

## **CBBAG - OTTAWA VALLEY**

Minutes

January 9, 2019

**Theme:** The Book Arts Lab at Carleton University

### **Chair**

No news, status quo. We still do need a program coordinator though. Swap signatures are due next month. Susan introduced Peggy Furness, from the Calligraphy Society, who has a few book projects in mind, related to her research in genealogy.

### **Workshops**

The December workshop, on acrylic pours, given by Wendy Southin, went well, and was full. On Saturday, the 12<sup>th</sup>, there will be a “free day” workshop, and so far there are more than 15 people registered. Many names on the list are new, and more have signed up than at last year’s offering. The mini-marbling course with Nancy French has 5 or 6 people, and will be held soon. The full marbling workshop will be in April.

Christine McNair will be teaching Nag Hammadi in February and supplies have been ordered from England. This workshop filled quickly. In March, we will have Cheryl Moote. At present, we are looking at what we could ask her to teach. That leaves May open, with no topic as yet. Send your ideas to Spike!

Roxanne asked that we send confirmed workshop bookings to her for the website.

### **Treasurer**

There is \$8490 in the bank, with some small expenses due to come out. Nancy is hopeful that our free day will encourage some people attending to become members.

### **Show and Tell**

Diane showed the books she had made with her covers created at Wendy’s acrylic pour workshop. The designs were very interesting. Susan also had a book made with covers from this workshop. Since the Coptic stitching with a single needle was challenging, she received help from Nancy French at Spike’s open studio last week. When she went home that day, she made a model with leftover board and paper, and wrote the instructions on the cover. In addition, and forgetting that the next challenge, ribbons,

was not due yet, Susan showed a book where she had attached a framed panel of ribbon embroidery.

Gayle distributed invitations to her and Steve's mid-winter party in February. These had covers of different colours, and included a delightful pop-up inside.

Paul had been given an old book with recipes in it, and so rebound it. Wendy has been making lots of ink lately, and described her methods. She had papers showing what the ink looked like after it had been filtered. Coffee filters were used.

Geneviève had three books, unbound copies of Keith Smith's manuals on binding, to sell, on behalf of Lynn Curry. Spike showed her mini-books of *Alice*, bound together as one group. Ten chapters had been sewn together, with two more due to be added. The small books formed a circle when at rest. It was noted that this could be worn as a bracelet.

## **Program**

Two guests from Carleton University joined Larry Thompson in discussing the Book Arts Lab. Robin Norris is the chair of the English Department and Patti Harper is Head of Research Support Services in the Library. They are co-chairs of the project. Generous monetary support has been received from the Faculty Deans, led by the University Librarian.

Years ago, a large platen press had been purchased by Michael Thompson. It was kept in the basement of Dunton Tower, and students used it to print things. It belonged to the English Department, but could not be taken to their offices on the 18<sup>th</sup> floor. At some point, it was relocated to the library. Many years passed, and wondering what to do with it, the decision was made to develop a Book Arts Lab.

Students from Industrial Design were asked to come up with conceptual plans, and in groups, they interviewed various people, including some of the Chapter's members. Experiential learning is a provincial initiative, meaning that the goal is to have students do real work in the field. The science labs already achieve this, but here was a new opportunity. The English Department is one of the oldest departments at the university, and there is a PhD program concerned with the production of literature. Many faculty are interested in various periods in history. All could use the lab in connection with the courses, as well as in many other disciplines in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

Patti passed around copies of the floor plan, which will be going out to tender soon. Hopefully, building will start in May, to be completed early in the fall. The lab will be

located on the main floor of the library, and will have 2 components, one for binding and instruction, and the other for printing. It will be enclosed within glass walls, so that all activity will be visible to others. Since the library is heavily used, the lab will promote itself. Classes will be built into the curriculum for January 2020. It will not be a production shop, instead, an educational place of academic enquiry. The closest lab of this type is at Massey College in Toronto, which they and some students visited last year.

Larry described some of his experiences trying to obtain equipment from places that did not need or use these things anymore. Some private organizations have donated things, such as a wooden type cabinet.

Patti mentioned that fundraising was needed to support scholarships. Donations of materials about printing, such as paper, or any books on the book arts were desired as well, with tax receipts given for donations valued at \$200 (single or multiple items) or more (single or multiple items).

Steve asked if the group had talked with Dalhousie, who also has a lab. Joe Landry, who is a prominent member of CBBAG, is in charge of this lab. Steve has seen the lab. He spoke about the issue of type not being put back after students had printed something. Dawson, the lab, has taken back some jobs, like printing diplomas. Geneviève suggested that it would be good to contact the conservation community, as they might have materials to donate.

What could the Chapter get out of this? Possibly a place to hold meetings? The issue of parking at Carleton was discussed. It is not free, although cheaper in the evenings. Would we be able to obtain parking passes? The O Train does run through the university. Many people now are getting into letterpress and book arts. Apparently, table top presses are being produced in England. Steve offered to send a copy of the history of Ladysmith Press to Larry.

Spike can see us being involved with the lab. We have never had the luxury of having the equipment for some workshops close at hand, as they do in Toronto. What do other book arts centres do? Holding symposia and inviting people to come and teach were mentioned. The display potential for our group was highlighted. The Art of the Book exhibit is not coming to Ottawa because space was not obtained for it. The Museum of Science and Technology tests their exhibits at the library.

Patti and Robin would be happy to receive any comments or ideas about the floor plan.

## **Next Meeting**

February 13, Maker's tables

21 in attendance