

## Walter Harding, Chicago's Greatest Bibliomaniac

His extraordinary collection of music books was spirited off to the Bodleian in Oxford

D.W. Krummel

What's the difference between a bibliophile (like us members of the Caxton Club) and a bibliomaniac? Holbrook Jackson's *Anatomy of Bibliomania* devotes five chapters to the question. There are also many passionate pronouncements. There is also a wonderful Chicago example that illustrates the difference.

Walter N.H. Harding (1883-1973) was little known in Caxton Club circles, although he built one of Chicago's most notable collections. Nor was he particularly sociable, however, except to those who knew and loved his kinds of books. He lived very modestly, and the fewer people who knew what he owned the better. Today his collection is one of the treasures of the Bodleian Library at Oxford, all 22 tons of it having been transported there by jumbo jet after he died.

I first became aware of Harding in the 1950s from my work on early English music printing, where the Day and Murrie *English Song Books, 1651-1702* (1940) locates copies in libraries. The British Museum is preeminent, but the second level includes the Bodleian, Harvard, Huntington, Folger—and Harding. At the Library of Congress, my supervisors knew of him, and allowed me to write to him in hopes of landing his collection. (Allowed is the right word: so anxious were they to be in contact that they got permission from several administrative levels above, enabling me to sign a letter on official stationery.) What they did not know was that John Brett-Smith, head of the Oxford University Press in New York and himself a sometime collector of Harding-type books, had long been courting Harding, and that the collection was to be donated to the Bodleian on Harding's death.

When I came to Chicago in 1962, I obviously needed to meet the man. When I phoned him, he remembered the letter, although he had never bothered to answer it. I discovered a collection, the contents of which



Antiquarian music dealer Albi Rosenthal drew caricatures of Harding on paper napkins in the 1960s.

were as amazing as its storage conditions were appalling. It was in a decrepit firetrap of a frame house in a lower-middle-class neighborhood far to the west of the Loop near Oak Park. Most of the ten or twelve rooms were filled with bookshelves, their contents broadly classified by genre (French opera scores, songsters, American sheet music). Happily, Harding and I had lots to talk about, but it was understood that the sole topic of conversation was his collection. (Harding and the Caxton Club were obviously never meant for each other.)

John Heyward had been able to persuade Harding to talk about himself and his collec-

tion in *The Book Collector* in 1962. Born in London in 1883, he came to Chicago at the age of four with his mother, whom he long cared for. After she died, he lived alone. He made his living as a pianist and organist. It must have been very modest, since each of his musical specialties eventually dried up: first, ragtime piano around 1920, then theater organ before talking pictures came in, then organ again, first in churches, finally in a Masonic temple. Along the way he learned to love the printed music that he was reading, and he saved his pennies for whatever he could find and afford. He bought from from the high-end London bookseller Bertram Dobell, but he also found treasures on Maxwell Street.

During the Depression in 1932, Harding had enough savings, or credit, to buy en bloc the remarkable collection of Sir John Stainer (1840-1901). Like Harding, Stainer had been born in modest circumstances in the Southwark area of London, but unlike Harding he rose to preeminence as a church musician, scholar, composer of a

long popular oratorio, *The Crucifixion*, and Heather Professor of Music at Oxford. The strength of the Stainer collection, in English songbooks, became the strength of Harding's as well. But Harding extended the scope of his collecting to include English poetical miscellanies (he is well represented among the owners of titles in Arthur Case's 1935 *Bibliography of English Poetical Miscellanies, 1521-1750*) and broadside ballads. In fact, Harding bought whatever music he could afford. Even before the Stainer library, he had acquired a strong collection of French opera scores. I'm not sure he really liked this music, and his French was



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as bad as mine. But he had become a bibliomaniac.

His early American sheet music is exceptional. There is a legend known as “Dichter’s trunk.” Harry Dichter, the best known dealer in musical Americana, assembled a cache that he would mail to his customers, in order of their seriousness and ability to pay top prices. The most affluent customers got first crack and would then mail the trunk to the next customer for items to be sold at lower prices. (Postage was then very cheap.) The pecking order was known to the insiders: Elliott Shapiro and Lester Levy got first crack, J. Francis Driscoll came down a bit, and Harding was said to rank near the bottom. Collectors are a clubby lot, however, and Harding was a loner. Judging from Jean Geil’s study, Harding did very well indeed.

There was always much to talk about with him if you knew what to talk about. In time I was allowed to bring guests to see the collector and the collection. He hovered, of course, anxious for praise but also for dialogue. One scholar was too busy taking notes to talk. Harding told me he would prefer that she not return, though she much needed and wanted to. Another visitor, more sociable, he wanted to see again. Alas, he was a Renaissance musicologist who needed to look briefly at a Venetian partbook from the 1520s, an only known copy that Harding had acquired as part of an en bloc purchase of other materials.

Two other visits were memorable. I was able to lure Lester S. Levy, the American sheet music collector, into addressing the Caxton Club in the 1960s with the understanding that I would arrange a visit with Harding. I wish I had been able to record their lore and collectors’ chatter. (“This is a better copy than mine.” “You know the only other known copy of that is at Brown.” “I’ve got a better copy than that, but yours has the illustration in chromolith. Let me know if you want to trade.”)

The other visitor was the preeminent antiquarian music dealer Albi Rosenthal. Later, back home in our apartment near the Newberry, he drew caricatures of Harding on a paper napkin, which he reproduced in *Un ingres du violon* (1989), a privately printed collection of his sketches (see preceding page).

When Harding died in December 1973, the news services were quick to publicize the “human interest story.” Harding became a media event in national and

even a few foreign newspapers for a few days. (My name was mentioned, so I heard from namesakes in South Africa and Australia.) The Bodleian Library, well aware of the unstable neighborhood of and frayed wiring in the Harding home on North Pine Avenue, quickly moved the collection to quarters that Bob Rosenthal had arranged in the then-new Regenstein Library. Since being installed at Oxford, its rich holdings have been well loved and deeply

explored. I do not think Harding ever returned to visit England, but his collection is now treasured and much used.

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NOTES: Harding’s description of his collection is in “British Song Books and Kindred Subjects,” *Book Collector* 11 (1962), pp. 448-59. The fullest biographical sketch is Michael Turner’s “Who Was Walter Harding? Some Preliminary Notes on His English Antecedents,” *Bodleian Library Record*, 15 (1996), pp. 422-54. (It is listed as part 1; subsequent parts never appeared.) For my memorial tribute, see “A Musical Bibliomaniac,” *Musical Times*, 115 (April 1974), pp. 301-2. My colleague Jean Geil surveyed the

American sheet music in *Notes*, 34 (1978), pp. 805-14. Helene Solheim’s dissertation (Ph.D., University of Washington, 1985) is on “Walter N.H. Harding and the Harding Drama Collection at the Bodleian Library, Oxford.” Several Bodleian Library websites also describe the collection, and individual items are entered in their databases.

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ABOVE Is this 2015 Google street view of 110 N. Pine Ave., Chicago, a newer house, or Harding’s former home? BELOW Harding as church organist.



# How the BBC told the Harding story

Abigail Williams of St Peter's College, Oxford, was the storyteller in a broadcast from February 2012

**A**NNOUNCER: For the next 20 minutes we investigate another fascinating character in "Ragtime to Riches." It's the little known story of Walter Harding, son of an East End bricklayer, ragtime pianist in Depression-era Chicago, and major benefactor to the Bodleian Library in Oxford. Forty years after he made his record-breaking bequest, scholars are still finding exciting new gems, and among those scholars is Abigail Williams.

**ABIGAIL W.:** Three years ago I began work on a project here at the Bodleian Library in Oxford to catalog the popular writing collections or miscellanies published in the 18th century. The project, called the Digital Miscellanies Index, is based at the Bodleian because there are more of these miscellanies in what is known as the Harding Collection than anywhere else in the world.

Right at the start of the project I went down into the Bodleian stacks across the road with Clive Hurst, the head of Rare Books. There we were down underground in these locked metal cages of rare books, looking at a bewildering number of things, and Clive said to me, "And, you know the amazing story of Harding himself?"

Of course, I didn't, but who can resist anything like that? My journey of discovery took me on a paper trail from the Bodleian, via the East End of London, to Depression-era Chicago and back here to the Bodleian.

**CLIVE H.:** The way it all started was with his collection of music and songs, and then he was such an interested and passionate collector that he starts seeing links between songs in sheet music and operas, the obvious things, to seeing songs in poetry, songs in drama, songs in chapbooks, the cheap popular literature of the 18th and 19th centuries.

He extends, all the time, his collecting range, and that's why it ends up by being the huge collection that it is, one of the biggest that has ever come in to the Bodleian, which in itself, the University of Oxford main library, is a collection of collections.

**ABIGAIL:** Some of the material is very obviously popular material, isn't it?

**CLIVE:** A lot of it. The interesting thing about scholarship is that it often lags behind the collectors who are amassing material, because they are so single-minded, and Harding was very interested in popular music.

He played popular music for a living and he was interested in the popular music of the past. It's only after a certain lapse of years that scholarship can catch up with that and find what is popular worth researching.

**ABIGAIL W.:** I find that really fascinating that you've got Harding in his suburban house in Chicago [sic], and he's there setting the pace for scholarship that hasn't even caught up with him 40 years after his death.

**SPEAKER 3:** Extraordinary, but it's true. It's because he is so passionate. I think that's true of lots of collectors, that they know their own subject is important when the rest of the world doesn't, and that's why Harding was able to amass so much material was because very few people were interested in it at that time, whereas now it's become priceless. You couldn't possibly afford to put together his collection.

**A**BIGAIL W.: In 1974, Walter Newton Harding, known as Newton, or Newt to his friends, gave the Bodleian its biggest ever donated collection, some 22 tons of rare books, sheet music, opera scores, and printed ephemera. The collection is remarkable and utterly unique, but perhaps the most amazing thing about it is Walter Newton Harding himself.

I wanted to know how this ragtime pianist managed to amass a world class collection of rare books and music and why did he then decide to give it to the Bodleian? He hadn't been to Britain since the age of four and had never visited the library.

One of the first things I did with my digging was to order up the archives of correspondence about bequests in the Bodleian's library records. I received some unprepossessing blue folders from the library storage center at Swindon. The first one I opened had press cuttings about Harding's death and legacy, so in a way I was beginning from the end.

They said things like, "Shabby Old Man Leaves Collections Worth Millions," and "Organist Dies at 90 in Home Filled with Rare Sheet Music." One of the most intriguing headlines was the *Chicago Tribune's*, "Collector Hated City Librarians. Leaves \$50,000 in Music," and another one, "Recluse Loved Books but Hated City Libraries and Librarians."

What was that about? If it was true, why did he give his stuff to the Bodleian, one of the world's biggest and most prestigious research libraries? The most obvious place to find some of the answers was Harding himself. He wrote an article in a scholarly journal about his book collection. Unusually for an article of this kind, he began by talking about his family background.

"I was born in London in 1883, in a cottage on a little street just off the old Kent Road," he wrote. "I was brought to Chicago when I was about four. I've never visited England since. Even then I loved songs and could sing 'The Flying Trapeze,' 'Champagne Charlie,' 'Captain Jinks,' and other songs of the 1860s, which my father, a builder, sang.

"I carried the tunes so well that my mother, a frustrated musician, determined that her only child should have some musical education. She took in sewing from her friends to raise the money for my lessons. When I finished high school at seventeen I went into music professionally to help out at home."

As a young man and keen musician, Harding became more and more interested in old books of music. He says that he went to Chicago Public Library to look at a collection of 17th century broadside ballads. He could see they hadn't been used for years and had to be dusted off before he could read them.

Here's what he wrote: "After my third trip it was suggested I see the head librarian. He asked about my interest in the subject, and apparently, never having looked at the volumes himself, suggested it might be pornographic in nature.

"I was not quite 21 at the time, 6' 3" tall, and weighed 13 stone. I was a pianist at one of the largest music halls in Chicago and ran the show. I had just finished helping rehearse a ballet spectacle of some 150 girl dancers. I assured him I had no need of vicarious thrills, and while I appreciated his solicitude for my virtue, it left me with rather a poor impression of the librarians."

Harding clearly had a sense of humor and could tell a good story, but there were also signs here of resentment towards the

See BBC on HARDING, page 4

library and its gatekeeper. I suspect that this was an antagonism that ran throughout his life.

Harding was self-taught. He wasn't part of those elite circles of theater-going academics in the city. He doesn't seem to have been a particularly sociable man. It's easy to see that he would have been seen as an eccentric, but a picture's emerging.

Harding is a very young man leading a pretty glamorous life for a short while. He talks about playing in the big nightspots of Chicago, playing opposite Mike Bernard and playing Scott Joplin. He talks of singer Belle Baker, Sophie Tucker, and the stars of the period.

His later letters show he had distinct views about how he believed Joplin wanted ragtime music to be played. This was quite a short phase in his life. After five years, Harding gave up the piano and took up the pipe organ in 1913. He became organist at one of the downtown Chicago cinemas in the grand old days of the Wurlitzer.

He played organ at the Fourth Presbyterian Church and at Emmanuel Baptist Church, which was attended by J.D. Rockefeller on his visits to Chicago. He played at Masonic events. He composed songs himself, but apparently threw away his own scores. He played to bread lines during the Depression. It was said that he could play *The Messiah* from memory.

He seems to have started collecting young, in his teens. He told one visitor he started buying English and French 17th and 18th century songbooks and sheet music when almost nobody else was interested in them, and that's part of his story, that he was hoovering up ephemeral material that wasn't valued at that time.

He got his name on the mailing list of important English dealers, who often sent him batches of material on consignment and then allowed him to pay for it in installments out of his weekly wages. Harding's success as a collector has quite a lot to do with what was happening around him, the backdrop of the Depression.

Before the Depression, lots of American book collectors got books mainly on credit. When the crash came, collectors returned all their books to the booksellers and the booksellers were flooded with unsalable stock. They knew what Harding collected, so they just sent him everything in that line.

By the 1950s Harding had amassed a lot of stuff, and what's more, he knew it intimately.

There's a wonderful account of an afternoon with Walter Harding and his books, written by Clarence Tracy, a Canadian academic who visited him around this time.

"I imagined that he was a millionaire bibliophile, with a mansion in one of the fashionable northern suburbs, and that he would be well protected by watchdog secretaries. So I was surprised when he answered the telephone himself and at once invited me to come to his house.

"I was even more surprised when the bus took me into a dreary slum and beyond it into what could only be described as a working class district, not a place in which one would expect to find a library of rare books. But here, in a small story and a half frame house with two lilac bushes blooming in the dooryard, Mr. Harding lived alone.

"He led me into a small, gloomy living room, furnished with a Chesterfield set that must have been 30 years old, and was upholstered in a reddish mohair that showed no evidence of having ever been sat on before. We sat on his red mohair for a few minutes making polite and awkward conversation, so I was relieved when he said, 'Would you like to see my books?' and I agreed wholeheartedly.

"These had taken over most of the upper story, ousting beds and other domestic items. Instead, each of the rooms I could see was lined with what looked like homemade bookshelves and was furnished with deal tables and hard chairs. The tables were provided with pickle bottles of pencils and a volume or two of reference books.

"Surrounded by his books, Mr. Harding came to life. At once he produced the book I'd come to see and allowed me to examine it and transcribe several poems. Afterwards, he showed me a few of his other treasures and it became clear that he knew his collection intimately, being able not only to pick the right book off the shelf, but to turn to the right page in it in an instant to find a version that he wished to show me of some 18th century song, such as 'Cherry Ripe' or 'Sally in Our Alley.'

I love this account. Harding obviously knew these books inside out and he wouldn't have dreamt of selling them, but by 1950 he was a single, childless man in his late 60s, with no close relations and clearly starting to think about what would happen to all this material and which library would make the best possible home. We can see a musing on it in the letter he wrote to Norman [inaudible], an American bibliographer.

"I am not wealthy and so could not endow a building or a section in some existing library,

and I don't think much of endowed mausoleums. I am a transplanted Englishman, and so I wonder if my books should not go back to the land from whence they came, and to the people that wrote the songs that they contain. The Bodleian might be the library in which my stuff could fill a proper niche, albeit a small one."

The Bodleian made contact with Harding in 1950, and in those blue files in Swindon you can read exchanges of letters. Over the two decades of correspondence you could see Harding clearly feeling more and more comfortable about the library. Here's Harding writing to them in July 1963:

"I had not known of the Bodleian's interest in music. I'm especially glad to learn the one in charge is young and enthusiastic. I was both once, but I'm glad to say I'm still an enthusiast."

By 1970 the gift to the Bodleian was made and Harding's name had been inscribed in stone on a plaque as one of the library's great benefactors. But at this point the books were still all with the 87-year-old Harding in the Chicago town house. This was where things started to get difficult.

The bankers involved in the transaction and the Chicago lawyers who'd done all the paperwork were getting more and more anxious about the safety of the collection and wanted to take the books away as soon as possible, but the staff in the Bodleian were worried about this, worried about taking Harding's books away from him while he was still alive.

Then fate intervened. A Chicago lawyer writes to the head of the Bodleian, Robert Shackleton, on the 28th of November, 1973, saying the house has been burgled. Money's been taken, not books, but there's a sense of panic. "Because of this," he says, "I've persuaded Mr. Harding to hand over all the books as soon as possible." Harding would be allowed to hold on to his stamp collection to look at for his remaining years.

Shackleton was shocked. He thought Harding had been put under too much pressure to give over the collection, and when he telephoned Harding he said he seemed confused and seemed to have aged considerably.

He arranged to go visit Harding himself in mid-December, and on the 6th of December he wrote to the Chicago lawyer to express his concern. I think it's an extraordinary letter for the head of the Bodleian library to have written.

He says, "There is one specific problem, which was not possible to explain to you on the telephone. It is, in fact, Mr. Harding's



devotion to his collection. He has built this up over the years with such energy, skill, and enthusiasm that he has almost come to identify himself with it. He has undoubtedly been living for it alone for many years past.

"The almost fanatical devotion of a collector to his books is something which I, as a modest collector myself, can fully understand. I know that I may seem to be arguing against the interests of the library in saying this, but if we were completely to deprive him of the collection I think his zestful life would be terminated and I should personally have a feeling of real guilt."

I found this amazing. Here's the prospect of the biggest ever donation to the library, and Shackleton is saying he's prepared to risk it for the sake of Harding's personal welfare. He's effectively saying that the happiness of a 90-year-old eccentric book collector in Chicago he hardly knows is worth more than 22 tons of rare books.

I can't imagine the Chicago lawyers were thrilled, but in fact their concern soon became irrelevant, because the next item in the file, a week after Shackleton wrote that letter, is a telegram from Shackleton to the Bodleian library. It's dated the 13th of December, 1973.

"Mr. Harding died yesterday. All affairs in hands of executors, therefore, no urgency. Going to Chicago tomorrow. Shackleton."

Harding had been found dead at his house by workmen doing repairs. He seems to have suffered a heart attack. He was 90 and he died in his house, and he died with his books around him. He was buried in Glen Oak Cemetery in Chicago and Shackleton was there at his funeral.

Early the following year Michael Turner, who's now retired after 40 years' work at the Bodleian, but before that worked as its head of conservation, was sent out as a young man to Chicago to organize the packing and removal of the collection. It eventually arrived a year later, 22 tons of it on two aircraft. Michael recalls this time at Walter Harding's house with great affection.

Michael Turner: It was a wooden frame house, which obviously was a ground floor and a bedroom floor, but he told me that at one point they'd actually lifted the house, built a

wall, and put it back down on the wall so they had a big basement, which, needless to say, was just full of shelves and books.

Abigail W.: And is it true there was nothing in the house except for books?

Michael Turner: Very little. Well, I got to know the house quite well, because, of course, it took some time to get to 20-odd tons of books out, but most of the books were upstairs. He slept in a rather small room, with just a few books

thought he, thinking back about him, I think he was probably quite a proud man. I mean, the one thing one has got to say is he didn't just have books, rather like some of us who have a lot of books that we perhaps haven't read. I think he knew those books inside out.

If you said, "Do you have or would you know about ..." this, that, or the other, he'd get up and go straight to a book and produce the answers. We'd had a conversation on the telephone, I think from England once, and

then when I got to Chicago, and he clearly pumped me a little bit about what I was interested in.

I think he'd gone round and prepared a little, because he would bring, "I want to show you this. I want to show you that," and I noticed as he went round, those books he was picking up had just been moved out slightly so he could see them quickly, I think.

Abigail W.: I think there's something rather touching here about the way in which Harding wants to show off his collection, wants to be the expert. Despite all his suspicion of librarians and his reclusiveness, he's carefully prepared himself and his books for this visit.

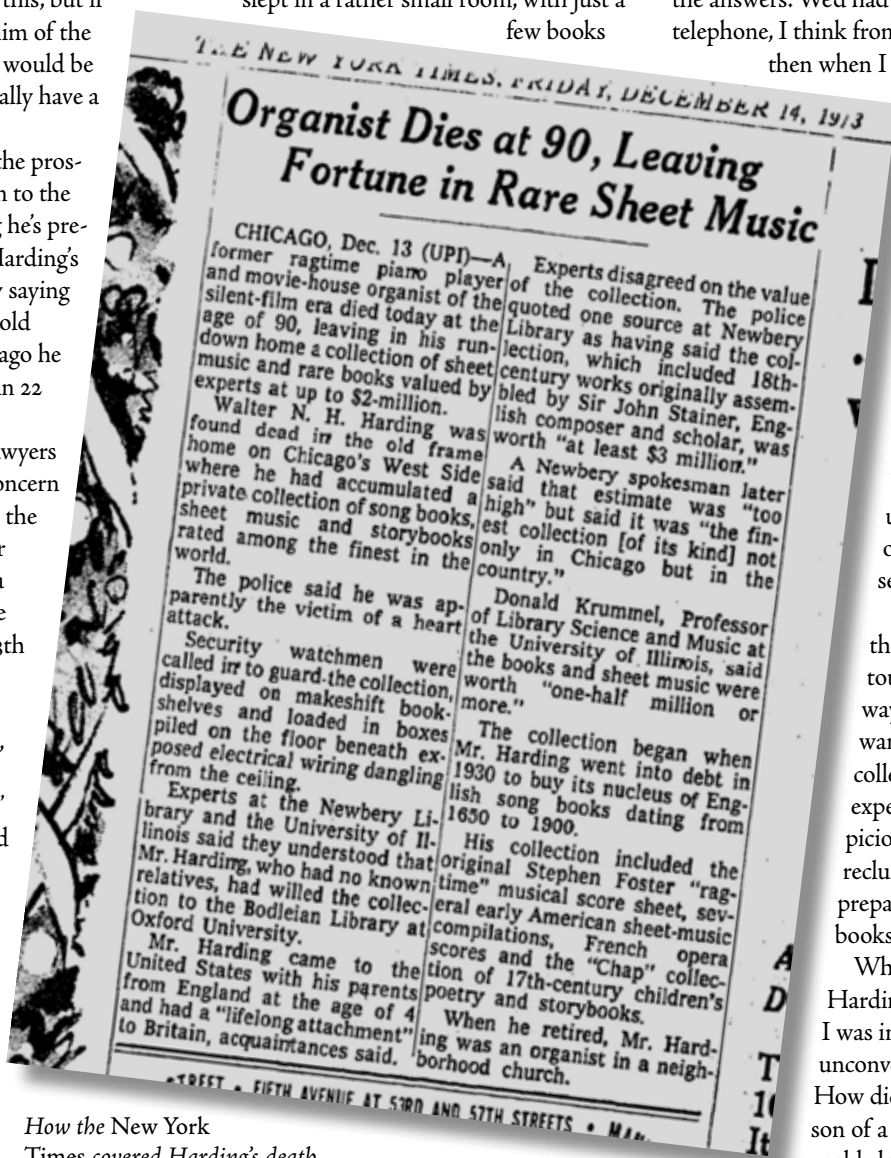
When I started my Walter Harding hunt, I did it because I was intrigued by Harding's unconventional background. How did a self-taught pianist, son of a bricklayer, build a world class antiquarian library? I didn't think then so much about

why he did it, or what the books meant to him, but the further I got into Harding's story, the more I realized that it wasn't just about hoarding objects or a kind of bookish trainspotting.

That Canadian visitor said after his visit, "I am sure that he lived every day in his library, getting to know each book better and better. They were his wife and children, and that was why he would not consider selling them."

For Harding, books weren't dead old

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How the New York Times covered Harding's death

by his bedside, but all the other rooms were just shelves and shelves and shelves of books, sometimes jutting out into the rooms, many around the walls.

Now, people have written a bit as though as he was kind of a tramp and a funny old, cranky man. I didn't find him that at all. The house was very dusty. I mean, it wasn't polished and clean, but I always say it wasn't smelly in any way. You didn't feel, "Oh, my goodness. What am I coming in?"

I think he lived a quiet, isolated life. I

# 2017-'18 Caxton Club Grant Recipients Announced

Winners from School of the Art Institute, University of Iowa, Columbia College, and Northwestern University

Eileen Madden

The Caxton Club's Grants Committee has selected recipients for 2017-2018. Our applicants this year came from the School of the Art Institute, the University of Iowa, Columbia College, and, for the first time, Northwestern University. The caliber of the work that the committee has seen since the Club began the grant program in 2002 has increased steadily, and this year it was particularly difficult to narrow the field to six recipients. Our decisions were so difficult that we chose (with the agreement of the Club's Council) to add an Honorable Mention category.

The grant winners this year are: **J. Dakota Brown**, from Northwestern University, and **Sonia Farmer**, **Christine Manwiller**, and **Michelle Moode**, all from the University of Iowa's Center for the Book. **Joseph Mora** of the School of the Art Institute is the recipient of this year's Colleen Dionne Memorial Grant.

Honorable Mention recipients, who will receive a one-year membership to the Caxton Club but no grant, are **Kazumi Seki** of Columbia College and **Stephanie Koch**, **Sarah Luko**, **Elise Hochhalter**, and **Nichole Cotton** from the University of Iowa.

**J. Dakota Brown** will use his grant to complete the final chapter of his dissertation tentatively titled "Typography and the Division of Labor in the Twentieth Century." He has been researching in the Newberry Library's collections on labor history and the history of print in order to explore design practices of the 1980s and 90s. He argues that "contemporary design practices cannot be adequately understood with sole reference to a history of designers; typesetters and printers developed many of the conventions and standards that were later programmed into layout and publishing software." He also aims "to connect the recent history of graphic design to contemporary discussions of the social effects of automation, deskilling, and deindustrialization." Brown says his dissertation includes "an analysis of experimental graphic design in the 1980s and 90s, during the early years of the Macintosh computer. I survey the formal



Kazumi Wilds

experiments of this era, as well as the political and philosophical debates they caused among graphic designers. The context of this narrative is then broadened beyond the design discipline to consider the long history of typesetting and imaging technologies." In order to complete his research, Brown will use his grant to visit the New York Public Library's collection of the Typographical Union No. 6 records. This very powerful New York union held off changes to printing industries longer than in most smaller cities, but was ill-prepared for the transition to newer technologies when they came, so it is an important record for Brown to explore.

**Sonia Farmer** is creating an artist's book that will form a dialogue of sorts with Richard Ligon's 1657 book *True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados*. Ligon's book is: "One part guidebook, one part candid travelogue, another part serious natural history, the text to this day remains a paradoxical narrative, eluding categorization, but also a problematic narrative at the core of Caribbean history." Farmer has engaged with Ligon's text in poetic erasures. Farmer will use her grant to create an artist book that "will use the language

and thematic drives at the core of this text to interrogate the idea of total history within the Caribbean region and call into question what it means to write 'a true and exact history' of anything." She envisions an artist's book of 180 pages in an edition of 25. The project is ambitious, since she plans to hand set all the type, but will also incorporate polymer plates to add layered imagery. These images will include botanicals, maps, and architectural drawings that continue the conversation with Ligon's history.

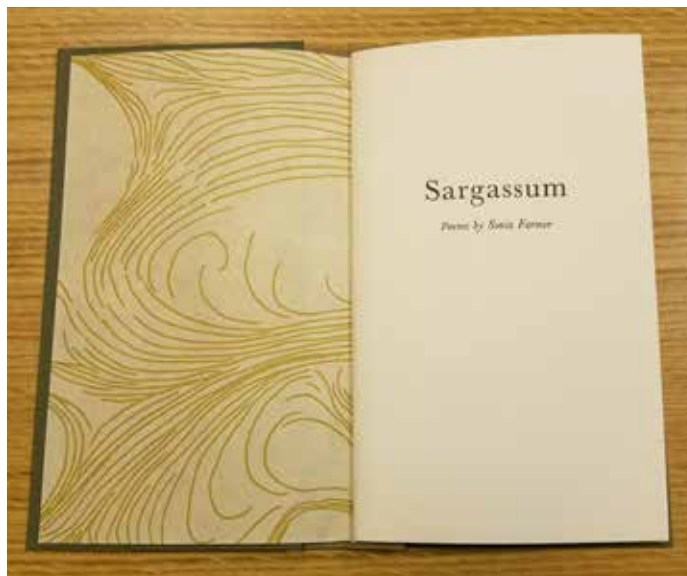
**Michelle Moode**, of the University of Iowa, is a second-time grant recipient. The work we are supporting this year, *Tracks and Signs*, is a part of her thesis project. Like Farmer, Moode is inspired by earlier books, in this case field guides. She said she is drawn to their "aesthetic, organization, and content. A field guide offers authority, while also being an accessible resource to the non-expert. They present idealized, abstract representations of the natural world, and present common specimens alongside the rare." The field guides that Moode is using to examine these conventions are "particularly pre-photographic Peterson Field Guides from the mid-20th century." Moode



plans not only to make the field guide for her project, but is also going to “make the field.” For the field guide, she will be hand-setting type for her text, and creating field guides that measure 7.5 x 4.5 inches. The imagery will be Moode’s own line drawings printed with polymer plates. The field guide will actually determine the landscape that Moode is going to create. The “images introduced in the book will act as characters or ingredients that will be combined and layered in numerous interactions outside the book. The scale of these related works will range from ephemera, to box structures, to a site-specific wall installation. By creating the field guide first, I am first creating parameters and structure for myself, and then will proceed to experimentation, improvisation, and world-making.”

**Christine Manwiller**, also of the University of Iowa, has been working during her time in the master’s program exploring “botanical contact printing.” Her project will be in two stages, the first intending to expand “on the research already in print, which is written mostly for textile dyers.” Manwiller “will continue investigations into three different printing processes: steaming, hot submersion and cold submersion.” The finished work will “culminate in a hand-bound book of information on each plant/tree used, and paper samples illustrating the types of prints and colors that each botanical source produces” that will serve as “a resource for book artists, drawing from existing sources on natural dyeing and botanical contact printing; distilling and tailoring the information to book artists who want to dye/print on paper.” In the second part of her project, Manwiller will continue a collaboration with poet Alice Yousef, a visiting writer at the UIOWA’s Writing Workshop, whose “poems on life, death, memory and the passing of time” have been illustrated with Manwiller’s botanical prints and calligraphed text.

**Kazumi Wilds** will use her grant to complete her University of Iowa MFA thesis. Wilds spent the summer



TOP Sonia Farmer. MIDDLE Kazumi Seki. BOTTOM Michelle Moode.

studying with Japan master paper-makers. She has taken what she learned from them, and is working to incorporate Eastern and Western papermaking techniques for her project on Japanese creation myths. She has also been experimenting with natural dyeing techniques as well as a variety of letterpress imagery using linocut, photopolymer, pressure and relief printing. She will bring all of these practices to her book on the creation myths of ancient Japan. Like Manwiller, Wilds is also experimenting with dyeing techniques to further work with her papers. She will be letterpress printing the text with metal type, and use polymer to produce the images based on her own illustrations. She hopes with every detail the book will transport the viewers, both Western and Japanese, into the world of the myth.

**Joseph Mora** is this year’s recipient of the Colleen Dionne Memorial Award. He is using the support from the Dionne family to create a utilitarian artists book/kit for undocumented students that will contain several resources and tools to help them through college. His project, *Survival Kit for Undocumented Students*, is in its early stages, and he has been doing his research at the Joan Flasch Artists’ Book Collection as well as through interviews with different institutions’ diversity departments (SAIC, UIC, U. of C. to name a few), and collaborations with other young undocumented students.” Mora hopes to create a “zine filled with facts and personal experiences about undocumented immigrants and a list of resources in Chicago. It also consists of tips on how to navigate conversations and offer assistance to undocumented students. Both SAIC and the Joan Flasch Artists’ Book Library are currently interested in having these zines in the collection and around campus for faculty, staff, and students.” Mora is passionate “about art, equality, and creating spaces where people can

have conversations that could lead to change in local and global issues.” He hopes to use his grant to contribute to that conversation.

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# Caxton Club COUNCIL NOTES

Leora Siegel, Secretary

The Caxton Council met on October 18 at the Newberry Library to conduct the business of the Club. The Council unanimously approved funding for five MFA grant projects and one SAIC undergrad project that were recommended by

the Grants Committee. Applicants were quite strong this cycle so a new category for "honorable mention" was created. Each winner will receive a one-year membership in the Caxton Club. The Development Committee is working on producing a new Caxton Club brochure. Plans for exhibit venues for the Club's publication

101 Books About Chicago are underway by the Exhibition Committee. Michael L. VanBlaricum (nonresident Member, nominated by Scott Koeneman and seconded by Douglas Fitzgerald) was voted in as a new Club member. He is founder and current president of the Ian Fleming Foundation. §§

BBC ON HARDING, from page 5

things, but part of life and part of a connection with the past. Harding loved his books and he knew them well. We can see this from his index cards, now in the Bodleian. There were literally thousands upon thousands of cards on which he recorded every instance of every song, his handwriting getting more and more shaky as the years go on.

In the article that he wrote about his collection, he ends where he began, talking about the music hall songs of the 19th century that

his father sang. It's surely significant that he focuses, not on the most prestigious or elite items in his collection, but on what they mean to him.

"They appeal to the eye and the songs have rhythm and humor. They typify my 50-odd years of collecting, the happiness and joy in living which they have brought me." The wonderful thing about a book collection like Harding's is that the happiness and joy in living that he said his books brought to him is something that later generations and scholars

like me can benefit from and share.

We can happily root around for many future decades in the contents of those locked metal cages, looking at the books that connect us back to forgotten pasts. Whether we're enthusiastic about 17th century ballads, miniature theaters, or French opera, we've only just begun to uncover the riches of Walter Harding's books.

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Transcribed from: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01bmlk6>

## CAXTON CLUB TEAMS WITH THE CHICAGO MAP SOCIETY FOR A JOINT EVENT

When: January 4, 2018

Where: Towner Fellows' Lounge, Newberry Library

Social Gathering: 5:30 PM; Program: 6:00 PM

Speaker: Peter Hiler

Title: The Life and Work of Jo Mora

Peter Hiler has been enamored of Joseph Jacinto Mora (1876-1947) since discovering his maps in the mid-1990s. Hiler is the curator of the Jo Mora Trust archives, and the results of his research are the basis of an extensive biography being published by the Book Club of California.

Jo Mora had a boundless talent the creative versatility of which is reflected in pictorial maps, book illustrations, painting, sculpture, and printmaking. Mora ventured west to explore the changing land of the cowboys and Indians that so fascinated him as a child. It was at this time that he passed through Chicago, making connections the nature and evidence of which will be revealed at this event. Mora's later life centered on the history of California, his family, and his abounding creativity. On the approaching 50th anniversary of the Byrd's famous album of the same name, join our Map Society colleagues as we explore the man who really created the "Sweetheart of the Rodeo."

Event Free. Cash Bar with Appetizers



On February 1, ON THE MOVE visits the Art Institute with Sandra Hindman and AIC curators Victoria Lobis and Martha Wolff to discuss and tour the exhibit "The Medieval World at Our Fingertips: Manuscript Illuminations from the Collection of Sandra Hindman." Check your January *Caxtonian* for details.



# Champaign Welcomes Caxtonians



Caxtonians visited the libraries of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign on October 6 and 7. John Chalmers captured these photographic subjects. Highlights not pictured included dinner at Timpone's and a tour and reception at the home of Joan Friedman.

**1** Scott Koeneman, an unidentified attendee, and Doug Fitzgerald. **2** Lynne Thomas. **3** Adam Doskey. **4** Krannert Art Museum reception, with Michael VanBlaricum, left, speaking.

**5** Large reading room at the main library. **6** Martin Antonetti, Jeniffer Hain Teper, and Richard Oram at the conservation lab.

## Book- and manuscript-related exhibitions: a selective list

Compiled by Lisa Pevtzow

(Note: on occasion an exhibit may be delayed or extended; it is always wise to call in advance of a visit.)

**American Writers Museum**, 180 N. Michigan Avenue, Second Floor, Chicago, 312-374-8790: “**Capturing Stories: Photographs of Writers by Art Shay**” (recording the bombast and energy of postwar America), Meijer Gallery, through spring 2018.

**Art Institute of Chicago**, 111 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, 312-443-3600: “**Color Studies**” (use of color in the history of architecture and design from the Bauhaus and Swiss typography to postmodern architecture and contemporary graphic design), through February 25. “**Revolut-sia! Demonstratsiia! Soviet Art Put to the Test**” (works of art and life-size reconstructions of early Soviet display objects or spaces), through January 15.

**Chicago Botanic Garden, Lenhardt Library**, 1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe, 847-835-8202: “**Curtis’s: The Longest Running Botanical Magazine**,” through January 21, 2018.

**Chicago Cultural Center**, 78 E. Washington Street, Chicago, 312-744-6630: “**Stand Up for Landmarks! Protests, Posters & Pictures**” (images, artifacts, and ephemera relating to saving Chicago landmarks), ongoing.

**Chicago History Museum**, 1601 N. Clark Street, Chicago, 312-266-2077: “**Chicago Authored**” (works by writers that define the character of Chicago), ongoing.

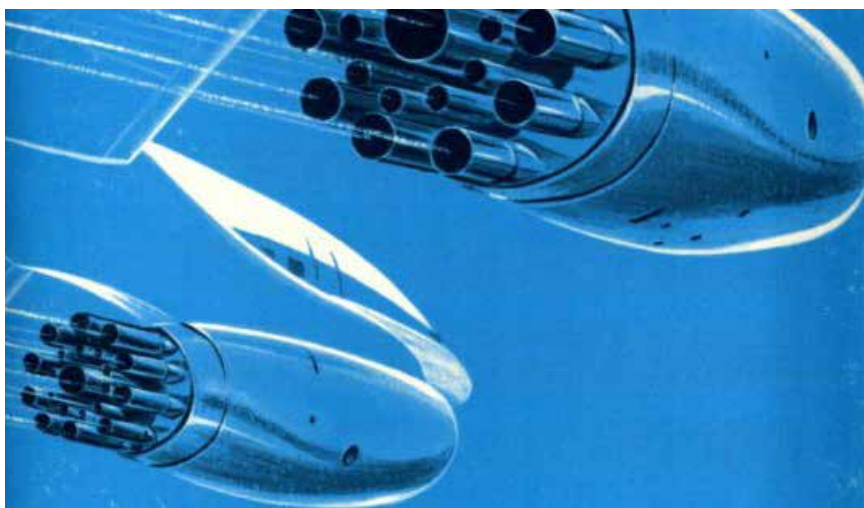
**Chicago Printmakers Collaborative**, 4912 N. Western Avenue, Chicago, 773-293-2070: “**28th Annual International Small Print Exhibition and Holiday Sale**” (new work by locals and invited others), through January 27.

**DePaul University John T. Richardson Library**, 2350 N. Kenmore Avenue, Chicago, 773-325-2167: “**Stories Shared: Highlights from the Arnold and Jane Grisham Collection**” (rare first editions, texts inscribed by their authors, and galley proofs of books describing the African-American diaspora), ongoing.

**Newberry Library**, 60 W. Walton Street, Chicago, 312-943-9090: “**Religious Change and Print, 1450-1700**” (explores how religion and print challenged authority, upended society, and made the medieval world modern), through December 27.

**Northwestern University Block Museum**, 40 Arts Circle Drive, Evanston, 847-491-4000: “**William Blake and the Age of Aquarius**” (Blake’s impact on American artists

in the post-World War II period), through March 11, 2018.  
**Northwestern University Library**, 1970 Campus Drive, Evanston, 847-491-7658: “**On Board with Design: Passenger Transportation and Graphic Design in the Mid-20th Century**,” ongoing. “**African Diaspora in the Americas and the Caribbean: Culture, Resistance, and Survival**” (aspects of the history, culture and religion of people of African ancestry in subject areas) Herskovits Library of African Studies, ongoing.  
**Pritzker Military Museum and Library**, 104 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, 312-374-9333: “**Hunting Charlie: Finding the Enemy in the Vietnam War**” (explores U.S. opposition to the war through rarely seen original art pieces), ongoing.  
**Smart Museum of Art**, University of Chicago, 5550 S. Greenwood Avenue., Chicago: 773-702-0200: “**Revolution Every Day**”



Northwestern Library / *On Board with Design*  
 PAN AMERICAN WORLD AIRWAYS, TIMETABLE, OCTOBER 26, 1958, FOR FIRST TRANSATLANTIC JET SERVICE.

(features works of graphic art, film, and video focusing on the experiences of women under and after communism), through January 14, 2018.

**Spudnik Press Cooperative**, 1821 W. Hubbard Street, suite 302, Chicago, 312-563-0302: “**Run, Run, Run**” (annual member exhibition), through December 16.

**University of Illinois at Chicago, Richard J. Daley Library**, 801 S. Morgan Street, Chicago, 312-996-2742: “**The Food’s the Show! Innovation at the Blackhawk Restaurant**” (photographs, artifacts, and ephemera illustrating the business and social history of this long-standing Chicago favorite), through December 31.

**University of Chicago, Joseph Regenstein Library**, 1100 E. 57th Street, Chicago, 773-702-8705: “**Red Press: Radical Print Culture from St. Petersburg to Chicago**” (Russian revolution through broadsides, pamphlets, periodicals, and posters, with many materials drawn from the archive of Samuel N. Harper, son of the University of Chicago’s founding president, arguably the first American Russianist, and an eyewitness to the revolution), through December 15.

Send your listings to Lisa Pevtzow at [lisa.pevtzow@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lisa.pevtzow@sbcglobal.net)

University of Chicago Library / *Red Press*  
 “LONG LIVE THE WORLDWIDE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION,” UNDATED, BAKWIN POSTERS COLLECTION





# Caxtonians Collect: Bill Winschief

Interviewed by Robert McCamant

Whether or not you believe the Peace Corps did great things for the rest of the world, of one thing there is no doubt: it produced a cohort of very interesting (and interested) young people who went on to make widely varied contributions to the United States. Exhibit A for today is Bill Winschief, a recently minted Caxtonian whose life in publishing and book collecting wraps back to his days in Kenya at the behest of the Peace Corps.

Take, for example, the way he met his wife. One day at Jimmy's, the bar in Hyde Park, he heard a man speaking Swahili. When Winschief spoke back to him in the same language, they formed an immediate bond. The man, a professor from Kenya, had a circle of East African friends, and when he and his Wisconsin-born wife gave a party, Bill met his future wife, Kirsten Vogeley, who had recently visited five countries in Africa.

He's a native of St. Louis. (He pointed out that it was the home of T.S. Eliott and also served as residence for Mark Twain and Tennessee Williams, among others.) He started college in New Orleans but finished at St. Louis University, a Jesuit school. Bill attended grad school briefly but ultimately decided to accept an offer from the Peace Corps to serve as a teacher in Kenya, with training at Teachers College, Columbia University in New York City. The Peace Corps experience in Africa also allowed Winschief to expand his travel horizons during school holidays, with visits to places such as Ethiopia when Haile Selassie was emperor, Mozambique when it was still a Portuguese colony and the opportunity to assist as "temporary warden" with the Outward Bound Mountain Program at Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, in this case working with boys from a mix of African tribes.

When he came back to the U.S., he decided publishing would be a good career because of the focus on books and time spent on college campuses. He applied to the Macmillan office in St. Louis, and they called back some months later with an offer to work out of the Chicago office. His titles varied but he spent 35 years in the college academic division with sales, marketing, and editorial responsibilities.

He explained that to represent the firm at a college or university he needed to wear at least two hats: of course, he was always out to

gain adoptions of college textbooks, but he also needed to keep his eyes open for professors with the potential to author future texts. "College publishing is quite competitive. The search was for tenured professors at well-regarded schools who communicated well and who might author long-term successful titles"

In his territory, the University of Chicago was the gold standard.

Norman Maclean, the University of Chicago English professor who wrote *A River Runs Through It*, was one of Bill's contacts. Departmental offices weren't the only place to meet authors, however. "I met the U. of C. economist Roger Myerson [a Nobel laureate famous for his work on game theory] around a Boy Scout campfire

when we both had sons in a Wilmette troop. Later, I had Roger's son as part of a group of scouts in a high adventure backpacking group at the Philmont Reservation in New Mexico."

He's just as glad to be retired these days. "A series of mergers has lessened the competitive landscape and due to a move to an increasingly digital format, academic books are not the business they once were. Many courses no longer require students to purchase books, with a host of materials available online."

Winschief is a serious collector of signed books. But with a twist: he frequently knows the authors, or has some sort of secondary connection to them. We've all heard of Scott Turow, the Chicago-based author. But when Winschief gets a Turow book signed, there's something personal: "For a while, he lived across the street from us in Wilmette, so when I go to a signing, he asks about what has happened to people in the old neighborhood."

And most of us know of the travel writer and novelist Paul Theroux. "I really like his travel writing," Winschief says. "Not so crazy about his novels. But I still usually buy and read them, because I first met Paul in Uganda,

before he had become a famous writer but after his politics got him thrown out of Malawi, where he served in the Peace Corps. Theroux may not be to everyone's taste, but he handles the English language very well and has enjoyed a wealth of connections with many other authors."



His default bookstore (and the site where he acquired many of his signatures) is the Book Stall at Chestnut Court in Winnetka. I lost track of the many author names he brought up... Simon Winchester was in there, and Garry Wills, and Salman Rushdie. Not sure how many of them he had run into before having a book signed. "Curiously, the Peace Corps included a cookbook by the late James Beard in my travel kit, and I later met him at a book signing at a former

Krochs and Brentano's store. Meanwhile, James Michener once worked at Macmillan, well before the sales of his novels allowed him to concentrate on writing full-time."

He is no longer employed for pay, but he is keeping quite busy. He cycles with the Evanston Bicycle Club to stay fit. He works with the Little Brothers Friends of the Elderly in providing transportation and companionship to people who need it. He has taught English as a second language at Evanston High School in a program administered by Oakton Community College, allowing him to meet students from around the world hoping to enhance their English proficiency. He belongs to two book discussion groups. And he continues to travel (from the Canadian Arctic to Antarctica), and has experienced all seven continents.

He joined the Club about a year ago, nominated by Michael Huckman (whom he met through the University Club) and seconded by Susan Hanes (who seemed immediately interesting because of her extensive travels with husband George Leonard).

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## Bookmarks...

**Luncheon: Friday, December 8, Union League Club**  
Isaac Tobin on "Judging a Book by Its Cover"

It's designed to stop you in your tracks, to intrigue and allure you, and to make you want to reach out and begin a relationship ... with a book. It's the cover and it's hoping to make you fall in love at first sight. Join us as noted designer Isaac Tobin offers a lively and generously illustrated presentation, "Judging A Book By Its Cover." Tobin will reveal what goes into creating a cover's look and offer his own lively thumbs up/thumbs down review of some of the most famous covers to grace a volume (or these days, possibly a T-shirt as well).

Isaac Tobin is an award-winning senior designer at the University of Chicago Press. A graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design, he has been the subject of a feature story in the *Chicago Tribune*, has taught at the Art Institute, and is regularly invited to lecture about his craft. December has you reaching for your jacket ... so you're already in the mood to warm up to this terrific luncheon. Why not book your reservation today – it's sure to be just your type!

*December luncheon: Union League Club, 65 W. Jackson Boulevard. Luncheon buffet (main dining room on six) opens at 11:30 am; program (in a different room, to be announced) 12:30-1:30. Luncheon is \$35. Reservations or cancellations by noon Wednesday for Friday lunch. Call 312-255-3710 or e-mail caxtonclub@newberry.org.*

### Beyond December...

#### JANUARY LUNCHEON

After you've filled and emptied the Union League's delightful luncheon plates on January 16, look up and enjoy perhaps the most famous plates in all of publishing! Caxtonian Steve Tomashefsky's presentation takes wing with a tale of tails, feathers, and Audubon.

#### JANUARY DINNER

January 17, Union League Club. A story about book collectors for book collectors. Stephen Grant presents "Collecting Shakespeare: The Story of Henry and Emily Folger." Copies of Grant's well-received book on the Folgers will be available for sale and signing.

#### FEBRUARY LUNCHEON

On February 9 we'll have "Portrait of a (Bookbinding) Artist as a Young Man." You're bound to enjoy this fascinating tale of the book arts and the remarkable path to a career as a bookbinder as Caxtonian Samuel Feinstein unfolds his story.

#### FEBRUARY DINNER

February 21, Union League Club. Sandra Hindman on "Medieval Manuscripts at Our Fingertips – Reflections on a Collection." The catalog accompanying Hindman's collection and Art Institute exhibit, authored by Christopher de Hamel, will be available for sale and signing.

**REVELS: Wednesday, December 13, Newberry Library**  
(One Week Early) Festivities Begin at 5:30, Dinner at 6:30

Our Annual Raffle and Fun/d Raiser ... More Revels, Less Auction. This year the Newberry's being renovated, its space reallocated, and our holiday festivities are changing, too. Join your friends in the holiday spirit and revel over a festive buffet and appropriate libations, all to music inspired by – of course – the sounds of paper! But keep your own competitive spirits up by bidding for ten Silent Auction and five Live Auction items. And display your spirit of generosity in the raffle for a \$150 Caxton Club Gift Card for to be applied to lunches, dinners, On the Move events, or books. Information on all auction items and their opening bids will be available to the membership by December 6. Raffle tickets (\$5 each) will be available at the event or for purchase online. And if you can't attend our spirited evening, please show your club spirit by bidding or purchasing a raffle ticket in support of our many endeavors.

*Revels: Newberry Library, 60 West Walton Street. The festivities begin at 5:30. Dinner, \$63. RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE NO LATER THAN NOON MONDAY, DECEMBER 11. Cancellations and no-shows after this deadline will require payment. To reserve call 312-255-3710 or email caxtonclub@newberry.org.*