

## Meet the Loudons

### Great Britain's 19th Century Horticultural Power Couple

Mary Burns

In the 19th century there was an explosion of interest in gardening at all levels of English society, including the new middle classes that had developed as a result of the Industrial Revolution. For several centuries botanical and gardening books had been available to the wealthier classes who could afford to buy them. These books were expensive to produce and could only be made available for sale in small editions. Coinciding with the craze for gardens and floraculture in 19th century Britain were developments in book-making technology. After remaining the same since the time of Gutenberg, over the course of the century almost all aspects of bookmaking were mechanized and books could be mass produced at a price that made them accessible to almost all economic levels of society. Some books were produced in parts to make them more affordable.

Another major development of the era was the rise of the periodical press. New, cheaper methods of graphic illustration, lithography, and wood-engraving were developed which replaced the more expensive processes such as hand-colored engravings and aquatints. Over the course of the century many practicing gardeners published books and magazines to satisfy the information needs of the new middle classes eager to grow their own flowers, vegetables, and fruits. Two of the most successful and prolific authors who filled this new niche were John Claudius Loudon (1783-1843) and his young wife Jane Webb Loudon (1807-1858). Together they formed what has been called the "most successful horticultural part-

nership and marriage of the 19th century."<sup>1</sup>

John Claudius Loudon was born in Scotland April 8, 1783, at Cambuslang, Lanarkshire, near Glasgow. His father was a farmer, of Kerse Hall, Lothian. During his lifetime suburbs came into existence as the new middle classes retreated to housing away from the



unhealthy, heavily polluted inner cities, an unwelcome by-product of industrialization and progress. They got their garden and landscape information from writers like Loudon, who wrote primarily for the middle classes. He was very liberal minded and promoted the development of public parks and better living conditions for rural workers. He believed that gardening was a form of self-improvement that promoted good morals. John Loudon was also very class-conscious. He advocated the acquisition of taste to increase the social standing of the less wealthy, including women. He promoted the education of gardeners and helped elevate their status. His efforts contributed to making possible the likes of a Sir Joseph Paxton, the head gardener at Chatsworth, who made its garden the most famous in England. John Loudon could also be very opinionated and authoritarian, but he was at heart a great humanitarian dedicated

to improving the lives of others through his work. During his lifetime he published roughly 60 million words about gardening, horticulture, architecture, farming, and rural improvements.<sup>2</sup>

John Loudon began working in nurseries in Scotland in 1794. He became a student at the University of Edinburgh in 1798. In addition to classes in botany and chemistry, he attended lectures on agriculture given by Andrew Coventry (1764-1832). Coventry was the first professor of agriculture at the university. It was Coventry who wrote letters of introduction that Loudon took with him on a visit to London in 1803. Through these letters he was introduced to the natural history artist James Sowerby, Sir Joseph Banks (the naturalist who accompanied Cook

on the great voyage of the *Endeavor*), and the philosopher and reformer Jeremy Bentham. Loudon's career as a landscape gardener also began in 1803 when he submitted proposals for improvements to the grounds at Scotland's Scone Palace, Perthshire. In 1804 he received more commissions in Scotland and the London vicinity as well as a commission from the duchess of Brunswick, the sister of George III. Although Loudon's reputation is based upon his gardening and horticultural writings, his first publication was a translation of the life of Abelard for an encyclopedia. His first published horticultural work was "Hints on Respecting the Manner of Laying out the Grounds of the Public Squares in London," an article that appeared in the *Literary Journal*, December 31, 1803.

Loudon's book publishing career was initiated with *Observations on the Formation*

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and Management of Useful and Ornamental Plantations (1804). In addition to discussing the construction and management of plantations, he addresses the theory and practice of landscape gardening, and embankments. The book is dedicated to George III, and on the title page John's name is followed with the title, "Landscape Gardener, &c." The work contains engraved plates by Edinburgh artist Francis Lamb (c. 1775-1850) based on Loudon's own drawings. While attending public schools he developed excellent drawing skills. This proficiency had already enabled him to secure the position as draughtsman and assistant to Edinburgh nurseryman John Mawer. Plate I of the book illustrates a larch tree being bent as it is grown so that its wood can be used to build ships.

Loudon's *Observations* was published in Edinburgh by Archibald Constable & Co. and in London by Longman, Hurst, Rees & Orme. Archibald Constable was a prominent Scottish publisher whose primary output was works of historical scholarship and modern editions of literature and history. He started publishing journals in 1800 with the *Farmer's Magazine*. He married Mary Willison, daughter of Edinburgh printer David Willison (active 1769-1820) who printed the *Observations*. The second publisher associated with the book, the Longman firm, survived for seven generations, focusing on educational and reference works. The firm became Loudon's primary publisher. Longman attributed its success to welcoming non-family members into the business as partners. In the 19th century there were a number of non-Longman partners, as many as six, which made for some lengthy imprints. Other of Loudon's early works were devoted to the subjects of hothouses, growing pineapples, cottage gardening and laying out farms and pleasure gardens.

Loudon journeyed through the south of England and through Germany, to what is modern Latvia, St. Petersburg, Moscow, and central Europe in 1813 and 1814. He gathered material for a book on the history of gardening. He also saw firsthand some of the devastating effects of the Napoleonic wars. When he returned from the trip he found that his banker had mishandled his finances and a fortune he had amassed working for General George F. Stratton at Tew Lodge Farm was lost. He never recovered it. In 1819, he made an additional trip to France, Italy, Switzerland, and the Low Countries to gather more material for a book. On this journey he took letters of introduction from Sir Joseph Banks along with him. While writing he was experiencing great pain



"Bending the Larch" from an 1804 copy of the *Observations on the Formation and Management of Useful and Ornamental Plantations*. Jane was not yet born.

from an attempted operation that had fractured his right arm in 1820. *An Encyclopaedia of Gardening* was published in 1822 by Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown. It was printed by Andrew and Robert Spottiswoode. It is interesting to note that Andrew also served as a member of Parliament. The resulting *An Encyclopaedia of Gardening* is one of Loudon's most significant publications and a major reference source for the era. It superseded Philip Miller's *Gardeners Dictionary*. John's growing reputation is evidenced by the list of credentials that follow his name on the title page, having grown from being a landscape gardener to "F.L.S., H.S. &c." *An Encyclopaedia of Gardening* was the first book to take a comprehensive approach to its subject and is nearly 1,500 pages long. In addition to addressing the topics of plant culture, botany, and garden design, the book provides an international survey and history of gardening. The text is lavishly illustrated throughout with nearly 600 wood engravings, some taking up a full page.

During 1823 and 1824 Loudon designed and supervised the building of his home that subsequently became home for his wife Jane. It is a villa at 3 Porchester Terrace, Bayswater, where they both lived and worked until their deaths. Here John set



up the Book Manufactory of Bayswater, which produced encyclopedias sold in parts as well as books and pamphlets. It was well established by the 1830s. Loudon's damaged arm was amputated in 1825 but before that he became addicted to laudanum. He overcame the addiction by gradually diluting the doses. Still, he was plagued by illness his entire life and suffered from an ankylosed knee. Additionally, he had difficulties with the left arm and did not have full use of his fingers.

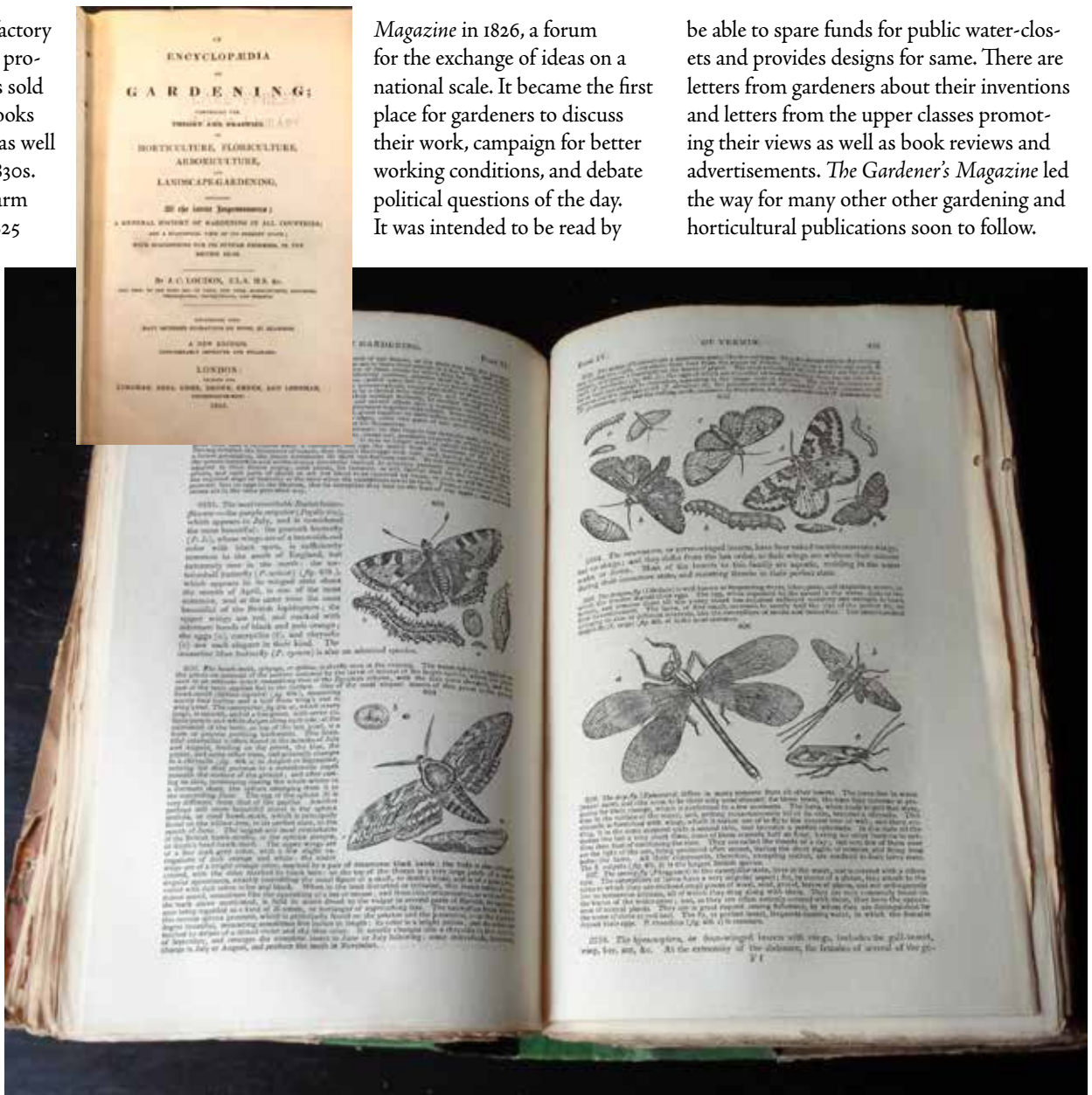
From December 1833 to July 1835, a new edition of the encyclopaedia was issued in 20 monthly parts by Longmans. John's list of credits on the title page have grown to "F.L.S. H.S. &c. Hon. Mem of the Hort. Soc. of Lisle, New York, Massachusetts, Baltimore, Phila-

delphia, Pennsylvania, and Toronto." Printing was by Andrew Spottiswood and the firm of Vizetelly, Branston & Co. James Henry Vizetelly was a printer-engraver who formed a partnership with Robert Edward Branston. Robert Edward was the son of Robert Branston (1778-1827), arguably the leader of the London school of black-line wood-engraving. Both father and son signed their work "Branston" and it is sometimes impossible to tell which was the engraver. This new edition was also generously illustrated. *An Encyclopaedia of Gardening* went through six revised and expanded editions that were published posthumously into the 1870s.

One of John Loudon's greatest contributions was establishing *The Gardener's*

*Magazine* in 1826, a forum for the exchange of ideas on a national scale. It became the first place for gardeners to discuss their work, campaign for better working conditions, and debate political questions of the day. It was intended to be read by

be able to spare funds for public water-closets and provides designs for same. There are letters from gardeners about their inventions and letters from the upper classes promoting their views as well as book reviews and advertisements. *The Gardener's Magazine* led the way for many other other gardening and horticultural publications soon to follow.



MAIN: spread from a 1925 copy of the Encyclopedia of Gardening; INSET title page of an 1835 copy.

professional gardeners and amateurs. Most important of all, it gave Loudon, as the author of the majority of the text, a venue to promote and disseminate his ideas and opinions on such matters as the education of gardeners and the benefits of gardening for all people. He advised the owners of estates that wherever there was a tool shed there should also be a library. A gardener using a library was less likely to wind up in a pub. A significant portion of the text is devoted to reporting on his own garden tours, in which he offers his straightforward evaluations of the gardens and grounds of the upper classes. These accounts are not always flattering to the owners. He also reports on visits to nurseries and towns. At Ayre, Scotland, he suggests that if the citizens are able to rebuild Wallace Tower they should

In 1829 Loudon published his first important botanical work, *An Encyclopaedia of Plants*. This encyclopedia includes indigenous, cultivated, and exotic plants whether native to Britain or introduced from elsewhere. The botanical texts were contributed by John Lindley (1799-1865) who wrote descriptions for 16,712 plants. Lindley is considered the father of modern orchidology and was the first professor of botany in the University of London. Drawings were by James De Carle Sowerby (1787-1871) son of James Sowerby, whose family was engaged in the business of publishing and illustrating natural history books. James the father contributed illustrations to William Curtis's *Botanical Magazine*, the first botanical journal published. The

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wood engravings after the drawings by James De Carle for *An Encyclopaedia of Plants* were created by Robert Edward Branston. *An Encyclopaedia of Plants* was published under the imprint Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green and printed by Andrew and Robert Spottiswoode. In addition to his encyclopedias about gardening and plants, Loudon produced encyclopedias about agriculture, cottages, farms, and villas. In 1830, with his reputation firmly established as one of the foremost horticultural writers of the day, he entered a new period in his life when he asked to meet the anonymous author of a science fiction work he had reviewed in *Gardener's Magazine*.

John Loudon and Jane Webb were brought together by a book Webb wrote in 1827 called *The Mummy! A Tale of the Twenty-Second Century*. Published as a three decker, it was popular enough to be issued in a second edition a year later. It wove together the elements of political commentary, Egyptomania and technology, producing a pioneering work of science fiction. Some of the innovations Webb wrote about were a steam mowing device and the telegraph. She did not identify herself as the author on the title page or by signing the introduction. Before she met Loudon, Jane was an established author of some reputation. This kind and self-effacing woman was born at Ritwell House, near Birmingham, on August 19, 1807. When she was a young teenager she went on a tour through France and Italy with her businessman father. She was only about 17 years old when he died in 1824 and so began writing to support herself. Loudon favorably reviewed her book in *Gardener's Magazine* and wanted to meet the author. He ended his evaluation this way: "The most extravagant and impracticable ideas will sometimes aid in forming new and useful combinations; and it is good to see the subject of scientific invention, and intellectual improvement, pushed to the extreme point, in order to show the absurdities to which every thing human is liable to give rise."<sup>3</sup> A meeting was arranged by a friend of Webb's in February 1830 and they were married the following September. He was 24 years older than she was and an invalid. There is little known about their courtship; Jane thought he was surprised when he met her because he was expecting to meet a man. Loudon's workaholic nature was in evidence even on the day they were married. According to Jane, he was dictating to his amanuensis while a servant was dressing him for church on the day of their wedding. Together they had one child, a daughter

Agnes, born in 1832.

Jane knew little about gardening before she met John. She was abashed that she was married to one of the most prominent horticulturists of the day and didn't know anything about his field of expertise. In addition to learning from him she studied on her own using the library at their home at 3 Porchester Terrace. He warned her about leaving dead blooms and leaves on plants under their drawing-room windows: "That is not good gardening, my dear."<sup>4</sup> Loudon often refers to women as indispensable helpers in the garden, especially with watering and taking insects off plants. Jane also attended free public lectures given by John Lindley.

Jane helped her husband with his work and functioned as his secretary, note taker, and copyist. She recorded his observations about conservatories, kitchen gardens, great houses and their grounds, as well as his recommendations for how they could be improved. She contributed to *The Gardener's Magazine* (signing herself as J.W.L.), and helped him write his *Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture and Furniture* (London, 1833). She said that they didn't sleep for more than four hours and drank strong coffee to keep awake. Together the two helped popularize the idea of garden tours around the country. During the 1830s and early 1840s she and John traveled through England and into Scotland to view and evaluate various homes and estates. A book was never published, but their reports and opinions were issued in a series of articles in *The Gardener's Magazine*, included in the "General Observations" section at the beginning of the number.

Jane was John's amanuensis for another of his monumental works, the *Arboretum et fruticetum britannicum*. His goal was to categorize all the trees grown in Britain, both native and nonnative. It was published serially from January 1835 to July 1838 by the Loudons at their Book Manufactory at Bayswater. It was sold by Longman, Orme, Brown, Green,



*Gardener's Magazine*, said to be "conducted by J. C. Loudon," solidified Loudon's role as head gardener to the country.

and Longman. John Lindley helped with the botanical text and seven artists were employed including James De Carle Sowerby. The text was printed by Andrew Spottiswoode. By the time it was completed it had expanded into an eight-volume work, four of text with 2,500 engravings and four of plates. It was so expensive that only landed gentry and institutions could afford to buy it. The Loudons wound up £10,000 in debt, but it was eventually reduced to £2,600. John published two smaller works borrowing from the text of the *Arboretum*.

In response to this fiscal predicament Jane took to writing again. This time she wrote gardening books that were practical and based on an informed and scientific approach to horticulture. During the 1840s and 1850s she was one of the best known professional writers of popular gardening books. These were intended in the main for women and younger readers. She wrote books about natural history as well as children's fiction, but did not include folklore and information about the uses of plants as did Anne Pratt, another popular botanical writer of the day. The aim of Jane Loudon's books was to get more women to study botany. She did not approve of the Linnean system of botany, which described plants in a sexual way, but supported the natural system of De Condolle. She did not





*The Loudon home in Bayswater, a neighborhood of London.*

mean to usurp the place of men with her writings and did not approve of bluestockings.

In 1838, Jane started working on a series of four books called *The Ladies' Flower-Garden*. The books, variously titled, were issued in parts over an eight year period beginning in 1839: *Annuals* (1840), *Bulbous Plants* (1841), *Perennials* (1843-1844), and *Greenhouse Plants* (1848). These volumes were designed for wealthier women and functioned as reference books. Each title (excepting *Greenhouse Plants*) contained hand-colored plates lithographed by Day & Hague, lithographers to the Queen. Day & Hague were on their way to becoming the leading printers of pictorial lithographs in Britain, their reputation established by the 1850s. The text was printed by Bradbury and Evans, a firm specializing in works on gardening, botany, and fine art as well as illustrated periodicals and legal printing. The publisher was William Smith located at 113 Fleet Street. The drawings for *Annuals* were the work of H. Noel Humphreys, a relative of John's who also lived in Bayswater. He was a graphic artist who illustrated many books for the gift-book market. However, Jane was also an accomplished artist in her own right who did the illustrations for many of her works. Her strength was in portraying mixed flowers.

Jane's first gardening book, *Instructions in Gardening for Ladies* (1840) was a huge success, selling 1,350 copies on the day of publication. She dedicated the book her husband and credited him with teaching her everything she knew about her subject. *Instructions* is a pocket-sized book illustrated with wood engravings designed to provide practical instructions for women. It contains a lovely

wearing gardening clothes and standing under an arbor surrounded by gardening tools, with a child. The text addresses topics such as preparing the soil, sowing seeds, and pruning. It was published by John Murray, publisher of Byron's best-known works, and printed by Steward and Murray. One should also note the publication of her one work for children, *The Young Naturalist's Journey or The Travels of Agnes Merton and Her Mamma* (London, 1840). It is dedicated to her daughter Agnes, the real Agnes Merton in the book.

Another pocket-sized publication with wood engravings was *Ladies' Companion to the Flower-Garden* (1841), an encyclopedia of ornamental plants grown in gardens and shrubberies with instructions on how to care for them in each entry. Its purpose was to present the information together in one volume for women whose gardens were small, so they would not have to look several different places for it. She had been inconvenienced by this herself. Jane's work was admired in the United States where *Gardening for Ladies; and Companion to the Flower-Garden* was published in 1843 through the efforts of Andrew Jackson Downing. (He believed that homes with beautiful gardens and fruitful orchards made for moral improvement in human nature.)

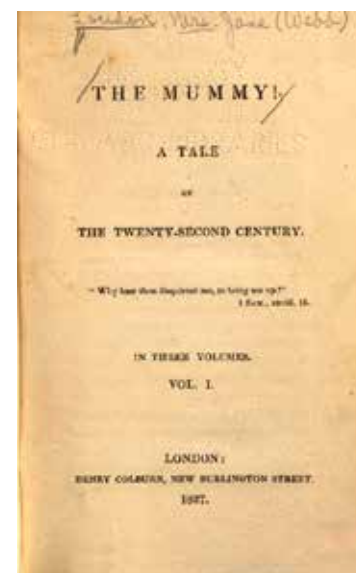
Jane's work was not limited to gardening books for ladies. She also published a book for school children, *The First Book of Botany*, a book with 30 wood engravings (London, 1841).

John Loudon continued to maintain his arduous work schedule into the 1840s. He went on another continental tour in 1840

and edited a book about Humphry Repton's landscape gardening and architecture. Also in 1840, a public garden he designed, the Derby Arboretum, was opened, and his book about its design was published. In 1841 he laid out the grounds for Castle Kennedy in Stranraer, Scotland. In addition to his work for *The Gardener's Magazine* he conducted the horticultural department of *Gardner's Gazette*, a weekly newspaper, through 1840-41. George Glenny, the founder of the periodical and one of Loudon's rivals, was ultimately fired by the publishers.

Jane Loudon also headed a magazine in 1841, *The Ladies Magazine of Gardening*. The subject matter primarily related to small suburban gardens, and house plants, provided descriptions of gardens, and discussed the history of flowers. Letters from other ladies were included and women were named as contributors to the text. Each issue has one colored plate and several wood engravings, and ends with a "Floral Calendar." Most of the wood engravings were taken from *The Gardener's Magazine*. It is interesting to compare the descriptions of a tour that the two parents

and edited a book about Humphry Repton's landscape gardening and architecture. Also in 1840, a public garden he designed, the Derby Arboretum, was opened, and his book about its design was published. In 1841 he laid out the grounds for Castle Kennedy in Stranraer, Scotland. In addition to his work for *The Gardener's Magazine* he conducted the horticultural department of *Gardner's Gazette*, a weekly newspaper, through 1840-41. George Glenny, the founder of the periodical and one of Loudon's rivals, was ultimately fired by the publishers.



*Jane Webb's success publishing The Mummy in 1827 may have contributed to Loudon's willingness to make her acquaintance.*

made with their daughter Agnes between June and September 1841 in northern England and Scotland. John's accounts appeared in *The Gardener's Magazine* and Jane's in *The Ladies Magazine of Gardening*. Jane shares her reactions to what she sees, the people she meets, and her young daughter's experiences. John focuses, as he did on previous tours, on the

landscapes of the estates and comments on their construction and what should be done to them. *The Ladies Magazine of Gardening* was issued for only a year, perhaps because the reading audience was not large enough to cover the production costs. Jane said that publication was suspended because there was so much other work to be done. This may have included the second work in the *Ladies' Flower-Garden* series, *Ornamental Bulbous Plants*, published in 1841.

In 1842 Loudon's health began to permanently decline and over the course of the next two years the couple's life together as husband and wife became increasingly difficult. He suffered inflammation of the lungs and was motivated to push himself even harder to eliminate the debts that burdened his household resulting from the production of *Arboretum et fruticetum*. He published *Encyclopedia of Trees and Shrubs*, a small work that used *Arboretum* text. *The Suburban Horticulturist* was published, a sequel to *The Suburban Gardener and Villa Companion* (1838). This focused mainly on kitchen gardens. Jane published her major work, *Botany for Ladies* (1842), a book about the natural system of plant classification, written as an alternative to John Lindley's *Ladies Botany*. Ironically, her husband began designing cemeteries in 1842. Working with the architect Edward Buckton Lamb he designed the Histon Road cemetery in Cambridge, laid out on a strict grid plan to make grave-finding easier and planted with specimen trees arranged geometrically. Most of the trees were evergreens.

Loudon continued designing cemeteries into 1843 to help with the household's continuing financial problems. He took on two commissions, one for a private company, the Bath Abbey cemetery, and the other for a local authority, the Southampton cemetery. He did not live to see either of them completed. Also in 1843, a series of articles (unsigned by him) was published in *The Gardener's Magazine* about cemetery design. These writings were critical of how cemeteries had been laid out and managed for the preceding 20 years. A grid layout with evergreen trees was recommended. Another book *On the Planting, Managing, and Laying out of Cemeteries* was planned for publication the end of 1843. Jane's books con-



Jane's first garden book, *Instructions in Gardening for Ladies*, sold 1350 copies the day of publication.

tinued to be widely popular and published in new editions. The sixth edition of *Gardening for Ladies* was produced by John Murray in London, and its first American edition, from



Detail of poppies from the *Ladies' Flower-Garden* of *Ornamental Annuals*.

the English third, was published by Wiley and Putnam in New York. The third title in *The Ladies' Flower-Garden* series, on ornamental perennials, was also in production.

In August 1843, John, Jane and Agnes made a trip to the Isle of Wight, on the advice of doctors who thought the air might improve John's health. Instead he quickly declined and the family left for Southampton, where he resumed work on laying out the cemetery. This project temporarily revived him but

he returned very ill to Bayswater the end of September. In early October he consulted a doctor in whom he had the utmost trust. John was told without hesitation that the disease was in his lungs. At that point he seemed to realize he would never recover and thus drove himself to finish the works that were already in progress.

On December 1, 1843, Longmans issued a plea for the sale of additional copies of the *Arboretum*. John and Jane's problems grew worse when one of the engravers of *Arboretum*, who was also a creditor, went bankrupt. One of his assignees threatened to have Loudon arrested, but other creditors refused to do the same. John sent Jane to London on December 13 to meet with the assignees. Loudon was upset to learn that they were demanding he give over his rights to the edition of Humphrey Repton's works that he had edited. He wanted the book to produce an income to support his family.

Loudon dictated *Self-Instruction for Young Gardeners* until midnight upon Jane's return, but still could not sleep. John rose the next day before dawn and told Jane he would turn over the rights to the Repton so his affairs could be settled before he died. He continued to decline as the day wore on, burdened with concerns about the unfinished *Self-Instruction*. He died standing on his feet. Jane had just enough time to wrap her arms around him to keep him from falling and his head sank upon her shoulder. On December 14, the day of John's death, copies of *Arboretum* valued at £300 had been sold as a result of Longmans December 1 call for help. When his coffin was lowered into the grave at Kensal Green, a stranger

came forward from the crowd and threw in some ivy. Jane found out afterward that he was an artificial flower maker who had received free tickets from John for admission to the Horticultural Gardens.

In summary of his character in full Jane wrote "there never lived a more liberal and thoroughly public-spirited man than Mr. Loudon."<sup>5</sup> Every December she gathered flowers remaining from their garden and a made a wreath to lay on his grave.





Black walnut plate from *Arboretum et Fruticetum Britannicum*.

After 13 years of marriage Jane was left a widow with a young daughter and in a precarious financial state. She wrote later that she really did not grasp the fact that her husband was dying because he had been so sick on so many occasions and always recovered. She would be plagued by their publishing debts for the rest of her life.

It is interesting to note the varied price range of the Loudon's publications provided by Dewis. Single volumes including pamphlets sold from 1 to 12 shillings. Serial publications tended to range from 1 to 5 shillings with the completed volumes selling from about £2 to £5. The *Arboretum* was the expensive exception that sold for £10.<sup>6</sup> In February 1844, Jane received an award from the Royal Literary Fund to help clear the remaining debts. A lifelong friend of Loudon's, Charles Waterton (1782-1865), dedicated the earnings of his second series of *Essays in Natural History* (1844) to her. Sir Joseph Paxton encouraged her to have John's *Self-Instruction for Young Gardener's* published when she couldn't bear to look at the manuscript after his death. Jane wrote a lengthy and detailed biographical sketch of John's life based on his journals and their years together as husband and wife to accompany it. This work, that weighed so heavily on John's mind to the very end, was

published by Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans in 1845.

After her husband's death, Jane continued to work in their extensive garden. Without John, she made their daughter Agnes the focal point of her attention and household. Jane also had numerous friends and acquaintances in the botanical and horticultural worlds as well as the prominent literary and artistic circles of the day. At Porchester Terrace when John was alive they had entertained 12 or more at lavish Saturday-evening dinner parties. Charles Dickens and his family, William Makepeace Thackeray, and Mark Lemon and John Leech of *Punch* were among the guests. Women writers including Elizabeth Gaskell, Mary Howitt, and Catherine Crowe were frequent visitors. One of Jane's closest friends was the mother of Wilkie Collins. Her friendship with the actor Charles Kean ensured complimentary tickets to the theater. The graphic artist Noel Humphreys and his wife were lifelong friends. Daniel Maclise, William Powell Frith, Charles Robert Leslie, William Henry Millais and his brother John Everett were among her other artist friends. Charles Landseer, who painted historical subjects, was Jane's most loyal friend and a constant presence. He often accompanied her to the theater and when she attended Flora Fêtes in professional capacity.

Still burdened with debt, Jane continued writing to support her household. One of her first publications after John's death was a new children's book, *Glimpses of Nature and Objects of Interest Described, During a Visit to the Isle of Wight*, published by Grant and Griffith (1844). Illustrated with wood engravings, it records the journey he family had made in late summer 1843. Jane shared what they saw and heard, intending to help children develop their powers of observation. The preface is signed "November 20, 1843, Bayswater," about three weeks before John's death.

Jane produced *The Lady's Country Companion, or, How to Enjoy a Country Life Rationally*, a comprehensive, practical guide designed to help young women who were raised in towns to understand the demands of living in the country. Published by Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans in 1845, it addresses every aspect of managing a country estate with chapters devoted to the house, garden, domestic animals, rural walks, country amusements, and country duties. It addresses such diverse topics as diseases in cows and sketching in the

open air. The frontispiece was engraved by John Godfrey (1817-1889). It quickly went to a second edition in 1846.

Of particular importance is the first new edition of John's *An Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture and Furniture* published after his death, edited by Jane and published by Longman, Brown, Green & Longmans in 1846. The same year *British Wild Flowers* was published by William Smith. It follows the format of the *Ladies' Flower-Garden* series but is not a part of it. The volume contains 60 hand-colored lithograph plates by Day & Hague. *British Wild Flowers* was published again by Smith in 1847. The final volume in the *Ladies' Flower-Garden* series, devoted to ornamental greenhouse plants, was published in 1848. By the end of the 1840s interest in *The Ladies' Flower Garden* series was such that all the titles were issued in second editions by William S. Orr & Co., a firm recognized for their natural history publications. However, as it has been noted by Blunt, the quality of the lithograph plates in these publications declined as they were reprinted over the years.<sup>7</sup>

March 1849 proved to be a sad turning point in the lives of Jane and Agnes. William Longman of the Longman firm, the main publisher of John's works, asked to meet with Jane. She received the devastating news that her husband's books were not selling and the royalties she received that year would be minimal. However, by the end of October that year it appeared that her fortunes were going to improve. Frederick Evans of Bradbury and Evans and the producers of *Punch* asked her to edit a new journal designed for serious-minded women. The editorship of *The Ladies Companion at Home and Abroad* gave Jane a new lease on her personal life and finances. As editor her responsibilities included writing general articles and functioning as drama critic and book reviewer. She attended the opera, plays, and Floral Fêtes. To her consternation, she received parcels of flowers and plants dead beyond recognition with requests for identification.

The journal was well received by the London press. She celebrated the publication of the first issue by throwing a Christmas Eve party for friends. They commented on how happy she looked wearing a steel-grey dress with a garnet necklace, earrings and bracelet.

This richly interesting period in her life was gut-wrenchingly short-lived. Jane was asked to resign as editor the following June. From that point on she began closing down or renting

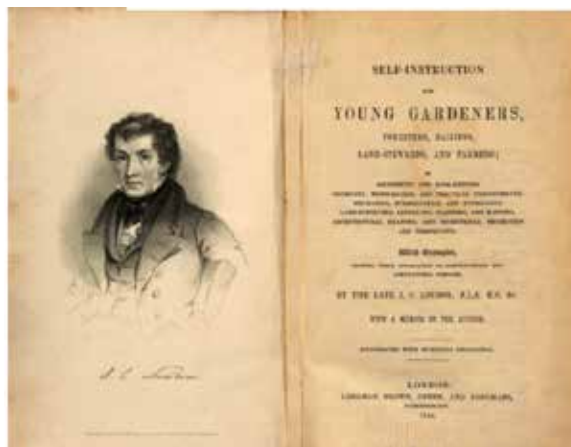
See *THE LOUDONS*, page 8

out the house for months at a time to economize. She and Agnes lived and traveled in Europe seeing all the sights: palaces, churches, cathedrals, art galleries, museums. They visited botanical gardens and were treated like royalty when they gave their names. Upon their return to Porchester Terrace, Jane would labor to clean up their neglected garden.

Jane continued to edit new editions of her deceased husband's works. An *Encyclopaedia of Gardening*, a new edition she corrected and improved, was published by Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans (1850). A second edition of her own noted *Botany for Ladies* (1842) was published with the title *Modern Botany* (1851). The title change indicates the book was meant for men as well as women. A ninth edition of *Instructions in Gardening for Ladies* was published in 1851 by Bradbury & Evans. The *Encyclopaedia of Plants* was published "in a new edition corrected to the present time" in 1855 edited by Jane with George Don, F.L.S., and David Wooster. Don was a Scottish botanist and plant collector, Wooster a botanist who lived in Bayswater and helped update other titles written by John. Jane's last book, *My Own Garden or The Young Gardener's Yearbook*, was published the same year. Beginning in the spring of 1855 Jane's health, as well as her finances, began a slow and steady decline. In September 1855 she and Agnes went though John's books and prepared a large number for sale. A new edition of *Instructions in Gardening for Ladies* was published by Murray in 1857 with the title *Plain Instructions in Gardening for Ladies*.

After suffering from inflammation of the lungs and acute inflammation of the kidneys in the spring of 1858, Jane's condition further deteriorated during a severe heat wave in June. On June 18 she pulled herself up and spent the whole day in the library alone. She went through all her personal papers and burned practically everything, including letters between herself and John. By the time the

heat wave broke in July, Jane was in a lot of pain and had difficulty breathing. An endless stream of people came to Porchester Terrace to ask about her. On July 12th Jane looked towards the door of the room as if someone she knew had come in and then she fell asleep. The following day, July 13th, she passed quietly away, at only 50 years of age. Agnes, who had relied so much on her mother's calm and steady presence, was too grief stricken to attend her funeral and burial. She cut flowers from the garden (as Jane had done for John) and made a wreath for her mother's grave. At the end of the day, in the company of Mr. Wooster, Jane's amanuensis whom Agnes had known her whole life,



Self-Instruction for Young Gardeners, 1845, was published after John's death.

of the scholarship and usefulness of the work of John and Jane Loudon is demonstrated by the continued publication of their works after their deaths. A new edition of her *First Book of Botany*, revised and enlarged by David Wooster, was issued in 1870 by Bell & Daldy. The same year a revised edition of Jane's *The*

*Amateur Gardener's Calendar*, edited by William Robinson, was published. As late as 1874 the American edition of *Gardening for Ladies: and Companion to the Flower-Garden* was published by Wiley in New York. John's *Trees and Shrubs*, the shortened version of the *Arboretum*, was published in London by Frederick Warne & Co. in 1883. As two

of the most prominent figures in the gardening and horticultural world of the 19th century, the lives of John and Jane Loudon intertwine with the important political, social, artistic, and literary figures of their time. A brief survey of their work proves that one may view them as more than the "most successful horticultural partnership and marriage of the 19th century." One is justified in referring to them as Great Britain's 19th century horticultural power couple. Their home at 3 Porchester Terrace in Bayswater was given a blue plaque in 1953 by the London County Council.

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Except as otherwise credited, all images are of books in the collection of the Lenhard Library of the Chicago Botanic Garden, and were taken by their staff.

## NOTES

- 1 Catherine Horwood, *Women and Their Gardens: A History From the Elizabethan Era to Today* (Chicago: Ball Publishing, 2010), 251.
- 2 Toby Musgrave, *The Head Gardeners: Forgotten Heroes of Horticulture* (London: Arum Press, 2007), 55.
- 3 John Loudon, "Art. VIII. Hints for Improvements," *Gardener's Magazine* 3 (March 1828), 479.
- 4 Horwood, 251.
- 5 John Loudon, *Self-Instruction for Young Gardeners* (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1845), xii.
- 6 Sarah Dewis, *The Loudons and the Gardening Press: A Victorian Cultural Industry* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Co., 2014), 211.
- 7 Wilfrid Blunt and William T. Stearn, *The Art of Botanical Illustration* (Woodbridge: Antique Collector's Club, 1994), 276.



Anemones from *The Ladies' Flower-Garden of Ornamental Perennials*, 1843.

Agnes walked with her wreath to the graves of her parents in the Kensal Green Cemetery. After dreading the sight of bare, freshly dug earth covering the remains of her cherished mother she was overwhelmed to see her grave so heaped with wreaths that they overflowed onto her father's grave.

By 1858, the year of Jane's death, *The Ladies Companion to the Flower-Garden* had reached a seventh edition, published in London by Bradbury and

Evans. Similarly, in America the popularity of *Gardening for Ladies: and Companion to the Flower-Garden* did not wane. It was reprinted almost yearly from 1845 to 1859 as the First American from the Third London edition and then the Second American edition from the Third London edition. The quality



# Looking ahead to the Caxton Revels, Wednesday December 12

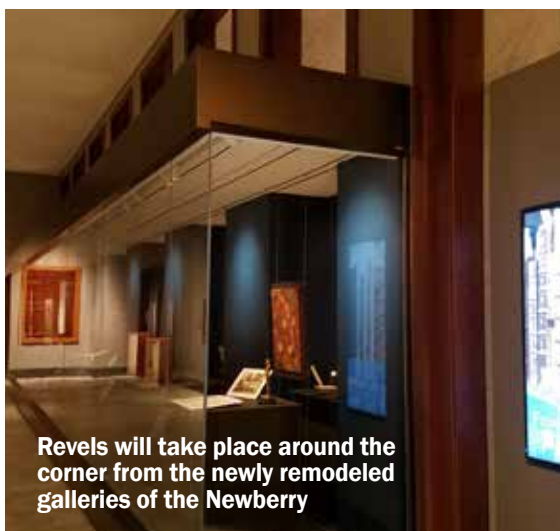
We're trying some experiments for 2018. For one thing, we will be in two new rooms at the Newberry, the Baskes Boardroom and Rettinger Hall. We're hoping that our silent auction, in Rettinger Hall, will become the social highlight of the evening. Members will be encouraged to sip libations and exchange stories as they shop for bargains. Unless a member happens to donate something extraordinary, we'll skip a live auction for this year.

But that's not all: In a return to Caxton Club tradition, we will be entertained with live music and magic! The magic will be performed by Club member and magic professional John Railing, and vocal jazz will be by Laura Freeman.

To make it easy to donate for the silent auction, members of the auction committee will accept donations at both the lunch and dinner

meetings in November and the luncheon meeting in December. If that's not convenient, email [bmccamant@earthlink.net](mailto:bmccamant@earthlink.net) and the committee will arrange to pick up your donation. We ask that you bring along a scrap of paper with each item iving your name and contact information plus anything you might know about it, such as, *Where did you get it? Do you have any idea what, if anything, you paid for it?*

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Revels will take place around the corner from the newly remodeled galleries of the Newberry



## On the Move at the Newberry, November 6

The Club will co-sponsor an On the Move event with the Newberry Library November 6. A behind-the-scenes tour of the Newberry's Century of Progress exhibition at 5 pm will be followed by dinner and a lecture by Dr. Ruth Slatter focusing on the Columbian Exposition, entitled "Eye of the Beholder: Visitor Experience at 19th-Century World Fairs" (6-7 pm in Ruggles Hall). Dr. Slatter is a lecturer in human geography at the University of Hull (UK). She is a historical and cultural geographer, primarily interested in individuals' experiences of 19th century institutional spaces. Watch the web site to register: attendance will be severely limited.

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# Caxton Club COUNCIL NOTES

Leora Siegel, Secretary

The Caxton Council met September 12, 2018, at the Union League Club for the first meeting of the Club year. Welcomed to the Council were the incoming Class of 2021: Susan Hanes, William Hansen, Bradley Jonas, Robert McCamant, and Cheryl Ziegler.

The Finance Committee presented the budget for Fiscal Year 2018-2019 to the full Council and it was unanimously approved. Expenditures include a redesigned Caxton website

<https://caxtonclub.org/>

that offers a new public interface and an enhanced members' section.

Two candidates for Caxton membership were presented by the Membership Committee and both were unanimously approved.

**Gretchen Van Dam** (Resident Member) was nominated by Jackie Vossler and seconded by Susan Hanes. As might seem appropriate for the circuit librarian for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, Gretchen collects early law books. She has served as a member of the adjunct faculty for the MLIS program at Dominican University and has taught legal research and writing at Chicago-

Kent College of Law, Loyola Law School, and John Marshall Law School. Gretchen is past president of the Chicago Association of Law Libraries.

**Adrienne W. Kolb** (Resident Member) was nominated by Susan Levy and seconded by Valerie Higgins. As Fermilab's archivist and historian from 1983-2015, Adrienne coauthored two books and several articles on the history of 20th century elementary particle physics. Living in the Chicago area, she became familiar with its architecture and the Arts and Crafts Movement.

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# 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: **"Bob Dylan: Electric"** (his influence on American music, literature, and culture). Opens November 16.

**Art Institute of Chicago**, 111 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, 312-443-3600: **"I'll Show You! Posters and Promos from Chicago's Famous Artists"** (ephemera from the collection of Gladys Nilsson and Jim Nutt), Ryerson and Burnham Libraries, weekdays only through January 7. **"Photography + Books: Out of the Retina, Into the Brain – The Art Library of Aaron and Barbara Levine,"** November 17 to March 17.

**Chicago Art Book Fair**, Chicago Athletic Association Hotel, 12 S Michigan Avenue, November 16-18.

**Chicago Botanic Garden, Lenhardt Library**, 1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe, 847-835-8202: **"Laura Ingalls Wilder and Her Prairie"** (illustrations of prairie wildflowers and art by naturalist Helen Sharp), through January 13.

**Chicago Cultural Center**, 78 E. Washington Street, Chicago, 312-744-6630: **"African American Designers in Chicago: Art, Commerce and the Politics of Race"** (how African-American designers remade the image of the black consumer through cartooning, sign painting, architectural signage, illustration, graphic design, exhibit design and product design), Exhibit Hall, fourth floor north, through March 3.

**Chicago History Museum**, 1601 N. Clark Street, Chicago, 312-266-2077: **"Chicago and the Great War"** (Gold Star memorial portraits, collected 1919-21), through November 12.

**Chicago Printmakers Collaborative**, 4912 N. Western Avenue, Chicago, 773-293-2070: **"To Arrive Where We Started"** (CPC faculty exhibit), through November 3.

**Intuit Museum of Outsider Art**, 756 N. Milwaukee Avenue, Chicago, 312-243-9088: **"Chicago Calling: Art Against the Flow"** (themes embodied in the works of ten Chicago artists), through January 6.

**Museum of Contemporary Art**, 220 E. Chicago Avenue, Chicago, 312-280-2660: **"Picture Fiction: Kenneth Josephson and Contemporary Photography"** (explores the relationship between the photographer and his world), through December 30.

**Newberry Library**, 60 W. Walton Street, Chicago, 312-943-9090: **"Pictures from an Exhibition: Visualizing the 1893 World's Fair"** (art and ephemera from the fair, including photographs, paintings, illustrated albums, souvenirs, and guidebooks), through December 31.

**Northwestern University Library**, 1970 Campus Drive, Evanston, 847-491-7658: **"Up Is Down: Mid-century Experiments in Advertising and Film at the Gold-sholl Studio"** through December 9.

**Pritzker Military Museum and Library**, 104 S. Michigan

Art Institute of Chicago / I'll Show You!

ASSAF EVRON. LEVINES' HOME, 2018. COURTESY OF THE ARTIST.



Avenue, Chicago, 312-374-9333: **"Lest We Forget: Sailors, Sammies, and Doughboys Over There in World War I"** (explores the experiences of those who served in the war), through March.

**Spudnik Press Cooperative**, 1821 W. Hubbard Street, suite 302, Chicago, 312-563-0302: **"Now More Than Ever"** (prints about environmental change by Emmy Lingscheit), November 2 to December 29.

**Stony Island Arts Bank**, 6760 S. Stony Island Avenue, Chicago, 312-857-5561: **"Tricontinental '66 and Other Acts of Liberation"** (a multidisciplinary "instigation"), through January 6.

**University of Chicago, Joseph Regenstein Library**, 1100 E. 57th Street, Chicago, 773-702-8705: **"Censorship and Information Control, Antiquity to the Internet"** (examines how censorship has worked, thrived, or failed in different times and places), through December 14.

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



Newberry Library/  
Pictures from an Exhibition

Museum of Contemporary Art / Picture Fiction

KENNETH JOSEPHSON, CHICAGO, 1972. GELATIN SILVER PRINT.





# Caxtonians Collect: Helen Harrison

Interviewed by Robert McCamant

Helen Harrison finds that it is hard to shush books. “I try – and even succeed briefly) to do it over and over again. But then they just make their way to my home. I go on a trip someplace, and I need books before I go – both to make my plans and to read while travelling – and surprise, I end up buying books when I’m there. Or I move to a smaller apartment and do some deaccessioning in preparation. It’s fine the week I move in, but then once I’m living there I discover a perfect spot for another bookcase.”

Occasionally, the books make her feel guilty. For example, when she moved from a house to an apartment last year, she felt sorry for the movers having to carry more than 60 boxes of them up to the second floor. But mostly, books make her feel good. She lives in Edgewater, a neighborhood that has nearly one hundred “Leave a Book, Take a Book” boxes, a confirmation that she lives in the right neighborhood.

She was raised on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, but has lived in the Chicago area since 1979. “I wanted to live in a bigger place,” she says, meaning greater human aggregation, not larger dwelling. Perhaps her last job in Maryland, as gift shop manager of Donald’s Duck Shoppe, spurred her decision.

At the time she moved to Chicago, she was an active Baha’i, and their publishing office was on Chicago’s north shore. She worked there four years and for several years at the Baha’i House of Worship, but eventually left the religion and moved to the city proper.

Subsequently, she had a husband for 14 years, which resulted in three children, now 30, 27, and 26. Two live in the city quite close

to her, but her youngest fell for a suburban man, so she needs to take longer journeys to visit her.

Harrison went to Mundelein for college. “I think I was a member of the last cohort to get a degree from Mundelein,” she explains. (It has since become a part of Loyola University.) Last

the MacArthur Foundation, where she is currently administrator of core services, assistant to the managing director, and uses her library-school skills helping the Foundation’s librarian with various tasks.

She imagines she will work for a few more years, then hopes to have more time for travel

and longer stays in the United Kingdom, her favorite travel destination, or to the Eastern Shore, where she still has family.

She joined the Caxton Club in 2017 and jokes that it was to meet people who would feel sorry for her because she only has only a smidge over 1,300 books. To focus her deaccessioning, she decided to list her collecting areas. “I stopped when I got to 25,” she confesses.

She is fascinated by the Bloomsbury Group, in particular Virginia Woolf, and regrets that she cannot often afford first editions. “They are pretty expensive with the Bloomsbury Group,” she says. She has managed to buy two first editions from Newberry book sales. One was unrecognized by the sorters, and she got it for \$1. The next year she averaged it out by buying one for a more appropriate price. She also likes books from the Bloomsbury neighborhood publisher called Persephone



year she got a master’s in library science from Dominican – the last school in the Chicago area that is granting them. “It was actually very convenient,” she explains. When appropriate, she took some classes online, which saved on time spent on the bus. But other parts of the curriculum she did in person, she says. “I really enjoy seeing my teachers and fellow students face to face, so this was the best of both worlds. And thanks to one of my professors there, Dr. Cecilia Salvatore, I was introduced to the Caxton Club.”

She’s worked mostly for nonprofit organizations in her career. Ten years ago she moved to

Books, which specializes in neglected work by mid-twentieth-century women writers. “Mostly I buy them on my trips to England as they are not available in U.S. bookshops, and I would rather spend the money on airfare rather than postage to have them shipped here.”

She also likes books about books, and other people’s stories about the books in their lives. “I especially love finding books with provocative titles such as *Aroused by Books* and *The Love Affairs of a Bibliomaniac*,” she says.

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## Bookmarks...

**Luncheon: Friday, November 9, Union League Club**  
**Scott Schwartz on John Philip Sousa**

He was a struggling composer, living on soda crackers in a tiny garret until he was awarded the commission to write the theme song for a new British television program called "Monty Python's Flying Circus." The show started being shown on PBS stations around America and suddenly John Philip Sousa had stormed onto the public stage. Well, actually that's the sort of story that an unprepared sophomore would tell. But we're not settling for that! Instead we're going to the authoritative source as Scott Schwartz, archivist for music and fine arts and director of the Sousa Archives and the Center for American Music at the University of Illinois joins us to tell the fascinating tale of the March King. An accomplished and entertaining speaker, Schwartz will share stories about Sousa's remarkable career and even reveal the sport the famed composer loved so much that he recruited musicians who could double as athletic players. March down to the Union League Club to learn the story of the composer who wrote the great American soundtrack to the Fourth of July fireworks!

*November Luncheon: Union League Club, 65 W. Jackson Boulevard. Buffet opens at 11:30 am; program 12:30-1:30. Luncheon is \$35. Program free but please let us know you're coming. Reservations or cancellations for lunch by noon Wednesday the week of the luncheon. Reserve at [caxtonclub.org](http://caxtonclub.org), call 312-255-3710, or e-mail [caxtonclub@newberry.org](mailto:caxtonclub@newberry.org).*

### Beyond November...

#### DECEMBER LUNCHEON

Join the Newberry Library's Karen Christianson as she explores the creation and construction of medieval manuscripts, using a particularly seasonal example in this fascinating presentation. Mark your calendar now; this luncheon is December 7th, the first Friday of the month.

#### DECEMBER DINNER

Our annual Revels will be held in the newly remodeled ground floor of the Newberry Library on December 12, featuring a silent auction and what's being described as a magical evening. See page 9 for more details.

**Dinner: Wednesday, November 28, Union League Club**  
**Michèle V. Cloonan on "The Monumental Challenge of Preservation: The Past in a Volatile World"**

Monuments of the world's shared heritage – movable and immovable, tangible and intangible – are at risk. War, terrorism, natural disaster, vandalism, technological obsolescence, and neglect make preservation a greater challenge than it ever has been since World War II. In her most recent book, *The Monumental Challenge of Preservation*, Cloonan makes the case that, at this juncture, we must consider preservation in the broadest contexts, requiring the efforts of an increasing number of stakeholders. Michèle will give examples of dilemmas presented by monuments ranging from the Book of Kells to the Vietnam Memorial. She will also discuss the role of collectors in cultural heritage preservation. Cloonan studied humanities at Bennington College and the University of Chicago. She has an MS and PhD in library and information science from the University of Illinois, and has worked for the Newberry Library, Brown University, Smith College, and UCLA. She is a professor at Simmons University in Boston, where she was dean from 2002 to 2012. Her previous book, *Preserving Our Heritage: Perspectives from Antiquity to the Digital Age*, was awarded the 2016 Society of American Archivists' Preservation Publication Award.

*November Dinner: Union League Club 65 West Jackson. Social gathering 5-6 pm, award presentation and program 6-7:30, three-course dinner immediately following. Program is free and open to the public. Dinner \$63. Beverages \$6-\$12. Reservations must be received by NOON Nov. 26. No-shows and dinner cancellations after deadline will require payment. Reserve at [caxtonclub.org](http://caxtonclub.org), call 312-255-3710, or e-mail [caxtonclub@newberry.org](mailto:caxtonclub@newberry.org).*

#### JANUARY LUNCHEON

Wait! There's A Plan? On January 11 Lewis Mumford prize-winning author Brad Hunt from the Newberry Library will be revealing fascinating stories about urban planning in Chicago.

#### JANUARY DINNER

To be announced.