Happy New Year

Where did 2009 go to? Why is it that as you get older time seems to go faster each year? I imagine that those older than me must be desperately trying not to blink in case they miss something important. I hope that you have had a good Christmas with family and are looking forward to the coming year and all that it might bring.

Firstly, I want to say a huge THANK YOU to all those who took the time to email me with feedback on the newsletter. I received about 40 replies, all encouraging and some with some great ideas for future newsletters as well. Unfortunately I don’t have the time to acknowledge each and every one who replied – but you know who you are and I thank you.

Some of the responses I received came from members of overseas book binding associations who also subscribe to our newsletter. There were even a few editors (past and present) who sympathised with my plight about not getting feedback from readers. Secondly, I can report that readers want:

- Continuing member profiles – this was one of the most requested topics – so I will need more volunteers in the future……
- More book reviews (especially if they are short articles, on any new, or old, book in the ABC library)
- Continuing website links (even if they take a bit to type in from the newsletter!)
- More technical articles and bookbinding history.

A small proportion of the feedback was ambivalent, especially over items such as crosswords and the calendar (which is of course more relevant for Auckland members than those of us who live in the provinces). So I will be looking to reduce the number of times that some items appear in a year as a result.

One piece of useful corrective feedback I received was around the inclusion of photographs. Most readers wanted photos included but bemoaned the lack of colour, which would help with clarity. So I am delighted to present this newsletter with a coloured insert! Enjoy. We will be printing one or two relevant newsletters in colour each year.

I will look forward to receiving any more feedback that anyone has at anytime in the future.

Terrie Reddish, Editor

Wanaka Autumn Art School 2010

We’re delighted to have Yoka van Dyk coming back for the 21st Autumn Art School – 12 to 16 April. There will also be calligraphy and printing courses, as well as others that may be of interest to ABC members. More information is available on the website: www.autumnartschool.net.nz

Robyn van Reenen
ABC Calendar 2010

Please send your event information to the Editor for publication.

January
Newsletter
17 - Bindery Open Day MOTAT

February
4 - 1.30pm ABC Meeting MOTAT

March
Newsletter
21 - Bindery Open Day, MOTAT

April
11 1.30pm ABC Meeting MOTAT
4 and 18 - School programme-book making for school age children on Sundays, D3 MOTAT
12 – 21” Wanaka Autumn Art School 2010

May
Newsletter
16 - Bindery Open Day, MOTAT

June
13 - 1.30pm ABC AGM MOTAT

July
Newsletter
11 and 18 - School programme-book making for school age children on Sundays, D3 MOTAT
18 - Bindery Open Day, MOTAT

August
1 - 1.30pm ABC Meeting MOTAT

September
Newsletter
19 - Bindery Open Day, MOTAT
26 - School programme-book making for school age children on Sundays, D3 MOTAT

October
3 - 1.30pm ABC Meeting MOTAT
10 and 11 - School programme-book making for school age children on Sundays, D3 MOTAT

November
Newsletter
21 - Making Xmas Cards School programme-book making for school age children on Sundays, D3 MOTAT

December
Nothing planned as yet

Bookbinding workshops for adult patrons of MOTAT: as required.

Auckland Chapter

The display cabinet from D4 is now in the MOTAT library and contains a box for people interested in becoming members to leave their names and contact details.

MOTAT was recently awarded a UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Award for Culture and Heritage Conservation for their work on restoring the steam-driven beam engine.

More volunteers are needed to help with both the children's bookbinding days and the adult MOTAT visitors' courses. Please contact Roger Boud and John Sansom respectively.

Alan Coombs showed us a large, old illustrated book, Picturesque Europe, in a case. The book was not in a good state of repair and the case decidedly battered. He told us the book had been found on the road! However, we could still appreciate the intricate all-over design on the front cover. It was a publisher's case: a plate had been made with the design, and this was blocked onto the cover. These books were produced in large editions.

The speaker was John Coley, an artist and art educator, who has taught at the Christchurch Teachers' College and has also been the Director of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery in Christchurch. His interest in bookbinding began when he saw an exhibition of artists' books, leading him to bind some blank books for his own use as travel journals. He showed us several of these journals, the first ones consisting of pencil sketches alone, and the later ones artistic combinations of watercolour paintings and hand-written commentaries. The atmosphere of the places he visited -- France, Italy, Turkey, and more - was readily conveyed through these wonderful pages. Our enjoyment of these books was completed by listening to his well-told travel anecdotes.

Lynne Melton

Far North Chapter

The Far North Chapter has nothing to report, we will endeavour to meet more regularly in the new year. We wish all our fellow binders a successful and enjoyable 2010.

Veronique

Christchurch Chapter

Ann Bell came down to conduct a 2 day workshop at the end of November. This enabled us to learn the techniques of Celtic Coptic with icicle binding and binding on cords. As usual we all beavered away with the enthusiasm that Ann always manages to extract from us and some interesting results were to be seen.

Ann then found herself in the midst of our end of year happening. Earlier in the year a number of members contributed items of interest for a book. These were assembled and printed and each of the said members was given a copy to take away and bind in which ever manner took their fancy and hand them in for the November meeting. Ann was

Renault, Joanna Trollope, Joanne Harris, Marge Piercy, Margaret Atwood (all women, funny that!). Favourite modern novel has to be The Time Traveller's Wife.

What is your favourite quote?

Too long to quote in full "Books…. I have loved them for so long……..I have loved them so much they have finally begun to love me back. Books burst open like ripe fruit in my hands and fold back 'pop up' scenery springing up from the pages.

What is your occupation?

Day job with Deaf Aotearoa, working with people whose first language is NZ Sign, plus the bindery evenings and weekends.

Elizabeth Steiner

Crossword answers

What do you believe?

Stephen Fry Gutenberg press, I dispute his article that he invented the printing press, he certainly developed it, but I have always believed that it was developed from a wine press, as the principles are identical. Two platens (top and bottom) and a wood screw to apply pressure also used as a book press.

Reg Platt

So, Readers – what do you believe, does Reg have a good argument or not?

Ed.
Mini book swap
Once again thanks to all that participated in the Xmas Mini Book Swap and the display at Wayzgoose*. It was such a great success, we are going to carry on with a 3rd book swap. Our next theme is 'Valentines'. The completion date will be 28 February.

The guidelines are:
- Roughly 2 inches in size
- White or coloured pages
- Any sort of covering
- Your preferred style of stitching
- Swap 1 book with 1 other person

If anyone else would like to take part drop me an email and Ill add you to our list of participants.

robyn.hunt@xtra.co.nz.

*Colour photos are in the insert

Profile
This month: Christine Carr of Cambria Craft Bindery, Nelson

How long have you been an ABC member?
I joined ABC sometime in 1990, after attending a basic workshop with Peter Goodwin at the end of 1989, which led me to 3 of the last fulltime courses at AIT with Bill Downey in 1990/91. From 1991 – 1994 I worked at Craft Bookbinding in Christchurch with Andrew Hoggan (another ex-pupil of Bill’s), developing trade binding skills to add to the fine binding foundation provided by Bill. In 1995 I came home to Nelson and set up Cambria Craft Bindery, which is still working though part-time in the last 9 years as I have had another day job. But I am looking forward to retirement soon and having more time for binding!

What do you most enjoy about being an ABC member?
The wonderful talented creative inspirational people I’ve met over the years! Sheila Colman and John Sansom shared Bill’s classes with me & helped me cope with his Scottish accent in my pre-implant days. Also the fantastic support in workshops, materials, advice, resources which has been a lifeline living in remote (from binding suppliers) Nelson.

How would you describe your skills and experience as a book binder?

After nearly 20 years I think of myself as a competent binder but by no means a master. I keep in mind Bernard Middleton’s saying that after 60 years binding he still made mistakes, which I find very comforting. I enjoy the challenge of work that comes into my business, so my skills have had to be wide ranging and sometimes inventive, and I also need to recognise what I can’t do. One indirect compliment came my way when a book I had rebound for a local book dealer was pronounced by his client as being the work of “one of the old Government binders since there is no-one doing this sort of work any more”, which amused me knowing that there are many fine binders in ABC.

Where could readers see examples of your work?
I had 2 books in Sheila Colman’s Wordworks in 1994, and another 2 in the 1999 ABC exhibition. Alas there has been no time to do creative bindings since, but perhaps in the future.... I also started making a line of mini-book jewellery, some of which has been on sale at the occasional Wayzgoose I have been able to attend.

Can you tell us about your worst book/binding experience?
Probably the male customer at Craft Bookbinding who at first refused to speak to me (a mere woman) and relayed his demands through my male co-worker, then insisted that his fragile tiny book only needed “a bit of glue” and refused to listen to my explanation of why a sound repair required complete rebinding (which he didn’t want to pay for). Against my better judgement I agreed to do what he asked, with the warning that it wouldn’t hold. Sure enough a week later he stormed into the bindery shouting that it had come apart and demanding to see the manager. Andrew looked at the book, asked for my side of the story, then sent this obnoxious person about his business after refunding the tiny sum that had been paid. I took to heart Andrew’s comment that “we don’t need customers like that, just refuse to do it” and have never since allowed myself to be bullied into doing less than the best job possible.

What other interests and hobbies do you have?
Family (4 daughters, 5 grandkids, 3 great-grand), my Hearing Dog Zoe, gardening my quarter acre, music – a whole new world to catch up with since the cochlear implant 10 years ago, art, opera (Zoe likes it too but gets bored at art exhibitions), winemaking, books of course.

What is your favourite book?
There are so many! Favourite authors Dorothy Dunnett, Ursula le Guin, Doris Lessing, Mary

Book review
We then had an afternoon tea of epic proportions, washed down with homemade punch, wine and tea. We all know Joe’s bindery will prosper. We all wish her the best!

Jen

Book reviews

Bound & Lettered Vol. 8 No.1
Stunning front cover and inside a treasure trove of interesting articles. The photography is excellent, made even more enlightening with a magnifying glass.

‘Art Collaboration- Learning From Children’ made me look at my 2 grandchildren with new eyes. Vivien Lunniss with ‘The Legend of Saint Ursula’ was a highlight covering the pitfalls of difficult repair work - again such detail in the photography. Another special was ‘Foot Notes’ by Elinor Stecker-Orel. Along with articles about Dragonflies, Memory loss and Making Homemade Books this is one of the best issues of 2009. I wanted to keep it.

Ruby Waddams

Book no. 345 Painted Paper & Techniques & Projects for Handmade books & cards by Alisa Golden

I love this book, and can hardly wait to get started spinning off projects of my own based on some of the techniques Alisa Golden demonstrates. This is
not a book full of detailed book-making tutorials; we have many books in our Library covering that subject. This book's primary focus is on all the necessary inspiration and information for mastering such techniques as washes, dropper outlines, brush-handle painting, and making borders, using water-based media, primarily acrylic inks and gesso. Alisa's exquisite examples range from repeating patterns and freeform designs to customised stencils and translucent layered looks, and projects included are an origami envelope, accordion-folded album, and decorative box.

I really found it an excellent book full of great sample photos and easy illustrated directions. It is sure a book that will fire up your own creativity.

Elizabeth Steiner

Library news

** Book no. 343 A Sewing Presentation Stitches and Sewings for Book Structures presented by Betsy Palmer Eldridge to the Standards Seminar in Toronto - well worth looking at for its excellent illustrations.

** Book no. 348 Society of Bookbinders Newsletter no. 2. 2009. Donated and bound by Steve Williams. The book covers a Society member's visit to NZ and mentions several books, made in the South Island. It is worth borrowing just to see the binding.

** Equipment & materials

HELP! - are there any members interested in being part of a contingency plan to take over looking after equipment and materials from John Sansom, some time in the future?

Paring knife - 38 Rose says that she uses a bootmakers or shoe knife for paring her leather made by Eberhard Forge. They can be obtained from The House of Knives in Petone, code EWS0041 and cost $5.46.

White cotton gloves - we have 12 available for Chapters to borrow if you are planning an exhibition. No cost, just wash and return.

Japanese Screw punches - we have sold our stock. If any members are interested in placing a forward order, we will order more. They come with five sizes of bit and will cost approximately $70, depending on the exchange rate at the time.

Redbridge library buckram – reduced to clear, stock. If any members are interested in placing a forward order, we will order more. They come with five sizes of bit and will cost approximately $70, depending on the exchange rate at the time.

Book Artist in Residence

“Two for the price of one” joked the Principal of Hamilton Girls High School about my role as HGHS Sunrise Rotary Writer (and Artist) in Residence for 2009. My writing and my art practices are inextricably interwoven, especially in the making of contemporary book arts. My stated vision for the residency involved exploring innovative and sustainable ways to present creative ideas through written and visual languages. I also saw it as an effective means to further my long term goal of building a mainstream audience for artist’s books in New Zealand by 2025.

Thanks to the visionary generosity of Waikato Sunrise Rotary and Hamilton Girls High School’s Board of Trustees, the Artist in Residence receives a stipend for 10 weeks and use of a large studio with separate wet and dry work spaces. Three fifths of the residency was for my own work, and two fifths was to engage with students and staff in a range of contexts.

Between September and December 2009, I taught hundreds of girls to make three or four simple book structures, mostly in junior English classrooms. These structures started spreading virally through the school, so that soon friends were teaching each other how to make little folded books. In addition, the Art Department were spending most of a term making artist’s books with Year 10 students, and I had some input into their long term and sophisticated book projects.

Not content with classroom teaching, at lunchtimes I held Open Studios for girls to drop into the Residency studio for unstructured creative time. A handful of girls discovered me within the first week and became dedicated regulars coming three times a week throughout the residency. Dozens of other students came once or a few times, so that more often than not there were a ten or twenty girls squashed around in my big work table and spreading out through the studio space. Open Studios were hectic fun with book making, drawing, painting, collage and origami.

It was particularly thrilling for me when students brought in a book they’d made at home and filled with original writing or drawings. Or when a student was inventing a new book structure and we could talk about how to solve design problems to achieve their desired result.

I was stunned by the quality and originality of the books that students were making. Towards the end of my Residency, I offered to curate an exhibition of the best of the many books created by students during my time at school, and consider the work I had been making in my own practice.

The largest piece in the exhibition was a lantern collaboration between me and the Open Studio students. Other Open Studio regulars showed their own book projects including a substantive comic book. Almost half of the student contributions came from the Year 10 art classes who used previous social studies research into human rights as their content. The intense subject matter (the Holocaust, Apartheid, slavery etc.) and the devotion of many classroom hours produced some very powerful and moving artist’s books. Most of the other student books on show were created in Year 9 and 10 English classes that I worked with for just 1-3 sessions. Almost all the books had original content: poetry or stories and illustrations which provided a light, playful contrast to the intensity of the human rights books.

My residency finished with a three day ‘junior camp’ called ’Living a Creative Life in Hamilton’ on the first morning, I taught intensive workshops to make a blank labyrinth journal with separate board covers to use for the rest of the camp. Everyone completed their books in time to take them along on the first of our afternoon art excursions. On the second and third mornings we had unstructured studio time. I provided a variety of tools and simple materials for journaling and other paper crafts, made a few suggestions and let them do what they want. Beautiful, creative journaling emerged with many girls delighting in drawing cards from Keri Smith’s ‘100 Ideas’ and using them to spark all sorts of wonderful pages.

I knew before I started that I would appreciate the residency’s studio and stipend. What I didn’t expect were the intangibles of the residency, in particular, the inspiration, collaboration and sheer fun of working and playing with the students; and also the collegial affirmation of working with the staff. All the different ways that I got to share book arts with students informed and invigorated my own practice.

This article is adapted and condensed from posts to my blog, Bibliophilia. For more Residency stories, poems and lots of photos, go to www.meliers.net and search the ‘writer in residence’ tag.http://meliers.blogspot.com/search/label/Wri ter in Residence

*Download these inspiring playful cards for free at http://www.kerismith.com/links/100ideas.htm

Meliors Simms, Hamilton

Colour insert goes here