 18th century up to the mid-1970's. In the evening the awards ceremony honored Miriam Irwin and Caroline Brandt with much deserved lifetime memberships. Congratulations!

Monday was filled with an optional tour of Worcester to see the miniature books in the collections of the Goddard library and the American Antiquarian Society. There we saw a complete run of St. Onge miniatures and many rare and early miniatures, some from the collection of Ruth Adomeit who started me collecting 25 years ago.

I've told you about the itinerary; what I don't know how to convey to you is the fellowship and camaraderie, the kindness and generosity, and the overall sense of good will that permeated every aspect of the Grand Conclave. I could fill this newsletter and the next two with the joys I found in this one weekend. So my best advice to you is to attend one yourself... See you in Amsterdam!!!

MBS Grand Conclave XXXIII

August 7 - 9, 2015 – Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Conclave hosts Tine Krijnen and Georges Toneman. Mark your Calendar! Our venue is the Bilderberg Garden Hotel in a quiet area of Amsterdam, yet the center and major attractions are all within easy reach using the very regular and efficient tram system.

MINIATURE BOOK NEWS

8 ST. ANDREWS DRIVE • ST. LOUIS, MO • 63124

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY LIBRARY EXHIBITION OF BEAUTIFUL DESIGNER BINDINGS

You CAN Judge a Book by its Cover:
33 MINIATURE DESIGNER BINDINGS

In 1948, Mel Kavin started a bookbinding company in Southern California, Kater-Crafts, that handled commercial and library books as well as fine hand crafted leather bindings. He also started collecting and studying books about bookbinding, printing and the history of books. The combination of these two interests led him to accumulate an extensive library about bookbinding as well as over fifteen hundred miniature books.

In 1972 he and his wife made their first trip to Europe where he called on many of the distinguished binders that he had heard about. He began a special friendship with Bernard Middleton, an internationally known English designer binder and author.

Here are excerpts in Kavin's own words about how his project of 33 miniature designer bindings came about:

"In 1992, over the Labor Day weekend, I was attending the Miniature Book Society's Annual Conclave in San Diego, California, where the farthest thing from my mind was publishing a miniature book... While examining some of the beautifully designed and produced miniature books, I felt a sudden urge to publish one of my own." He was able to persuade Middleton to provide a text. With the text in hand, he enlisted Ward Ritchie to design the book, Henry Morris to print it, and Tini & Einen Miura to design the binding. So by 1994 he was able to publish a lavishly designed miniature book, *You CAN Judge a Book by its Cover*, in an edition of 400 copies. (copies are available for purchase at sales@katercrafts.com)

He was so pleased that he began to commission other world-class binders to design and create a binding of the Middleton text. He stopped at 33 for no good reason "but that I had to stop somewhere."

In 1998, Kavin published a full-color catalogue of all of the 33 bindings, providing a photo and description of each book together with biographical information about each artist. The catalogue is titled: *You CAN judge a Book by its Cover: 33 Miniature Designer Bindings*.

The Olin Library at Washington University in St. Louis recently acquired this superb collection of individual designer bindings that Mel Kavin planned and completed in just four years, from 1994 and 1998. These bindings are now being exhibited in the two dedicated miniature bookcases at the library. Each binding is displayed along with a photo of the binder, his or her biography, and a description of the binding itself. Six examples appear on page 12.

To make the exhibit even more interesting Kelly Brown, Rare Book Assistant, devised a contest: viewers would be given an opportunity, on a website with all the bindings, to choose which book they liked best. At the end of the exhibition, several months in the future, the winning binding would be identified. To encourage voting, a small prize would be given to a randomly selected entrant.

Photographs of the exhibit cases and some of the bindings follow:



Close-up views of the left and right exhibition cases showing the designer bindings.



NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

News about miniature books comes from various sources around the globe. Some recent dispatches:

From VIETNAM-NET--August 23, 2014:

Miniature book collector has big dreams

VietNamNet Bridge – Painter Nguyen Thanh Dam may not be the only person with this hobby in Viet Nam, but he is the only one with such a bulky bookcase of miniature books.



"The books are very small but the knowledge contained therein is very big. I've never measured the value of my books with money, but they must be as costly as my house," he said, while receiving some guests at his small, old house at a quiet alley in Ly Thuong Kiet Street, downtown Hanoi.

His passion for collecting miniature books began in 1970, when he was in the Soviet Union to study layouts of books and newspapers.

"Ever since I was in high school, I had a dream of owning a bookcase for mini-books," he recalled.

Collector's editions: Nguyen Thanh Dam has a passion for collecting miniature books.

Since Dam lived in the Soviet Union for nearly a decade, he travelled to many libraries to find these mini-books. But as a student, he hardly had money to buy such valuable books. He recalled that he had to even skip a few meals to buy them.

"It was true that the smaller the books, the more expensive they were. The size of the first one I bought was only 3.5 by 5cm and cost about 15 roubles," he said.

"The Russians were good friends, and as they knew about my passion for such books, they presented me a lot of them. These were the most priceless gifts that I had received," he said.

On the day Dam returned home, among his belongings were these tiny and strange books that Viet Nam had never seen at that time.

Historic book

Not only has Dam collected many exclusive and strange mini-books, but he is also a talented book cover designer.

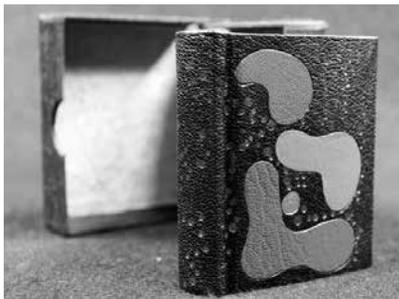
In 1980, to prepare for Vietnamese pilot Pham Tuan's flight into space as part of the Soviet Union's Interkosmos programme, the Vietnamese Government had assigned the painter to design some mini-books including Tuyen ngon doc lap (Declaration of Independence).

"It was a difficult task because at that time printing conditions were poor. I was required to design books that would be thin, durable and beautiful. I went to Buoi paper making village [in Cau Giay District] to buy do paper [poonah] to print the book, so ink would not be visible on the other side of the paper. It took me four months to complete three books to send to the Soviet Union," he said.

After the Vietnamese Embassy in the Soviet Union received these books, they quickly sent them to pilot Pham Tuan. However, because of safety reasons only the book Declaration of Independence was allowed for Pham Tuan to take on his journey into space.



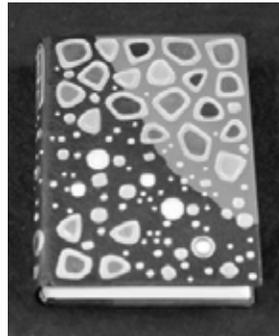
Can you figure out the title from this cool Rebus puzzle binding cover? By Eleanor Edwards Ramsey.



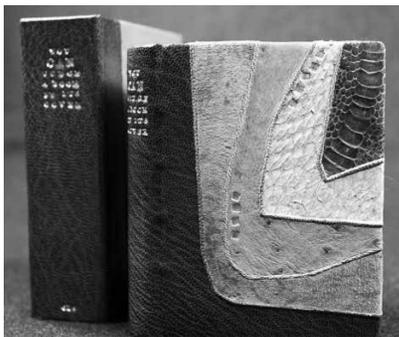
The original Middleton book, cover by Tini Miura



John Mitchell



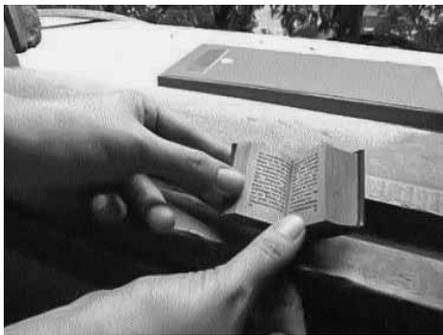
Michael Wilcox



Sally Lou Smith



Silvia Nussio-Rennie



Size can be deceiving: The book might be small in size, but it contains a vast amount of knowledge.

The pilot carefully noted on the book cover: "Taking off at 1.33am of July 24, 1980."

On July 31, 1980, when Tuan returned to Earth, many foreign correspondents interviewed him about the book.

People were surprised to learn that the book's scripts were still intact while other material had almost completely faded.

This was an opportunity to promote Vietnamese books and poonah paper material to the world. This was also the first and the only mini-book of Viet Nam to "fly" into the universe.

"In 1982, I attended a seminar on books in Germany and learnt that UNESCO had issued standards for mini-books: They must be less

than 8cm in width. I have collected a lot of mini-books with weird designs such as ones shaped like lanterns, eggs and lighters. Based on the mini-books, we can learn of the technology and advancement of the printing industry in each country."

According to Dam, his bookcase now has up to 500 little tiny books. Some of these are as small as matchboxes but have several hundred pages.

These books have been meticulously designed and packed with more knowledge about mankind, politics, economy, culture, astronomy, and aspects of art.

Dam said proudly that he had some precious books such as one on Vladimir Lenin. There were only 100 copies published on the occasion of his 100th birth anniversary, to present to the leaders of countries or special guests.

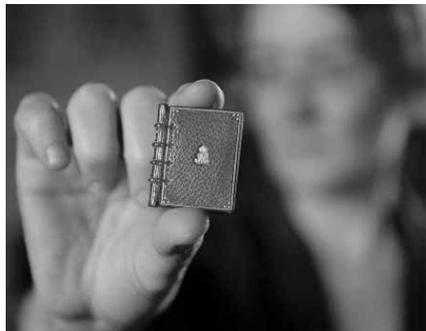
Dam has one of these books, thanks to a student. He even had a gold-plated book done delicately and beautifully.

Historian Duong Trung Quoc also called him up recently and offered to present him with two mini-books that Quoc was presented during a foreign trip, Dam said.

"Once, a foreigner who visited my library offered to buy my books at any price. I refused to sell them because they are knowledge. If knowledge goes there's nothing left. Moreover, the mini-books are rare, and it is even more difficult to collect such antique books," he said.

VNS/VNN

From THE TIMES OF MALTA.COM--September 3, 2014: Tiny Sherlock Holmes book printed



A miniature Sherlock Holmes book written exclusively for Queen Mary's dolls' house is to be published for the first time in its original format.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle penned the story by hand in a tiny tome measuring 3.8cm by just over 3cm.

It is a little-known tale written in 1922 in black ink over 24 pages, about how Dr Watson tries out his powers of deduction on Holmes - only to get things completely wrong.

How Watson Learned The Trick is one of more than 200 tiny books produced by some of the

most famous British authors of the early 20th century for the dolls' house - on permanent display at Windsor Castle.

Other contributors include Thomas Hardy, Rudyard Kipling, Sir James Barrie and Edith Wharton.

The text of the story has been published before but the new miniature book is the first time it has been reproduced in a tiny format.

In the minuscule novel, Watson downplays the crime sleuth's skills over breakfast, telling him "I was thinking how superficial are those tricks of yours" and goes on to describe how his methods "are really easily acquired".

He deduces from the stubble on Holmes' face that he was too preoccupied to shave that morning and states that the detective has taken to financial speculation as he was interested in a newspaper's business page.

And the fact that Holmes is wearing a black coat and not his dressing gown proves he is expecting an important visitor.

But Watson is proved wrong - Holmes could not shave because his razor had been sent away to be sharpened, he was reading the cricket page next to the financial reports, and he put on his coat as he had an appointment with his dentist.

Oliver Urquhart Irvine, librarian at the Royal Collection Trust, said: "Sherlock Holmes is a world-renowned literary figure and an enduring character, who remains as popular today as in the Victorian society that Conan Doyle characterised.

"I am delighted that for the first time this Sherlock Holmes tale will be available in the exact format that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle produced nearly 100 years ago."

How Watson Learned The Trick is published by Walker Books in collaboration with the Royal Collection Trust on October 2, price £12.99.

From THE AzerNEWS, Baku, Azerbaijan--October 16, 2014: Central Scientific Library obtains miniature books from Russia

By Amina Nazarli

The Central Scientific Library of Azerbaijan's National Academy of Sciences, ANAS, continues to expand its international relations.

The Library is cooperating with scientific institutions and libraries of more than 60 countries and 700 local and international organizations.

The Central Scientific Library has recently established cooperation with Russian based DeAgostini Company with a view to purchase different cognitive miniature books from the company.

Under the reached agreement, the company sent to the Library 20 miniature books of world's literature masterpieces, including "The Player" by Dostoyevsky, "Who is to Blame?" by Gersen, "The Favorites" by Leo Tolstoy, "Family Chronicle" by Aksakov, "The Brigadier" by Fonzyvin, "The Hunter's Memoirs" by Turgenev, "The Duel" by Kuprin, "The Revolt of the Angels" by Frans, "The Philistines" by Gorkin and others.

The Library will further enrich its fund.



From GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS--2015:

The Guinness World Record book for 2015 is just out, and there are two entries related to miniature books.

The first entry is:

"Smallest printed book the illustrated reference book *Flowers of the Four Seasons* measures 0.02 x 0.02 in (0.74 x 0.75 mm) and was printed by Toppan Printing Co. Printing Museum in Bunkyo, Tokyo, Japan"

There is a photo of the book opened along side of a needle and a note saying: "FACT Only 250 copies of the 22 page book were printed between Apr and Dec 2013."

The second Guinness 2015 entry is headlined with text:

Mini-Marvel: Queen Mary's Dolls House Built in 1921-24 by architect Sir Edwin Lanseer Lutyens (UK) at a scale of 1:12, Queen Mary's Dolls' House includes plumbing, electricity, and a cellar Stocked with drinkable wine. It is the **most visited Dolls' house**, having been on display for many years at Windsor Castle in Windsor, UK, which attracted more than 9 million visitors between 2004 and 2013 alone. Its miniature library contains the most works of literature made for a dolls' house; the 206 unique literary works include a handwritten book of poetry by Rudyard Kipling and *How Watson Learned the Trick*, a story specially written by Arthur Conan Doyle.

PERCY SPIELMANN

Very little has been written by or about Percy Edwin Spielmann, Ph.D., B.Sc., F.R.I.C., F.R.S.L. He was born in 1881 in England. As might be inferred by the initials of the societies he belonged to, he became a well-known chemist. He became an expert on bituminous substances that helped roadmaking with asphalt. And he wrote a major treatise on organic chemistry in 1919, copies of which are still available today.

After accumulating a substantial library of miniature books, perhaps greater than James D. Henderson's in the 1920s, he wrote the most comprehensive book about miniature books up to 1961. *Catalogue of the Library of Miniature Books, together with some descriptive summaries* was published by Edward Arnold of London in 500 copies in 1961. A major portion of the 289-page book contains bibliographic descriptions of some 550 books. The bibliographic descriptions were actually written by Louis Bondy, the renowned London book dealer. Included are interesting chapters on publishers, printers, and illustrators, as well as summaries about Almanacs, Bibles, Book Plates, Bindings, etc.

Spielmann wrote a lengthy article about his library in the April 1962 issue of *The Private Library*, the quarterly journal of the Private Libraries Association in England. The article was reprinted in MBN 77, in June 1993. He said "The assembling of this library began by indiscriminate purchases of books within my limits of three to three-and-a-half inches in

size." When he ascertained that the subjects covered mathematics, art and science, and some children's books on natural history were few, he limited his acquisitions to "the representative, the curious, and the rare."

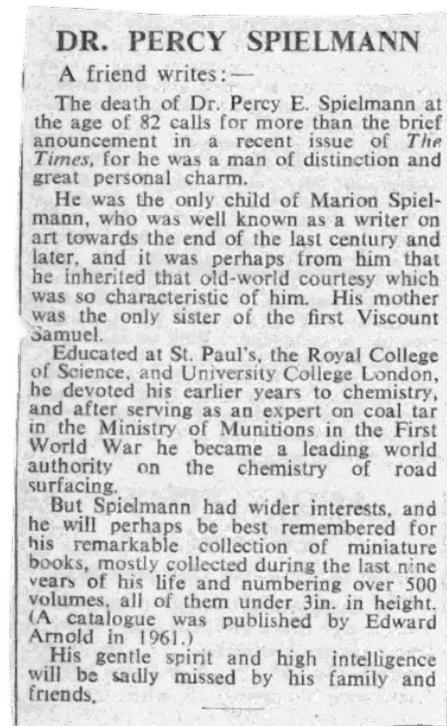
Spielmann goes on to discuss the rationale of miniature books early on "to save library-shelf space" and "to permit religious books to be carried easily in the pocket."

He states that the three difficulties to produce miniature books "lie in the cutting and casting of tiny type... the production of ink which will not clog, and the quality of paper which will "play up" to both." He discusses aesthetic and emotional connections, the great variety of subjects and languages, and how his library was housed and shelved in specially built book cases. Moreover he tells you a practical way to retrieve a book, thus: "The removal and return of one tiny volume from a row can be facilitated by the use of commercial pliers with thin flattened ends."

Spielmann's entire library was purchased by your editor in one lot at an auction in London in 1964. Included with the collection of books were several file boxes containing correspondence, photographs, newspaper articles, rare reference books, etc. This substantial cache of research material led your editor to start a new journal, *Miniature Book News*, in 1965 patterned after Henderson's *Newsletters of the LXIVMOS* of the 1920s.

The reason for bringing up Spielmann again at this juncture is purely serendipity. Out of the blue, recently, an email was sent to me by Charles Sebag-Montifiore of London inquiring about Spielmann's Library. Turns out that Charles is a great grandson of Percy Spielmann's uncle, brother of Percy's father, Marion. Charles was trying to find out about the Library of miniature books. Google had led him to the MBS website. He emailed Barbara Williamson on a Saturday morning. Barbara forwarded his email to me. I sent a lengthy email to Charles indicating that I had purchased the Library at auction back in 1964. Charles thereon sent me a return email, all in the same day. Amazing how fast email communicates---such correspondence in those days would have taken weeks.

Charles was delighted to hear that the Spielmann Library is alive and well, and he sent me a notice in one of the London newspapers of Spielmann's death, which is reproduced above.



SURFING THE INTERNET FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE SUBJECT OF MINIATURE BOOKS

This article is intended as a basic description of how one goes about using the internet to search for information about miniature books in general. The task of searching for a specific miniature book is a separate subject, and might be better dealt with in another article.

With a computer you can do many tasks, such as send and receive emails, look at your photos, listen to music and entertainment, and search for information from around the world.

Approximately 85% of our Miniature Book Society members have computers according to Karen Nyman, MBS's membership chair. If you have an email address, you must have a computer!!

Thus, members can find information by using an application called a "browser" (such as Internet explorer, Google Chrome or Safari) and a "search engine" to reach the World Wide Web (WWW) of information on the internet. The most important search engines are Google, with about 65% of the market, Baidu (a Chinese engine) with 17%, Yahoo, and a few others.

If you "log on" to Google and enter the two words, **miniature books**, you might bring up some 10,000,000 "links" or results!! That means that Google can show 10 million links with **either** the word *miniature* **or** *books* printed in it. Many of the links would deal with miniature matters or books, but not necessarily miniature books.

In order to narrow the search you need to add quotation marks to the two words together, thus "**miniature books**." This addition might narrow the number of results to about 446,000 links or documents on a given day. The numbers and the order of the links actually displayed change frequently. Clicking on the links lead to articles, photos, videos, miniature books for sale, dollhouse interest, books, libraries, catalogues, etc. worldwide.

The 446,000 links, divided into pages of about 10 links per page, would take hours and days to open. Many of the links are actual repeats because the same information might be coming from different documents or sources. If you choose Yahoo as your search engine, you will get fewer entries and some different links in a different order.

I entered "miniature books" in Google recently. This brought up a first page which showed a list of about ten links. On the right of the page there was a list of sponsored ad links (Used books, Miniature Books up to 70% Off, Miniature Antique Books, Antique Miniature Books Sale). In the main free section, here are the first links that showed up, in descending order:

- Sponsored ad: Shop for Miniature Books on Google.
- Miniature Book Society (this in turn links to mbs.org.)
- Bo Press
- Images for Miniature Books (this brings up hundreds of photos showing miniature books, people, book cases, etc.)
- Miniature Books by Lee Ann Borgia
- Not a Small World for Miniature Books (A CBS YouTube video of the Charles Osgood feature of July 31, 2006, about Neale Albert and his books.)

- Miniature Books in Wikipedia
- Abe Books
- 10 Miniature Books We Covet
- 4,000 Years of Miniature Books – IU Lilly Library Exhibition.

Those are the links for page one. If you go to page 3, you will find the following links:

- Miniature Books – AbeBooks.com (an ad)
- Miniature Books on eBay.com (another ad)
- Miniature Boos at Amazon.com (still another ad)

Then: free:

- Library of Miniature Books Has Its Own Story (a New York Times 2013 article on Neale Albert).
- Miniature books on Pinterest (this brings up a bulletin board of actual miniature books, some of which are for sale).
- Dealers – Miniature Book Society.
- More Making Books By Hand.
- Miniature Books by the Brontes, and Other News.
- Karen Nyman Miniature Books.
- The World's Most Beautiful Miniature Books – (London Telegraph article).

If you enter Google a few days later, you would probably receive a somewhat different listing or order. This situation leads to the question of just how various links are ranked and in what order. The answer to this question is somewhat mysterious. Basically, the search engines use various methods and algorithms that measure the number of "hits" each subject receives and the relationship between the subject and other subjects. I don't quite understand the process, but I am sure they would tell you it is a secret formula.

At the bottom of the page there are additional links of subjects that will lead to further information:

- miniature books for sale
- miniature children's books
- how to make miniature books
- dollhouse miniature books
- miniature books amazon
- miniature books ebay
- antique miniature books
- miniature books for dolls

This article is intended to give viewers some basics on surfing the internet. In future article we might explore other byways that links would lead us to, such as Pinterest, Etsy, and eBay that are other applications for discovery. Of course, information about miniature books can be had on our own Society's website or link, **mbs.org**, which was created and is maintained so well by Karen Nyman.

If the above explanation is a bit confusing, an excellent book is *The Internet For Dummies*. I am thinking of going to Barnes and Noble in the morning and picking up a copy for myself!!

Happy surfing.

THE GENESIS OF GENIUS

Tiny books by the Brontë children suggest the unbounded creativity to come

By Kate Kondayen, Harvard Library Communications

Photo credit: Stephanie Mitchell, Harvard Staff Photographer

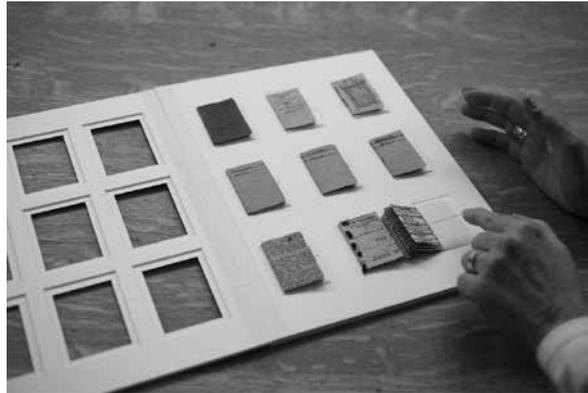
Originally published in the Harvard Gazette, June 26, 2014. Reprinted by permission.

Flames of childhood passion often die. How many astronauts and ballerinas are among us? Yet some talent is so profound that even early efforts signify genius.

The tiny, hand-lettered, hand-bound books Charlotte and Branwell Brontë made as children surely qualify. Measuring about 2.5 by 5 centimeters, page after mini-page brims with poems, stories, songs, illustrations, maps, building plans, and dialogue. The books, lettered in minuscule, even script, tell of the “Glass Town Confederacy,” a fictional world the siblings created for and around Branwell’s toy soldiers, which were both the protagonists of and audience for the little books.

In 1829 and 1830, Charlotte and Branwell cobbled the pages together from printed waste and scrap paper, perhaps cut from margins of discarded pamphlets. They wrote with steel-nibbed pens, which tend to blot, yet the even script demonstrates their practiced hand.

Charlotte, who in adulthood wrote “Jane Eyre,” nested leaves together, then neatly sewed the spine with embroidery thread; it’s evident she constructed her book and planned its content before ever putting pen to paper. Branwell, who would become a painter and poet, stacked folded leaves together, which allowed him to add pages as he needed; clearly not as adept with needle and thread as his sister, he stab-sewed the leaves together with thicker linen yarn.



Nine miniature manuscript books, six by Charlotte Brontë and three by Patrick Branwell Brontë.



Detail of tiny Brontë book.

Children can be rough on their playthings — miniature books created by the younger Brontë siblings Emily and Anne did not survive — but Charlotte kept and stored the “Glass Town” adventures carefully. “They must have been very precious to them, as they are to us today,” said Priscilla Anderson of Harvard’s Weissman Preservation Center, who restored the volumes.

Only about 20 volumes of Brontë juvenilia are known to remain. Harvard holds nine, the Brontë Museum at the family home in England owns a few, and the remaining are scattered among museums and private collectors.

Until recently, juvenilia — works produced by an author or artist while still young — were viewed as oddities by scholars and collectors. Today they are understood to provide valuable and rare insight into an author’s development. In the case of the Brontës, experts might trace Gothic influences from the 13-year-old Charlotte’s stories, or identify Branwell’s growth as an artist by comparing his childhood illustrations and his later paintings. Perhaps even more importantly, the books provide a glimpse into the inner lives of children growing up in a society in which they were expected to be seen and not heard.

“What is extraordinary is the extent to which they imitated a professional publication, the variety of the content, and the perseverance it required,” said Anderson. “The ability to make these volumes from start to finish out of scraps is impressive.”

At nearly 200 years old, the books are delicate. Over time, the paper became increasingly fragile, the adhesive used to mount the volumes damaged the covers, and the tiny script was hard for scholars to read. To ensure that scholars today and tomorrow have access to these treasures, the library repaired, rehoused, and digitized the books. Their unusual size, age, and nature presented several challenges to Anderson and Debora Mayer, the Helen H. Glaser Conservator at Weissman.

“Perhaps children’s eyes and hands can read and manipulate these things, but for grownups they’re microscopic,” explained Anderson, who said she felt like she had giant’s hands when she worked on the books.

To repair tears, Anderson used fine surgical instruments, teasing out and pasting down individual fibers of kozo paper about the width of a human hair. (Kozo is a fine paper made from the inner bark of an Asian plant, and is regularly used to mend books.) All through the painstaking work, she knew even a small mistake would be magnified. “I held my breath, literally,” said Anderson, “to keep fragments of paper from blowing away.”

New binding exposed text in the gutters of Branwell’s volumes for the first time in 170 years, and the digital technology deployed provides clarity beyond that of the human eye. Technicians moved the camera very slightly on multiple takes and combined them into one image. Every millimeter is sharply focused.

Charlotte’s husband sold the volumes after her death to a collector, who gave them to poet and fellow collector Amy Lowell; she donated the set to Houghton Library in 1925.

The digital copies of the Brontë juvenilia have largely met scholars’ needs, according to Houghton curator Leslie Morris. Yet the awe-inspiring physicality of the books as artifacts cannot be captured on screen.

“These tiny books help to evoke the whole experience of the Brontë children. Here they are, living in a somewhat isolated parsonage in Yorkshire, having only themselves as playmates and needing to entertain each other,” Morris said. “Seeing the physical object brings home the effort and intelligence it took to create them and why they created them. Having grown up with Brontë, it’s a way of connecting with the past through objects.”

Remembering Our MBS Friends



John Carroll Collins



John Carroll Collins was born May 12, 1927 in Grand Saline, TX and passed away April 18, 2014. He was graduated from the University of Texas and the University of Kentucky and held Masters Degrees from each school. He was an antique and fine art appraiser. John was a brilliant man, interested in many pursuits including miniature books. He was an MBS member since 2002.



Mary Galbraith Thomas Peterson

Mary Galbraith Thomas Peterson passed away on March 29, 2014 at age 97. Ms. Peterson lived in Turlock, California, and was the publisher of Mauriton Press. Mary was a loving mother, grandmother, artist, printer, printmaker, entrepreneur, freelance writer, poet, bookseller and admitted chocolate-la-holic. She made three miniature books and had been an MBS member since 1984.



Margaret Feldman

MBS Charter member, Margaret Feldman passed away on May 13, 2014 at the age of 93. Margaret was a passionate microbibliophile and dollhouse miniature collector. She started collecting miniature books in the 1970s. She attended the first MBS Conclave in Tipp City with Miriam Irwin. Margaret was also friends with Barbara Raheb and many other MBS members.

BRIEF NOTES

Catalogues Received:

Karen Nyman Miniature Books

Miniature Book Catalog 52

Annual Christmas Catalog - November 1, 2014

Yearbook Goes Digital

The 2015 Yearbook (Membership Directory) will be sent digitally to all members in March of this coming year. This means that all members who have an email address (that we have on file) will be sent a pdf version of the Yearbook that they can save on their computer. A printed Yearbook will be sent to all members who do not have an email address, to all institutions and libraries, and to any member who requests a printed version by contacting Karen Nyman at 619-226-4441 or karennyman2@cox.net. There is no fee for a printed version. This change will substantially reduce our printing and postage costs for the Yearbook. Any questions? Please contact Karen Nyman.

Melinda Brown/Bromer Booksellers Video

A production company in Weston, Massachusetts, recently filmed a story about MBS member Melinda Brown as she showed off her amazing collection of miniature books. You will truly love this video of Melinda talking about her passion. Later in the video Melinda takes us on a tour of Bromer Booksellers in Boston. To view it, visit: <https://vimeo.com/100998159>.

Collector? Publisher? Printer? Binder? Book Artist?

Since 2012, Karen Nyman has been asking new members if they are collectors, publishers, printers binders, dealers, educators and/or book artists. Consistently, for all 3 years, most new members consider themselves collectors. For all 3 years, we have attracted 2 or 3 new members who checked the box for "dealer". Interestingly, the number of educators and book artists has increased substantially while the number of new members who consider themselves publishers, printers or binders has dropped sharply. In 2014, none of our new members considered themselves to be miniature book publishers. On the other hand, 8 new members in 2014 considered themselves to be book artists in contrast to only 2 in 2012 and 3 in 2013.



Jill Timm, **Mystical Places Press** announces a new miniature book. **Texas Colors** captures the brilliant wild flowers found in the Hill country of Texas that are especially abundant after a wet winter. Printed using Giclee, a museum quality digital printing process on watercolor paper, the book is 2" x 3", with 8 photographs that have been transformed into stunning watercolors. The pages are attached in an expanding binding that allows the images to stretch out. This little book includes a colophon. Limited to an edition of 60. **Texas Colors** with the slip case is \$100. Also available without the case for \$75. www.mysticplaces.com/texas.html

NOVEMBER 2014 CHANGEABOUTS

New Members:

Sherry Briggs
12 Hampton Avenue
Neesham MA 02494-2615
781 449-0449 (h)
sherrybriggs@yahoo.com

Cynthia Cosgrove
10151 University Blvd #279
Orlando FL 32817-1904
321 292-4822 (cell)
cynthia.cosgrove@gmail.com

Pamela R. Hewitt
24662 Via Carlos
Laguna Niguel CA 92677-7604
949 831-8617 (h)
949 275-5905 (cell)
thescrapper@cox.net

Wendy Painter
10151 University Blvd #202
Orlando FL 32817-1904
919 619-1653 (cell)
wpainter@gmail.com

Kathleen Roberts
7 Harbor Watch Road
Burlington VT 05401-5269
802 598-7947 (cell)
Kathy@Kathysbooks.com
K Roberts Fine Books

Margaret Shepherd
40 Commonwealth Avenue Apt E
Boston MA 02116-3170
617 230-4946 (h)
shepherdmargaret5@gmail.com

Gloria Thompson
417 Washington Street Unit 2
Brookline MA 02446-6123
617 738-7048 (h)
thompson@bu.edu

Renewed Member:

Kazuo Taguchi
Shimomaruko 2-13-1-1014
Ohta-Ku, Tokyo 146-0092
JAPAN
81-3-3758-2817 (h & f)
090-2453-3459 (cell)
ks-taguchi@tkysh.jp

Address Changeabouts:

Cecilia Dean
Visionaire Publishing, LLC
30 W. 24th Street, 9th Floor
New York NY 10010

Suzanne Pfeiffer
7406 Spring Valley Drive #210
Springfield VA 22150

Rhoda Pollock
1232 Coburg Village Way
Rexford NY 12148
518 817-3132 (cell)

Barbara J. Raheb
7312 Gila Court
Palmdale CA 93551-4719

Emily Sneed
1015 NW 21st Ave Apt 424
Gainesville FL 32609

Telephone Changeabouts:

Cathie Abney
513 593-1015 (cell)

Email Changeabouts:

Kathleen Bryson
kbryson209@gmail.com



MBS President Stephen Byrne awards the 2014 Glasgow Cup to Joan Knoertzer. The Glasgow Cup recognizes a member who has shown a special dedication and friendship to MBS and who keeps alive that special spirit so evident at the founding in 1983.

Advertising Rates

Full Page	4.5 x 7.5"	\$100.00
Half Page	4.5 x 3.75"	\$50.00
Quarter Page	2.25 x 3.75"	\$30.00

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McKinney, Texas 75070
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Mail payments for ads (in \$ US dollars)
(paypal address minibook@cox.net) to:

Karen Nyman, Treasurer
702 Rosecrans Street
San Diego, CA 92106-3013

Miniature Book Society Newsletter

A publication of the Miniature Book Society Inc. Number 97

Issued in March, July, November. Items for publication, including advertising material, should be sent to the Editor. Publication deadlines are: February 1, June 1, October 1. Payment for advertising should be made to Miniature Book Society Inc. and sent to the Treasurer.

The Miniature Book Society is an international nonprofit organization founded in 1983 and chartered by the state of Ohio, USA. Its purposes are to sustain interest in all aspects of miniature books; to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas; to serve as a clearinghouse for information about miniature books.

Website: www.mbs.org

Board of Governors for 2015

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Cherry Williams
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Membership in the Society is open to all interested individuals, organizations and institutions. Membership dues in United States dollars: \$40.00 individual/couple for USA members, \$45.00 individual/couple for Canadian members; \$55.00 individual/couple outside North America. Corporate membership: \$50.00 (USA), \$55.00 (Canada), \$65.00 (outside North America).

Membership inquiries and dues payments:

Karen Nyman, Membership Chair
702 Rosecrans Street
San Diego, CA 92106-3013
(619) 226-4441
karennyman2@cox.net

Newsletter Editor:

Barbara Williamson
612 Harvest Drive
McKinney, Texas 75070
(214) 548-4692
willibj1@att.net

Miniature Book News Editor

Julian Edison
8 St. Andrews Drive
St. Louis MO 63124
(314) 567-3533
jiestl@mac.com

Manuscripts, letters and news items are welcomed and are subject to editing due to space and style limitations. Preferably submissions should be made electronically, by e-mail or disk. Attachments in Microsoft Word are preferred. Articles in the Newsletter do not necessarily express the views of the Board or of the Editor.

Deadline for the next issue: February 1, 2015.

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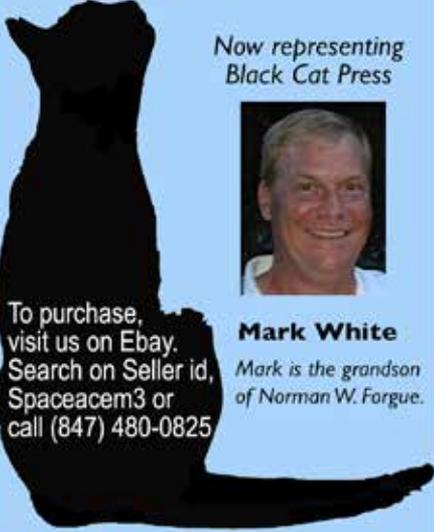


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'from our family to you'.

J. Brogan, Editor

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