

# The Aldus Society

## NEWSLETTER

Spring 2002

Volume 3, No.1

### Collecting James Thurber Subject of May Aldus Program

“The most important thing about humorist James Thurber,” Willis Birchman wrote in 1937, “is Columbus, Ohio, his birthplace.”

Aldus board member Jay Hoster would agree. Jay has been collecting Thurber material for a quarter of a century, and his article on the subject appeared in *Firsts* magazine in 2001. Jay will be sharing items from his collection at an Aldus Society meeting on May 16. Jay has always had an interest in Columbus history—he’s a past president of the Columbus Historical Society—and he’ll offer some insights on how the Columbus of the first part of the twentieth century affected Thurber’s writings.

He’ll discuss Thurber’s first published piece of humor, which appeared in an East High School publication in 1912, and show how Thurber managed to make comedy out of the city’s greatest natural disaster, the 1913 flood.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



Shakespeare has his Stratford-on-Avon. Dickens has his London. Irving has his Catskill Mountains and Mark Twain the Mississippi River. In the same literary tradition, James Thurber has his Columbus, Ohio.

### Evolution of Manuscript Production in Europe Focus of April Program

The second lecture in the History of Text series will feature Professor Frank Coulson of Ohio State University’s Department of Greek and Latin. In his talk for The Aldus Society, Professor Coulson will trace the evolution of manuscript production in Europe from late antiquity to the Renaissance. Focusing on four periods (Late Antiquity, Carolingian Renaissance, the High Middle Ages, and the Renaissance), he will discuss how cultural and social factors influenced and modified manuscript production. The lecture will be illustrated with slides.

Professor Coulson did his graduate work in the Department of Classics and the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies at the University of Toronto and, since 1982, he has been a professor of Medieval Latin and Paleography at Ohio State. Professor Coulson’s research interests lie primarily in the reception of Ovid in the Middle Ages and Renaissance. He has published widely on the manuscript tradition of the *Metamorphoses* and has produced a critical edition of an important medieval commentary on Ovid.

Most recently, Professor Coulson’s contribution to the development of manuscript studies at Ohio State was recognized with the Alumni Award for Distinguished Teaching.



#### JOIN US!

WHEN: Thursday, April 25th

WHERE: Chemical Abstracts,  
2540 Olentangy River Road

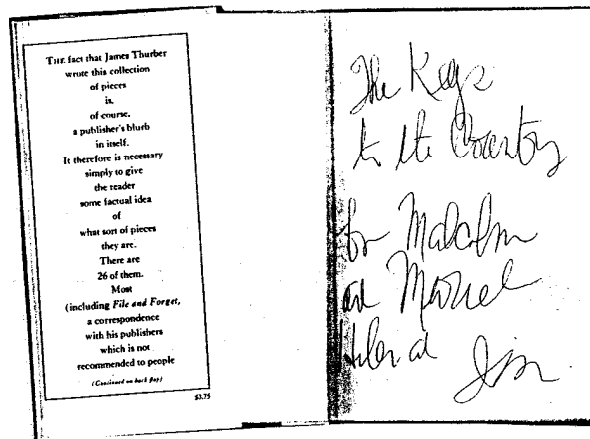
TIME: 7 p.m.

Jay will also be showing slides of what he calls simply "The Book," which is a well-worn ex-lending library copy of *My Life and Hard Times*. A previous owner had everyone in the Thurber family sign the book and included photos taken by Robert Thurber, James' brother, of Muggs (featured in the story "The Dog That Bit People") and the aging Reo of "The Car That Wouldn't Start."

Jay has added signatures of Thurber's daughter and two grandchildren, along with photos of the 1913 flood and a football game played at Ohio Field that year between Ohio State and Case. Jay comments, "It's just possible that Thurber was there that day, although he was probably in the library reading Henry James."

Jay has also had winners of the Thurber Prize for American Humor and numerous writers such as Garrison Keillor, P. J. O'Rourke, and Adam Gopnik sign the book. Jay notes, "This book breaks all the rules of collecting modern firsts. It's not a first edition, it's in rather dreadful condition, but in spite of all that, it's the cornerstone of my collection."

In addition to "The Book," Jay will also share many Thurber collectibles; not only books by and about Thurber, but memorabilia including scarves emblazoned with Thurber's



Presentation copy of *Thurber Country* (1953) inscribed by Thurber for Malcolm Cowley and his wife Muriel.

ubiquitous dogs, vintage advertising illustrated with Thurber drawings, and original family photos, some which have never been published or, indeed, been seen by the public.

## COLLECTING THURBER

WHEN: Thursday, May 16th

WHERE: Upper Arlington Library  
2800 Tremont Road

TIME: 7 p.m.

## Columnist Peter Franklin Shares the Literary Side of Cookbooks

On a snowy night in March, syndicated newspaper columnist Peter Franklin warmed his audience with his program, "More Than Recipes, a Literary Look at Cookbooks." He read from books by a variety of authors and demonstrated that good writing can make for reading pleasure that is beyond just trying out recipes. By sampling different countries and cultures he showed the experiences that can surround the preparation and enjoyment of food all over the world. Highlights included authors M. F. K. Fisher ("How to Make a Pigeon Cry" from *How to Cook a Wolf*), and Barnaby Conrad (*The Martini*). His subject matter ranged from French cooking (including a wonderful recounting of the French food riots...yes, there really *were* food riots in the 18<sup>th</sup> century before the Revolution) to Italian cooking, for which he showed us an antique "guitar" used for cutting thin pasta, once used by his wife's grandmother in Abruzzo.

Franklin's syndicated newspaper column "Cookbook Nook" appears in *The Columbus Dispatch* and over 200 papers throughout the United States. He has amassed over 6,000 cookbooks in the past 25 years. (Through his generosity, approximately 4,500 of these cookbooks now form the nucleus of what is the largest collection of cookbooks in Ohio, housed in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library at the OSU Libraries.

— Christine Hayes & Carol Logue

### Books from which Franklin read:

M.F.K. Fisher, *The Art of Eating* (1954) which collects *Serve It Forth*; *Consider the Oyster*; *How to Cook a Wolf*; and *The Gastronomical Me: An Alphabet for Gourmets*  
Amanda Hesser, *The Cook and the Gardener* (Experiences at Anne Willens' cooking school in a Burgundian chateau)  
Stuart T. Allen, *In the Devil's Garden* (2001). (Fascinating social history about "forbidden fruits")  
Mary Taylor Simoneti, *Pomp and Sustenance* (1989) (Sicilian food)  
Anne Teresa Cullen, *Food and Memories of Abruzzo*  
Carol Field, *Celebrating Italy* (Foods at Italian festivals)  
Russ Parsons, *How to Read a French Fry* (2001) (the *Los Angeles Times* food editor writes about the science and technology of food in the kitchen in a practical and entertaining way)  
Claudia Rodden, *The Book of Jewish Food* and *The Four Seasons* (About the NYC restaurant)  
Barnaby Conrad, *The Martini* (we wonder what he would say about what's happened to the martini in the last few years!!)

## The Aldus Society

### Trustees, 2001-02

PRESIDENT  
Geoffrey D. Smith

MEMBERSHIP  
Paul Watkins

SECRETARY  
Carol Logue

TREASURER  
Emerson Gilbert

PROGRAMS  
Marcia Preston

COMMUNICATIONS  
Genie Hoster

ARCHIVES  
Anita Branin

Laura Evans  
Ivan Gilbert  
Jay Hoster  
Joyce Miller  
Ron Ravneberg

*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](mailto:bookshigh@aol.com)

NEWSLETTER  
CONTRIBUTORS:  
Carol Logue  
Christine Hayes  
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](mailto:smith.1@osu.edu)

## President's Column

by Geoffrey Smith

Recently, a member of The Aldus Society remarked upon the democratic nature of the group, a perception that I sincerely hope is shared among the majority of the membership. From its inception, The Aldus Society has intended to make accessible to as wide an audience as possible public programs addressing the variety of approaches for appreciation of text and image. Books and reading are gifts for all people and enrich our lives. Images and design are equal gifts and meet our aesthetic needs.

Though I may be waxing sentimentally, books are beings unto themselves with all aspects of their content and manufacture contributing to the appreciation of the total and finished product. We appreciate Dickens' early, rambling *Sketches by Boz* for the text itself, certainly, but how much more delightful is it to read an illustrated edition (is there any other? I ask facetiously). Do we not linger as long over Cruikshank's pictorial depictions of nineteenth-century England as we do over Dickens' verbal descriptions? How inviting are the covers of the early printings of Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, be they in green cloth or blue cloth, with the relaxed Huck Finn himself standing in front of a gilded fence waiting to meet you? Of course, different people value books for different reasons. Some value a tattered copy of Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*, read and re-read from youth through middle-age.

Sententiously, then, there are as many ways to appreciate books and images as there are people in this world. To that end, as has been stated before in this column, each and every member of The Aldus Society is encouraged to suggest ideas for programs and each and every idea will be considered seriously by the programming committee. But, as is your wont, you are certainly welcome, simply, to enjoy the programs, for attendance is participation in its own right.

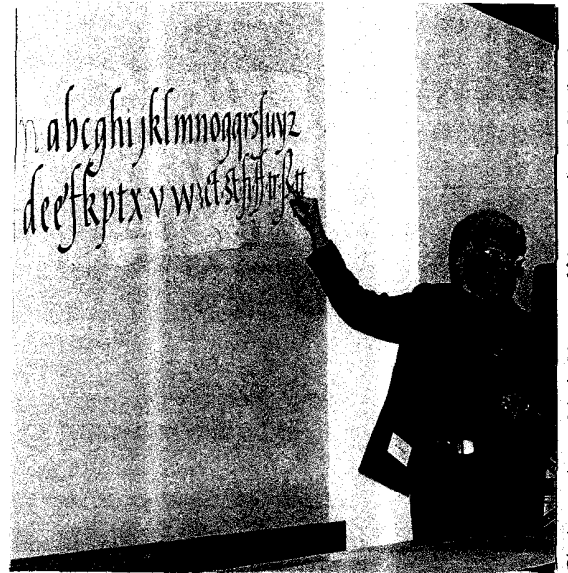


Photo courtesy of Jody Sjogren of Metamorphosis Studios, Inc.

Nationally recognized calligrapher and Aldus member Ann Alaia Woods has presented two programs to The Aldus Society. They were titled "The Art of Calligraphy, a History of Script Writing." The first program, which covered early writing was held in February, 2001; the second, covering calligraphy to the present times, was held this past February.

## Trustees Elected at March Meeting

At its March program meeting, The Aldus Society also held its annual Business Meeting, which included the election of new trustees. Trustees elected that evening included Ron Ravneberg and Laura Evans, both new trustees, and Ivan Gilbert who ran for re-election.

In turn the trustees elected officers for the coming year. They are Geoff Smith, President; Carol Logue, Secretary; Emerson Gilbert, Treasurer; Paul Watkins, Membership Chair; Marcia Preston, Program Chair; Anita Branin, Archives Chair; and Genie Hoster, Communications Chair.

## UPCOMING BOOK EVENTS

**May 1-4: Friends of OSU Libraries Book Sale**  
Main Library on OSU campus  
Phone 614/292-3387 for more details.

**May 19: Ann Arbor Antiquarian Book Fair**  
Michigan Union Ballroom, U. of Michigan campus,  
11am-4pm  
Phone 734/995-1819 for more details.

## MEMBERS ENJOY FIRST SMALL-GROUP PROGRAM

In two informal sessions on February 6th and 10th, Marcia Preston launched a new Aldus venture: the Small-Group Program. She invited us into her home. With nine people on the 6th and seven on the 10th, everyone had the chance to closely examine her wonderful and varied collections.

Marcia answered our eager questions and briefly told us how she started collecting. She assured us it is very easy and gratifying to contact private-press printers. In the living room, her miniature books covered the coffee table and we enjoyed examining these charming tiny books. She has protectively mounted her illustrated manuscript leaves in a large binder and has identified each item.

The heart of her collection is an impressive array of illustrated private-press books and unique hand-made artists' books, many with calligraphic adornment. She is especially fond of books of the Windhover Press of Iowa by Kim Merker and of the calligraphic gems by Paulette Roades. There are also examples from Britain, which has a long tradition of special private-press productions that include fine illustrations.

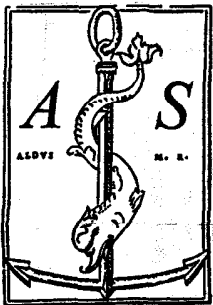
The opportunity to inspect such treasures in a personal and informal manner was greatly appreciated by all of us. An added bonus is for Aldus members to get to interact with each other as well as with individual books. The subjects and books that may be explored in a small-group program are unlimited and the intimate atmosphere of a home expands the experience.

The Aldus Society Board hopes that sharing will become an ongoing aspect of our group's activities. Members of the Society have already contributed greatly to our public programs. If you want to share your pleasure in collecting, but feel uncomfortable about giving a more formal program, please consider volunteering for a small-group program. Any Board member would be happy to discuss an event with you.

And, thank you again, Marcia, for sharing your pleasures in books with us.

— Carol Logue

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



*The Aldus Society*

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

— Colleen Sell

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

STREET: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Yearly Dues:

- \$15 - Student
- \$35 - Individual
- \$60 - Family
- \$100 - Patron

YES, please include me in the Aldus Membership Directory

YES, please include me in the Aldus e-mail group.

My e-mail address is: \_\_\_\_\_

*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, P. O. Box 1150, Worthington, Ohio 43085-1150!**