



Caxtonian

Journal of The Caxton Club of Chicago

Volume IV, No. 11

November 1996

Collections of One-Time Caxtonian Frank Lloyd Wright in Oak Park

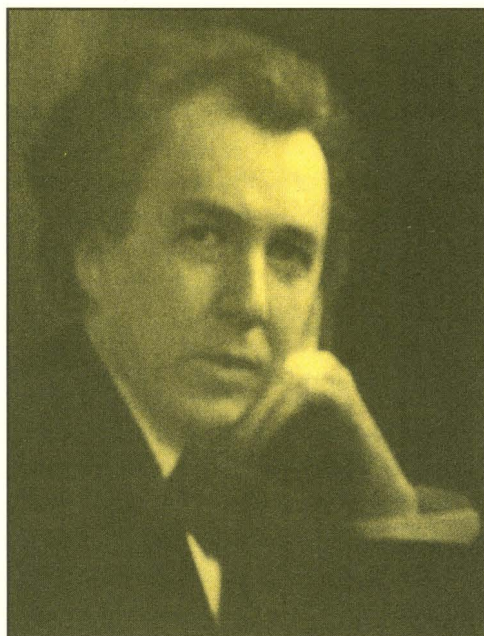
Nestled within the village of Oak Park, Illinois, are, besides important architectural creations of Frank Lloyd Wright, a number of significant collections of primary FLW materials. Two of the collections are preserved in the Oak Park Public Library and a third in the FLW Home and Studio of Oak Park.

The Oak Park Public Library, which dates from 1870, has been collecting FLW materials for many years. It now owns a number of rare, even unique, FLW pieces. Among these is a presentation copy of *Ausgeführte Bauten und Entwürfe von Frank Lloyd Wright*, Berlin: Ernst Wasmuth, 1910.

This pioneering collection of FLW's works and drawings from 1893-1909 consists of 100 plates held in two portfolios of which 72 plates are paper and 28 are tissue overlays. The trade copy, which was given to the library by FLW scholar Grant Manson, is incomplete, but the presentation copy, acquired from John Lloyd Wright, FLW's son, is, according to Professor Anthony Alofsin, one of only 11 or 12 copies known to exist in the world. FLW had originally ordered 25 of these special editions bound in half-leather for special friends and clients. The monograph enclosed within the folio was inscribed in 1913 to John, who was then working with him at the offices in Orchestra Hall, Chicago.

The library also owns a number of monographs by and about FLW. Three notable pieces are *House Beautiful*, River Forest, IL: Auvergne Press, 1896-97; *The Japanese Print: an Interpretation*, Chicago: Ralph Fletcher Seymour, 1912, and *The Life-Work of the American Architect Frank Lloyd Wright*, Santpoort, Holland: C.A. Mees, 1925. The *House Beautiful* piece, which was printed by

Winslow, a client, and FLW in a private stable designed by FLW, is numbered 47/90. This book is known for its beautiful page decorations and illustrations of dried weeds. *The Japanese Print* is printed on Japanese paper and has tan boards. It represents a beautiful example of



Frank Lloyd Wright ca 1908, just before he went to Berlin for the Wasmuth publication. Photo used with permission of FLW Home and Studio Foundation (H-255 A).

Caxtonian Ralph Fletcher Seymour's work. The last monograph, also known as the *Wendingen*, includes illustrations of work done by FLW between 1902 and 1923. It is inscribed by FLW to Gilman Lane, an apprentice, in 1934.

A number of significant pamphlets are also among the library's collections. *Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect* is a promotional pamphlet about his offices in the Rookery, Chicago, and his Oak Park Studio. It is believed to have been published in 1898. *For Sale at Oak Park, a Forest Avenue Property & a Chicago Avenue Property* is a pamphlet describing plans of FLW's

Home and Studio and offering the properties for sale. This piece is believed to have been published in the 1920s. A very rare and beautiful pamphlet, *FLW's Experimenting with Human Lives*, is a 12-page exposition about the "inappropriateness of skyscraper construction in seismic zones." Written after the 1923 Japanese earthquake, it was printed by Ralph Fletcher Seymour.

The library also has two unique photographic collections that illustrate FLW's early buildings before they were altered by subsequent owners. There are also a number of original FLW drawings and elevations among the library's collections.

The Unity Temple Restoration Foundation Collection is also held at the Oak Park Public Library. This collection documents the construction of Unity Temple, Oak Park, in 1906, and includes correspondence from contractors, suppliers, and church members. It includes, as well, letters from the FLW Studio, many of them signed by FLW himself. This is an important and unique collection.

The FLW Home and Studio, located at Chicago and Forest Avenues, Oak Park, is also a FLW resource of international significance. Its collections specialize in the early work of the architect. The Wright Family Collection is made up of books, including an original edition of *House Beautiful*, the 1901 *Chicago Architectural Club Catalogue* with FLW's handwritten revisions to his essay "The Art & Craft of the Machine," and a recently acquired copy of the 1910 Wasmuth. Other unique pieces

(Continued Inside)

Caxtonian

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Founded 1895



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Musings...

Architecture is an era's signature upon the land. In no better way does a people reveal so publicly and permanently its beliefs, its capabilities, and its limitations as when it builds — for living, worship, work, and play. John Ruskin observed that, of the three manuscripts in which great nations write their autobiographies — “the book of their deeds, the book of their words and the book of their art” — only the last is trustworthy.

Former Caxtonian Frank Lloyd Wright wrote an indelible inscription across the American landscape in architectural designs, which Lewis Mumford called the “very products of the prairie,...” Edgar Kaufmann and Ben Raeburn reported these statistics for Midwestern buildings designed by FLW and built between 1893 and 1959: In Illinois, 88; in Wisconsin, 45; in Michigan, 37; in Oak Park, 24. Before he died in 1959, FLW saw his work created in 35 of the 50 states. All told, he designed approximately 430 buildings. Some not built in his lifetime have been built since 1959.

FLW is, it seems to me, the Midwest's gift to the world — a humane intellectual linking the past and future through an integrity that continues to inform a variety of artistic genres. Brendan Gill, in a 1987 FLW biography, *Many Masks*, wrote, FLW “flourishes today, far beyond the boundaries of his life and time. His fame multiplies at a rate that even he would find satisfactory. Admiration of his handiwork approaches the universal.” My wife Norma and I discovered the truth of Gill's observation last month while on Maui, Hawaii.

Upon mentioning in the Lahaina Printsellers shop this planned FLW issue, I was asked, “Have you seen the FLW country club in Waikapu?” We had not, but we drove there and found, lying like a magnificent gem in the rugged, rust-colored foothills of West Maui, the Grand Waikapu Country Club, built in 1992 from a thrice-modified 1949 FLW design (see story on opposite page).

Without and within, the building illustrates the organic, Whitmanesque essence of FLW's thought processes that evolved into edifices prized as art. A certain boldness of viewpoint inspires the very setting for the structure. The spaciousness within is enhanced by stained and leaded art glass, screening or emphasizing ceilings and apertures. Textures and colors reflect and complement nature in the most ingenious ways.

Beyond the structural — but infusing every element of it — is FLW's mind, driven by the natural law of simplicity, his fervent belief in “democracy as a revolution,” and his awareness of the need for the modern city to be transformed by “some deeper thought [which] must get inside, penetrate, and from the inside work out the practical new forms suited to democratic life.”

Art historian Oliver Larkin once recalled Victor Hugo's hope that an “architectural genius may startle us unexpectedly even in the 20th century.” FLW, Larkin wrote, was “that genius.” The proposition at the heart of FLW's philosophy, Larkin said, was clear: “Democracy and its promise of unwarped growth for the individual.” FLW would, I believe, be pleased to know that old Caxton colleagues cherish his signature upon our land, and that we as a people strive to make his human ideals universal.

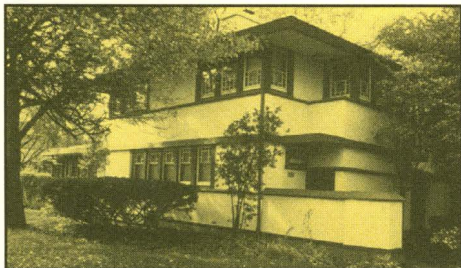
Robert Cotner
Editor

Hawaiian Country Club Has FLW Elements From Illinois

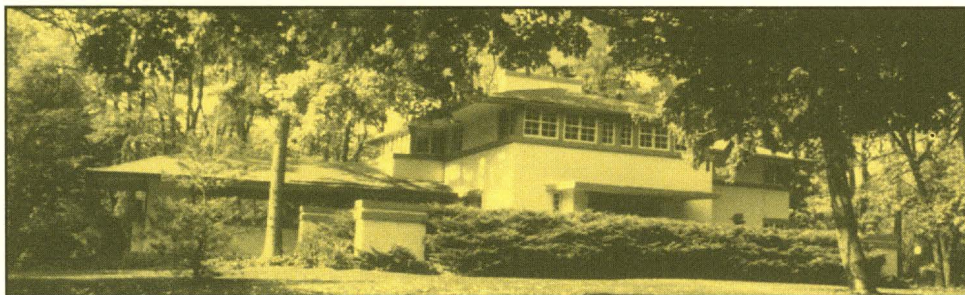
In 1949 Frank Lloyd Wright designed a luxury home for the Windfohr family of Fort Worth, TX. It was never built. In 1952, the Windfohr design was modified for Raul Bailleres, an official in the Mexican government. This project was abandoned before construction.

In 1957, playwright Arthur Miller and his wife Marilyn Monroe, asked Wright to design a large country home for them in Connecticut. Wright modified the Windfohr plan in accordance to the wishes of Miller and Monroe, and the plans came to be known as the "Marilyn Monroe" house. Because of costs, the house was never built. The couple separated in 1958, and Wright died in 1959.

William B. Green Home, 1300 W. Garfield Ave., Aurora, 1912.



A. W. Gridley Home, 637 N. Batavia Ave., Geneva, 1906.



A 74,778-square-foot building — two-thirds underground, Grand Waikapu Country Club sits in the rugged foothills of West Maui, Hawaii. Photos by and from the collection of Robert Cotner.



In 1988, Messieurs Howard Hamamoto, Pundy Yokouchi, and Takeshi Sekiguchi approached Taliesin West to review plans of structures designed by Wright but never built. They planned a country club in Hawaii and wanted to honor Wright, if the appropriate plans were available.

The Taliesin group suggested the plans for the Marilyn Monroe house, with modifications in size and design to fit the site in Hawaii. In 1992, the Grand Waikapu Country Club on the island of Maui was built, a grand memorial to Wright in America's South Pacific state.

Elements from existing FLW buildings in Illinois and Wisconsin have been adapted and incorporated into the Maui country club.

The chandelier of the circular Monroe Dining Room is modeled from one designed by Wright for the Johnson Wax Building, Racine, WI. Art glass designs in the Waikapu edifice were modeled after designs by Wright in the Susan Lawrence Dand House, Springfield, IL, the Avery Coonley House, Riverside, IL, and Taliesin East, Spring Green, WI.

Titles and Values Of FLW-Written Books

An Autobiography, New York, 1932. \$400.

Buildings, Plans and Designs, New York, 1963. \$1,000.

The Disappearing City, New York, 1932. \$600.

Drawings for a Living Architecture, New York, 1959. \$1,000.

The Future of Architecture, New York, 1953. \$150.

Genius and the Mobocracy, New York, 1949. \$175.

The Japanese Print, Chicago, 1912. \$3,000.

Modern Architecture, Princeton, 1931. \$350.

The Natural House, New York, 1954. \$350.

Studies and Executed Buildings [Ausgeführte Bauten und Entwürfe von Frank Lloyd Wright], Berlin, 1910. \$3,000.

The House Beautiful, River Forest, IL, 1896-97. \$3,000 (signed).

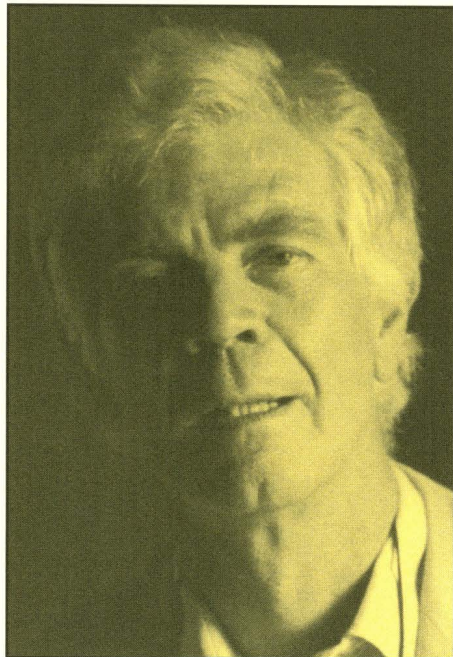
From Allen and Patricia Ahearn, Collected Books: A Guide to Values, 1991.

STUDIES AND EXECUTED BUILDINGS BY FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

John, I hope you will find this book a source of inspiration and a guide to the work of your father.

FLW's presentation inscription to his son John of an 1910 monograph.

Literary Scholar to Address November Caxton Meeting



British scholar Richard Wilson, Visiting Professor in English at Northwestern University, will present "Words, Words, Words — The Printer's Devil!" He will be joined in the reading by Chicago actor Frank Mackey.

Wilson has toured Africa and the Middle East with the Inter-Universities Council and the British Council, and has lectured and given talks and readings in Europe and North America. As Director of the Open University's Summer Drama Schools in London, he organized and took part in dozens of readings and workshops with other leading British actors and actresses.

Accompanying Wilson to the Caxton dinner meeting will be his wife Kate, the daughter of Vivian Redler, master printer at Oxford University Press for 30 years and founder/publisher of Perpetual Press.

Wilson was the Caxton luncheon speaker on March 8, 1996. Caxtonians will not want to miss this rare opportunity to hear one of England's most gifted speakers.

Gordon R. Williams, Long-time Caxtonian, Dies in California

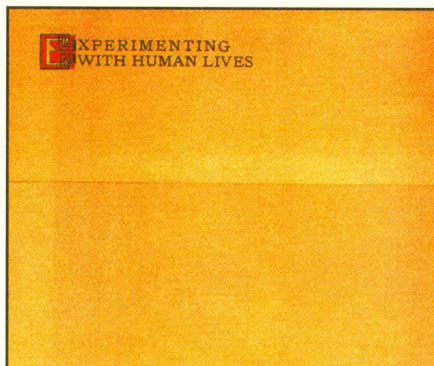
Gordon R. Williams, a Caxtonian since 1959, died September 15, in California of complications from prostate cancer. Mr. Williams was born in Oregon July 26, 1914, and was educated at Stanford University and the University of Chicago. He enjoyed a long and distinguished career in librarianship.

He was the chief assistant librarian at the University of California at Los Angeles from 1952 to 1959. He then came to Chicago, where he served as the Director of the Center for Research Libraries from 1959 until his retirement in 1980.

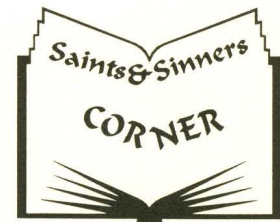
As a Caxtonian, he served on the Publications Committee and wrote parts of the text for two Caxton Club publications, *Fantasy in a Wood-Block*, and *RHM — Robert Hunter Middletown*. He retained non-resident membership in The Caxton Club since retiring to California. He was also a member of the Zamarano Club in Los Angeles and the Roxburghe Club in San Francisco.

His wife Jane wrote to the club saying, "The Williams family will remain sorrowful for a long time." All Caxtonians extend their deepest sympathy to Jane and the family. We shall miss him.

Frank J. Piehl



Cover of Ralph Fletcher Seymour's pamphlet for FLW, 1923. Oak Park Public Library Collection



Caxtonian Paul A. Saenger's *A Catalogue of the Pre-1500 Western Manuscript Books at the Newberry Library*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989 (first edition) is listed in Catalog M548, Oak Knoll Books, New Castle, DE, for \$150.

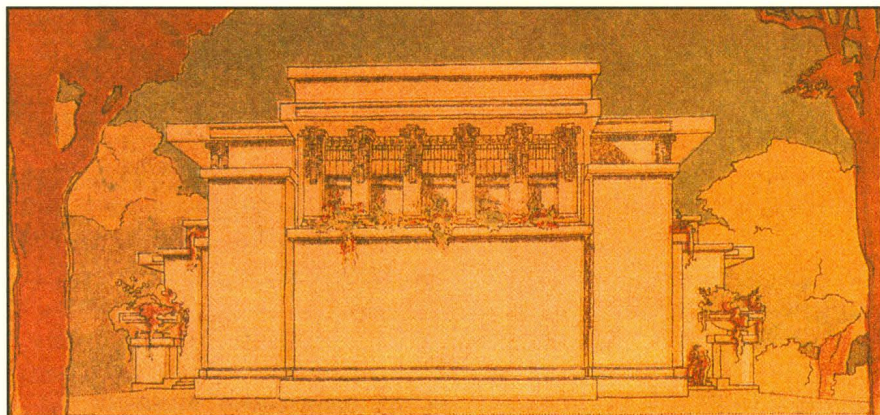
The Midwest Bookhunters Annual Fall Book Fair is set for the Grand Ballroom, Navy Pier, 600 E. Grand Ave., November 3, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$3.

A 1936 first edition of Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind* was recently listed for sale at \$3,800. The romantic saga of life in the South during the American Civil War and Reconstruction was a best-seller and won the Pulitzer Prize in 1937.

The Fellowship of American Bibliophilic Societies (FABS) has published Vol. I, Number 3, of its newsletter. The publication gives a summary of the programs of bibliophilic societies across America. It also contains an essay by Caxtonian editor Robert Cotner, "The Club Newsletter: A Vital Extension of the Club Itself." The following new members have joined FABS: The Sacramento Book Collectors Club, the Book Club of Washington (state), the Florida (Clearwater) Bibliophilic Society, and the John Russell Bartlett Society (Providence, RI). Copies of the latest newsletter are available from Hayward Blake.

Sociologist E. Digby Baltzell died recently in Philadelphia. A University of Pennsylvania professor, Baltzell is famous for coining the acronym WASP (White-Anglo-Saxon-Protestant) in 1964, which has become a permanent addition to the nation's lexicon.

Oak Park Preserves Architectural Treasures



Unity Temple, 1906, from the Wasmuth publication, 1911. Used by special arrangement with the Oak Park Public Library.

(Continued from Page One)

include pencil sketches by FLW and his first wife, Catherine, historical photographs, and numerous works of Japanese art.

The Restoration Documentation Collection houses slides, drawings, correspondence, and archeological artifacts. The Maginel Wright Barney Collection contains artwork, correspondence, and memorabilia of FLW's sister, who was an illustrator of children's books, a designer, and an artist in her own right.

Perhaps the most significant piece of Wrightiana for consideration here resides, not within city limits of Oak Park, but in the archives of The Caxton Club itself. This is the early minutes of the club welcoming FLW to membership, May 3, 1907. Unfortunately on January 14, 1910, he was dropped from membership evidently for non-payment of dues.

Michael Godow and Jeanette Fields

**FROM FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT ARCHITECT
FOREST & CHICAGO AVENUES OAK PARK
ILLINOIS ▼ ▼ TELEPHONE FIFTY-THREE**

Return address, 1908. From Unity Temple Restoration Foundation Collection.

Wright Programs Scheduled This Month in Oak Park

"Wright and Wasmuth: The Heritage in Print and Drawing" will feature presentations by four Frank Lloyd Wright scholars and conservators, November 14, 7 p.m., Unity Temple, 875 Lake Street, Oak Park.

Panelists include Anthony Alofsin, author of *FLW, the Lost Years, 1910-1922*; Wil Hasbrouck, restoration architect, founder/editor of *Prairie School Review* (1964-81), and FLW scholar; Ernst Wasmuth, grandson of German publisher of early FLW

materials, and Robert Weinberg, paper conservator and partner in Graphic Conservation, Chicago.

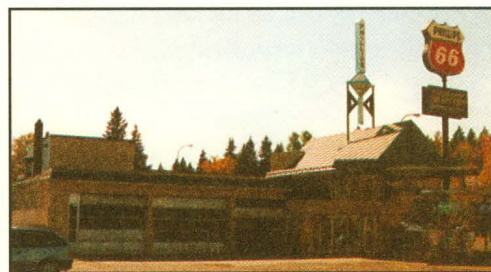
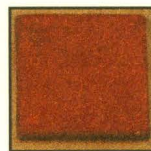
This program, sponsored by the Oak Park Public Library to commemorate the library's conservation of significant FLW works, will include an exhibition of original FLW drawings and folios at the library, 834 Lake Street, Oak Park. The exhibition will open after the program on November 14 and continue through November 17. For information, telephone 708/383-8200.

Cloquet Service Station, Timeless Tribute to FLW

In tune with his penchant for mobilization of the common man, Frank Lloyd Wright designed one of the country's most distinctive gasoline stations. Based on a service station design from the Broadacre City project, the working design for the Lindholm service station was adapted at Taliesin under the tutelage of FLW. With supervision by a Taliesin apprentice, construction took place on a picturesque site in downtown Cloquet, Minnesota, and was completed in 1958.

FLW incorporated many innovative features in the Lindholm service station design that found their way into the subsequent Phillips 66 service stations built through the 1980s. The station features a 35-foot cantilevered canopy, a stylized, 60-foot tall Phillips 66 obelisk, extensive use of skylights in the service area, overhead dispensing of motor oils and greases, the first copper-tiled roof, radiant floor heat for the entire main floor, and a uniquely Wright-angled, glass-enclosed and cypress-appointed observation lounge overlooking the St. Louis River. The Lindholm service station stands as a timeless tribute to one of FLW's passions: the automobile.

Jon Cotner



A Cherokee-red tile with FLW's signature (above) marks all of Wright's later buildings. Photos by and from the collection of Jon Cotner.

Book Marks

Luncheon Programs

All luncheon meetings, unless otherwise noted, are held in the Mid-Day Club, 56th floor of the First National Bank of Chicago, Madison & Clark, Chicago. Luncheon and discussion, 12:30 p.m.

November 15

Anthony Alofsin, author of *Frank Lloyd Wright: The Lost Years, 1919-1922*, will speak on Wright and his importance to Oak Park and the nation.

December 13.

Caxtonian Susan Levy, Executive Editor of the Lakeside Classic series with R.R. Donnelley & Sons Company, will speak on the "Origin, History, Production, and Distribution of the Lakeside Classics."

Ed Quattrocchi
Leonard Freedman

Important Note: Members planning to attend luncheons must make advance reservations by phoning either the Caxton number, 312/255-3710, or Quattrocchi at 708/475-4653. Luncheon for members and guests, \$20.

Caxton Club Now on Web

Working with Robert Williams and Frank Piehl, Caxtonian Paul Baker is designing the pages for a Caxton Club website, at the following address: <http://www.caxtonclub.org/>. Until completed, the website must be entered through the user name, *Rogers*, and the password, *Middleton*. Caxtonians' feedback would be much appreciated.

Re-Remembering Caxton, Pioneer English Printer

Caxtonian Leonard Freedman sent along the following excerpt from Frank Leslie's *Popular Monthly*, January 1890.

It was in 1447 (says Donald G. Mitchell in his new book, "English Lands, Letters, and Kings") that William Caxton issued the first book, printed with a date, in England. This Caxton was a man worth knowing about on many counts: he was a typical Englishman, born in Kent; was apprenticed to a well-to-do mercer [textile merchant] in the Old Jewry, London, at a time when, he says, many poor were a-hungered for bread made of fern roots; he went over (while yet apprenticed) to the low countries of Flanders, perhaps to represent his master's interests; abode there; throve there; came to be Governor of the Company of English merchant adventurers, in the ancient town of Bruges; knew the great, rich Flemings who were patrons of letters; became friend and protegee of that English Princess Margaret who married Charles, Duke of Burgundy; did work in translating old books for the great lady; studied the new printing art, which crept in to Bruges; and finally after 30 years of life in the busy Flemish city, sailed away for London, and set up a press which he had brought with him, under the shadow of Westminster Towers. Fifteen years and more he wrought on there, at his printers craft, both translation and original, and dying over seventy in 1492.

Dinner Programs

All dinner meetings, unless otherwise noted are held in the Mid-Day Club, 56th Floor of the First National Bank, Madison & Clark streets, Chicago. Spirits, 5 p.m., dinner, 6 p.m., lecture, 7 p.m.

November 20

Richard Wilson, Oxford University, England, will speak on "Words, Words, Words — The Printer's Devil!" Wilson is currently Visiting Professor of English at Northwestern University.

December 18.

Caxtonian John Railing will entertain at the annual Holiday Revels at the Mid-Day Club. He will share his extensive pop-up book collection, and there is a rumor Caxtonian and magician Jay Marshall and his Pal Lefty will make an appearance. Expect much more!

Karen Skubish

Advance reservations, which are absolutely necessary, may be made by phoning the Caxton office at 312/255-3710. Any special meal requirements (such as vegetarian) need to be made in advance. Members and guests, \$35.

The First National Bank of Chicago's parking garage, 40 S. Clark Street, offers a special parking rate after 5 p.m. to guests of the Mid-Day Club. When you leave, please tell the parking attendant you were at the Mid-Day Club, and your parking fee will be \$5.25



The Caxton Club
60 West Walton Street
Chicago, IL 60610