

The Aldus Society

A Columbus Book Club

NEWSLETTER

Spring, 2001

Vol. 2, No. 1

President's Column

It was an honor to represent The Aldus Society at the annual board meeting of the Fellowship of American Bibliophilic Societies (FABS) at the Grolier Club of New York City on April 19th. Book clubs from across the country sent representatives and it is a pleasure to announce that the state of FABS is sound both fiscally and affinitively. Much discussion concerned the *FABS Newsletter*, which club representatives saw as a wonderful source of book events throughout the nation and encouraged members to attend events at other clubs when they have the opportunity. I hope too that FABS members from outside central Ohio may have the occasion to experience some of the programs of The Aldus Society when they are in Columbus.

The second year of The Aldus Society has begun well with a high rate of renewed memberships for 2001 as well as many new members. The second year of Aldus is a critical year, for after the initial enthusiasm of year one, we hope to build a sustained interest in programs and discussions related to the text and image, including the history of print and publishing, book collecting and the book and graphic arts. To that end, Aldus plans to offer some new programming.

There are preliminary plans for a trip to Mountain House in Chillicothe this fall. It is the home of the great American papermaker Dard Hunter.

We will, of course, continue our regular programming but, within that structure, plan to interweave lectures on the history of book culture from the classical period to the twenty-first century, a suggestion by Aldus board

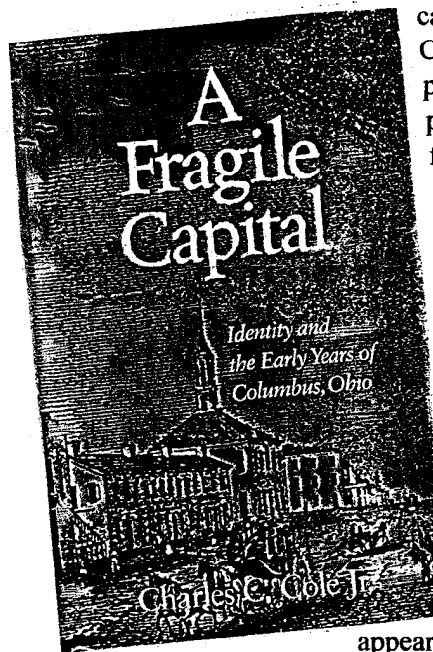
First Books Published in Columbus Subject of May 17th Program

At our next Aldus program, Charles C. Cole, Jr. will speak on the earliest books published in Columbus after it was created as the permanent state capital in 1812. He is the author of *A Fragile Capital: Identity and the Early Years of Columbus, Ohio*, recently published by Ohio State University Press.

In this program, Charley will elaborate on his book's chapter about literature and provide additional information on our first authors, most of whom were Columbus residents. He will include details on the first book published in Columbus, which was written by John Kilbourn in 1816, and on the several volumes from the pen of Margaret Coxe, the most prolific woman author in the early 1800s. Cole will also talk about the publications of Caleb Atwater, Joseph Foss, Joseph and William Sullivant, John Quincy Adams, and others. He will also tell about the

careers of the earliest printers in Columbus and suggest some perspective on the role and types of publishing which occurred during the first decades of this city.

For the past ten years, Charley has devoted much of his time to historical research and writing. In 1990, he retired after serving thirteen years as Executive Director of the Ohio Humanities Council. In addition to this latest work, he completed *Lion of the Forest: James B. Finley, Frontier Reformer*, published by the University Press of Kentucky in 1994. In the last decade he has also written five articles which have



appeared in *The Public Historian*, *Methodist*

History and Columbus Monthly.

Charley earned his A.B., M.A. and Ph.D. degrees at Columbia University, where he taught courses on American History and Contemporary

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The Newsletter is published quarterly by the Communications Committee of The Aldus Society.

If you have submissions or ideas for articles, please contact Genie or Jay Hoster, NEWSLETTER CO-EDITORS, 267-7774 (days) or at bookshigh@aol.com

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS:
Charles C. Cole, Jr.
Jay B. Hoster
Geoffrey D. Smith

NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION:
Genie Hoster

The Aldus Society
Mailing Address:
P. O. Box 1150
Worthington, Ohio
43085-1150

Geoff Smith can be contacted at 292-5938 or smith.1@osu.edu

PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE (Continued from page 1)

member and Membership Officer, Paul Watkins.

We will rely upon the expertise of local authorities to cover distinct historical periods, including works in stone and scroll, works in manuscript, early printing, early modern books, machine press books, and computer and graphic books. We expect that the lecture series will occur over a two-year period.

We realize that it will be difficult for members to attend every lecture of this series, but, should some members be able to do so, they will receive, essentially, a course in the history of the book. Erasmus referred to Aldus Manutius' print shop and salon as a university without walls. We feel that this planned series epitomizes that concept.

We wish a grand spring and summer to the membership.

Book Exhibit in Athens Through mid-June

"The Best of the Best," a juried collection of work from the Guild of Book Workers, is currently on display at the Ohio University Library. Fifty-three hand-made books are on display. Aldus members interested in printing history, fine printing, artists' books and the like will enjoy this wonderful collection.

The exhibit will remain in place through mid-June. Aldus members are encouraged to stop in.



WORLD'S LARGEST BOOK?

Professor Walter B. Pitkin of Columbia University surveys his latest work, "A Short Introduction to the History of Human Stupidity", a mere 574 pages published by Simon & Schuster on April 1st (April Fool's Day)...
uncredited news photo from the 1930s

FIRST BOOKS (Continued from page 1)

Civilizations and was also Associate Dean. He was Professor of History, Dean and Provost at Lafayette College, and served as President of Wilson College before moving to Columbus.

This last program before our summer hiatus will begin at 7 p.m. at the Worthington Public Library, 820 High Street in Worthington.

A Fragile Capital can be purchased at Books on High, 3510 North High Street in Clintonville; at Student Book Exchange (SBX), 1806 North High Street across from OSU; and at Thurber Country (at Thurber House), 77 Jefferson Avenue, which is open M-F Noon-4 p.m.

Mark your calendar:
First Books Published in Columbus
Thursday, May 17th
7 p.m.
Worthington Public Library

Dear Colleagues:

The cultural baggage associated for better or worse with the term "bookman" raise questions for me about a project I am working on and for which I would appreciate assistance.

I am writing an essay about African American book culture at the turn of the century. Hence I would be very interested to hear of any incidents involving Book Collecting associations and race. I am seeking information particularly about rare book societies (the kind that attend to the physicality of the material book). But if people know about historical incidents involving Reading Book Clubs or Authors' clubs and the race makeup of their membership, I would be eager to learn about those as well.

Please direct your reply to me: Susanna Ashton, at Sashton@clemsun.edu. Thanks so much.

Donn Vickers to Speak to Metropolitan Club

Donn Vickers, Executive Director of the Thurber House, will be speaking on Wednesday, May 23rd to the Metropolitan Club. His talk is titled "Twenty Years of Myth and Mirth."

Vickers is retiring on May 31, twenty years after establishing the Thurber House as a literary center dedicated to writers and readers alike. Under his leadership the center has created a series of programs including welcoming a new writer in residence every quarter, hosting readings by famous authors, and sponsoring a series of literary-themed summer picnics. Under his leadership, the Thurber House has also established a biennial Thurber Prize for American Humor and publishes an American humor anthology.

This Metropolitan Club meeting, which includes lunch, is open to the public. It will be held at the Athletic Club of Columbus, 136 East Broad Street, and the cost is \$23.00. Reservations are necessary: call 464-3220.

New Officers and Chairpersons Elected for Aldus

At the March 22 Annual Business Meeting, three new trustees were added to the board. In addition, new officers were elected for the 2001-02 term.

New trustees are Anita Branin, Emerson Gilbert and Joyce Miller. We hope you'll extend a welcome to them at our next program meeting.

Officers and chairpersons elected for the 2001-02 term are: Geoffrey Smith, President; Carol Logue, Secretary; Jay Hoster, Treasurer; Charles C. Cole, Jr., Historian; Marcia Preston, Program Chair; Genie Hoster, Communications Chair; and Paul Watkins, Membership Chair.

For Bibliophile Jack Matthews — Reading Matters...

It's hard to imagine that we could have found a better speaker for our first annual meeting than Jack Matthews.

Jack's new book *Reading Matter: A Rabid Bibliophile's Adventures Among Old and Rare Books* has just been published by Oak Knoll Press, a revered imprint for book lovers.

It's in a long line of volumes on book collecting that Jack has brought out over the years. But as instructive and enjoyable as it is to read Jack's published efforts, listening to him speak supplies a fuller awareness of Jack's enthusiasm for the printed word.

Jack grew up in Clintonville, but has lived for many years in Athens, where he is Distinguished Professor of English at Ohio University.

Many of us have fond memories of making the drive each spring and fall to the book sales in Glouster, a small town north of Athens, where Jack and his wife own a building that had once served as the local saloon. A more cerebral sort of intoxication awaited its more recent patrons, since the space was crowded with tomes of all sorts that Jack had found on his many bookhunting expeditions.

But more than the hope—and, often enough, the reality—of finding a book you never knew existed until you saw it, but once having seen it, being quite sure that you wanted it, was the good cheer offered by the proprietor. Those who fish for trout and walleye have no monopoly on telling tales of great catches made and issuing laments for the ones that got away.

In *Reading Matter* Jack tells of a doctor who had driven eighty miles to come to the sale. About an hour after he arrived, Jack heard the doctor "all alone in a back room, talking volubly to himself as he dug through the boxes on the floor. His monologue was loud, dramatic and uninhibited."

Jack helped him carry several boxes of his finds to the front of the store, and the doctor told him, "You know, when I got out of bed this morning, I suddenly felt so sick I almost passed out, and the first thing I thought was: 'Oh, no! I'm going to miss that sale!'"

Jack comments that "most mere mortals of his age would have wondered if they were dying; most physicians would have shifted into a diagnostic mode; but here was a man whose first thought was of the booking opportunity that might be denied him—incapacity or death be damned."

If you're not familiar with Jack's book *Collecting Rare Books for Pleasure and Profit*, which came out in 1977, you'll enjoy the practical advice and appreciate how it manages to capture the passionate spirit of the activity.

Aldus Society Planning Trip to Rare Book Collection at the Toledo Museum of Art

Later this summer, The Aldus Society will be sponsoring a bus trip to the Toledo Museum of Art. The Museum is the home of the Molly and Walter Bareiss Collection, considered one of the finest and most comprehensive collections devoted to modern illustrated books.

The Toledo Museum of Art has long been a center for the history of the written word. In 1901 the Museum established a noteworthy collection of inscriptions, manuscripts, incunabula, rare printed editions, and historic bindings. In the 1970s, the Museum significantly expanded its collection with the acquisition of a portion of George Wittenborn's art book collection. And in 1984, Molly and Walter Bareiss donated their magnificent collection of modern illustrated books, propelling the Museum into national and international status as a resource for scholars, students and visitors.

A list of artists represented in this collection reads like a who's who of late 19th- and 20th-century art, including such luminaries as Marc Chagall, Aristide Maillol, Henri Matisse, Joan Miro, Pablo Picasso, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Robert Motherwell and Robert Rauschenberg. Mr. and Mrs. Bareiss had the forethought to find and acquire a wide spectrum of materials significant to the book arts, including reproductions of paintings, drawings and prints in unusual book formats, artist-produced serials, and various mechanical reproductions created directly by the artist.

Details about our trip should be forthcoming in your mail. Hope you'll be able to join us.

Not a Member Yet? Copy or Clip this Form and Return it TODAY!



The Aldus Society
A Columbus Book Club

"May you find yourself always
in the company of good books
and kindred spirits."

— Colleen Sell

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME: _____

STREET: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ e-mail: _____

Special Interests or Meeting Ideas:

Yearly Dues:

- \$25 - Individual
- \$40 - Family
- \$50 - Patron
- \$100 - Founder
- \$10 - Student

We welcome the names and addresses of anyone you think would like to join our organization.

Return this form with your check to the Aldus Society, Box 1150, Worthington, Ohio 43085-1150