

# the **Gold Leaf**

Autumn, 2010



THE JOURNAL OF THE HAND BOOKBINDERS OF CALIFORNIA

VOLUME TWENTY-SEVEN, NUMBER TWO

# The Hand Bookbinders of California Officers

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## On the cover

Photo courtesy of Peggy DeMouthe, from her “Tip” on page 27.

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# from the HBC President

Dear Members:

I am writing this letter from the mountains of Telluride, Colorado, amidst the Aspens gloriously glowing yellow and orange. I have had the good fortune to spend the past two weeks studying with Suzanne Moore and Monique Lallier at the American Academy of Bookbinding. I am rejuvenated with an arsenal of refreshing ideas for books and am eager to get to my bench in Muir Beach.

To begin with, I want to thank our Exhibitions Chair, Vanessa Hardy, for organizing an excellent exhibition at both the San Francisco Public Library and the Doyle Library in Santa Rosa. Both venues have been well attended and received.

Please join me in welcoming Rhiannon Alpers, our newest and youngest member of the Board, as Program and Workshops Chair. Rhiannon has set a fabulous schedule for our meetings this year; be sure to take a peek at the schedule enclosed in this *Gold Leaf*. New this year, is our 'Master Techniques Workshops'. These workshops feature highly regarded binders who will teach specific skills and techniques. Look out for John DeMerrit, Sandy Good and Monique Lallier as these workshops fill quickly. See page 11 for the schedule.

The Board has been exploring ways to update our website to be more interactive with our membership as well as means to promote our members who take commissions. Watch out for these changes as the year progresses.

Like all nonprofit organizations, the HBC has a set of bylaws that establish everything from the official name of the group to the duties of the Officers and how dues are collected. It has been so long since these bylaws were last seen that an electronic version did not exist. Fortunately for the good record-keeping skills of our members, a hard copy was found, which was scanned so the text could be extracted. The Board agreed that it would be fitting that these bylaws be shared with our membership, and they are reprinted here, verbatim. You are encouraged to read them and let the Board know if you believe an update would be in order—see Article 9. (Note: You will notice that there is no Article 8—we do not know if this was an omission or simply a miscount of the Articles.)

Finally, a big heads-up that the year 2012 is HBC's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary! I would like to solicit your suggestions about possible activities and celebrations for this occasion. Please contact me with your ideas directly at: [president@handbookbinders.org](mailto:president@handbookbinders.org).

Sincerely, Coleen Curry

# The Gold Leaf

## Letter from the Editor

Greetings, and welcome to the Autumn, 2010 issue of *The Gold Leaf*. In this issue you will find an update on the response to the HBC exhibition, plus information on upcoming HBC programs and workshops for 2010-2011. Some are summarized in the Minutes of the August meeting, and you will also see an announcement for a new series of Master Techniques Workshops. This issue also features a profile of our longtime member and supporter, Klaus (Ulli) Rotzscher.

As always we update our members' list, saying hello to several new members; and sadly, we say goodbye to long-time supporters and friends of HBC.

In our Spring issue, watch for some interesting “vintage how-to” items, culled from past workshops, tip sheets, and members' personal contributions. I'll start off with a new one on the One-Hour Lifting Knife project—which could be subtitled “What To Do With A Drawer-Full of Dinner Knife Blades.” We will also offer updates on exhibitions, publications and videos (reviewers welcome) and much more.

-Peggy DeMouthe, Editor

## Submissions and Deadlines

The Gold Leaf is published twice each year by the Hand Bookbinders of California.

Spring/Summer Journal – submissions by March 15  
Autumn/Winter Journal – submissions by September 15

Submissions to Peggy DeMouthe: [pdemouthe@mindspring.com](mailto:pdemouthe@mindspring.com)

# the Hand Bookbinders of California

## Monthly Meetings Schedule

HBC meets the first Tuesday of the month. Generally, the Board meets at 6pm—to which all are invited, with the Program at 7pm.

### AUGUST

Summer Party: the annual summer picnic was held at Sandy Good's home in Woodacre. Sunshine and good food!



### OCTOBER

“Treasures of the Book Club”: the meeting at The Book Club was a look at some of the Book Club Treasures that Barbara Land had not shown us before. She displayed wonderful bindings and discussed their history.

### NOVEMBER

“Two Tanneries in Fes, Morocco” with Signa Houghteling. Judy presented a slideshow of her recent trip through Morocco. Added comment by Najat Goldwasser, born and reared in Fes. The excellent Moroccan refreshments prepared by Judy, with tasting for authenticity by Najat, were enjoyed by all.

## Upcoming

### DECEMBER 7: 2010 Holiday Party & Gift Exchange

Held at Barbara Land's home, 1434 Lake Street, San Francisco.

### JANUARY 4: “Blade Sharpening Techniques” with Tom Conroy

Held at SF Center for the Book, 300 DeHaro Street, San Francisco.

### FEBRUARY 1: “Tour of the San Francisco Public Library Bindery”

A tour of both the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the Main Library and the Preservation Unit at 190 9<sup>th</sup> Street.

### MARCH 1: Presentation by Monique Lallier

Held at SF Center for the Book, 300 DeHaro Street, San Francisco.

### APRIL 5: Show & Tell, Elections of the Board

Held at the Book Club of California, 312 Sutter, Ste. 500, San Francisco.

### MAY 3: End of season Potluck

# the Hand Bookbinders of California

## Membership Updates

### HBC welcomes renewing Individual Members:

Jane Aaron, Cathy Adelman, Rhiannon Alpers, Mary K. Austin, Pamela Barrios, Ellen Bauch, Millie Bird, Nancy Bloch, Marlyn Bonaventure, William Bratt, Patty Bruce, Sara Burke, Catherine Burkhard, Carolee Campbell, Anne Cottrell, Coleen Curry, Peggy DeMouthe, Sarah Elson, David Feldstein, Heidi S. Ferrini, Mark D. Flaherty, Georgette Freeman, Donna Garrett, Diana Goldstein, Sandra Good, Nigel Gore, Gerrilee Hafvenstein, Vanessa Hardy, Lyall F. Harris, Terry Horrigan, Signa Houghteling, Constance Hunter, C.L. Ingalls, LaVonne Jacobsen, Timothy James, Margaret H. Johnson, Wendy Jones, Sally Kaufmann, Marie Kelzer, Barbara Kretzman, Catherine Kornel, Andrew Laird, Mary Risala Laird, Barbara Land, Victoria Lee, Frank Lehmann, David Levy, Brian Lieske, Erika Lindensmith, Martha Little, Sharon Long, Kitty Maryatt, Mary Matlage, Jean McCormick, Norman McKnight, Cathy Miranker, Tini Miura, Monique Moore-Racine, Glen R. Mazingo, Sabina Nies, Elaine Nishizu, Linda K. Ogden, Patricia Owen, Melinda Padgett, Joanne Page, Eleanore Ramsey, Robert Rosenzweig, Ulli Rotzscher, Thomas C. Schwartzburg, Vicke Selk, Richard L. Shepard, Robert Simola, Sarah Songer, Lynn Stralem, Gail Sulmeyer, Marilyn D. Swanson, Jill Tarlau, Hannah Tashjian, Claire Teel, Michael Thompson, Alice Vaughn, Ruth Walker, Susan D. Wilson, Elaine S. Wismer, Barbara Wood, Pamela Wood, Constance Wozny, Karen Zukor and Dana Draper & Ingrid Butler, Becky Rose & Amiram M. Eisenstein, Najat & Thomas Goldwasser, Karen & Robert Hanmer, Eddy & Camille Hood, Bruce Kavin & Judith Howard, Monique Lallier & Don Etherington, Hisako & Takashi Nakazawa, Lily & Charles Stevenson, Danya Winterman & Ivar Diehl  
and Fred & Barbara Voltmer

### And Group Memberships:

American Academy of Bookbinding, Book Club of California, Mills College, Guild of Bookworkers, Association of Book Crafts (NZ), Design Bookbinders (UK), Society of Bookbinders (UK), and Canadian Bookbinders & Book Artists Guild (CAN)

### HBC welcomes new Individual Members:

Rebecca Chamlee, Juliayn Coleman, Alexandra Connor, Justin Johnson, Mary Dresser, Gabrielle Fox, Notara Lum, Cari Ferraro, Paul A. Kramer, Andrew McCormick, Brian Lieske

# Member News

## In Remembrance

In this space, we honor members, former members, and longtime supporters who are no longer with us.

**George Storz** passed away in early July, in Mendocino. His wife Betty is a longtime supporter of the HBC and, although now retired, still maintains close contact with old friends in the Bay Area. A student of Mies van der Rohe in Chicago, George was a well-recognized architect in California, and designed the home that he and Betty shared in the headlands between Mendocino and Fort Bragg.

**Anne Yamasaki** passed away in May, the day before she would have celebrated her 74<sup>th</sup> birthday. A talented calligrapher and member of the Friends of Calligraphy and the Colophon Club, Anne was always a welcoming friend and a positive presence at any book fair or print related event. She was a tireless volunteer and will be remembered as much for her outgoing and inclusive personality as for her beautiful art.

## the Hand Bookbinders of California minutes of the Board Meeting

Tuesday, October 5, 2010

Present: Robert Rosenzweig, Margaret Johnson, Peggy DeMouthe, Barbara Land, Vanessa Hardy, Rhiannon Alpers, Signa Houghteling, Tom Conroy

In the absence of the President Coleen Curry, Bob Rosenzweig opened the meeting at 6:00 pm in the library of The Book Club of California in San Francisco.

Coleen had sent a message with points to bring up at the meeting, which Margaret read to the group. All but one involved the Website and were discussed when it came up on the agenda. The other was the notice from the Book Club requesting a fee for using their rooms for our meetings. That was discussed at length at various stages of the meeting.

The Treasurer's reports were distributed. Patsy had sent the reports to Bob in advance for his perusal. He suggested that the Fiscal Year Total for Publicity for the Members' Exhibition was incorrectly inserted as \$975.66 for the year. However, \$74.10 in May, 2010 was the only expense in the current year. Typos happen.

Margaret failed to report a correction/addition to the Minutes of the August meeting: Under the Treasurer's Report, Bob asked that Patsy send him the reports ahead of the meeting so he can go over them. She has done so.

Vanessa reported that the annual exhibition, now in Santa Rosa, will close on October 15 and the books returned. She is currently exploring sites for the 2011 exhibit and will report progress at the next meeting. It may, possibly, be held at the Book Club, which occasioned one of the discussions about the Book Club. At its meeting in the summer it had been decided to charge a fee of \$10 a head for all events held after regular hours by BCC members and others, including HBC. Since they had failed to inform HBC of the decision until a colloquy between Vanessa and Lucy Cohen a week before, Lucy waived the fee for the present meeting. The announcement caused considerable consternation among the Board members.

After a number of discussions, it was agreed that perhaps a set fee for a meeting – possibly \$25 or \$50 – would not be unreasonable, but a fee of \$10 a head was ridiculous. We do acknowledge the fact that there are some expenses incurred each time, such as electricity, heating, air-conditioning, cleaning, etc. and it would not be unreasonable to contribute to those costs. Signa has offered to draw up a list of talking points to take to the BCC Board. She cites our long relationship, shared goals, and other affiliations which should make our relationship somewhat special. In the meantime, a search for another venue will be undertaken in the event we cannot work things out with BCC.

Peggy pronounced the next issue of *Gold Leaf* as almost complete. She needs the president's letter to finish it off. She is including the Website update, the complete By-laws of HBC, along with a profile of an HBC member, and other items.

Rhiannon reported that John DeMerritt's workshop in November is slow in filling. She intends to advertise early Monique Lallier's week-long workshop in February to be sure to fill it. And she will be sending out postcards in December for Sandy Good's workshop in January. Tom Conroy said his 2 workshops in New

York recently were cancelled due to fewer people signing up these days.

Margaret read out Lang's Monthly Membership Report which Coleen had requested. Membership renewal letters were sent out in August. In 2009-2010 the membership stood at 151 persons and 14 groups. As of this date, the 2010-2011 membership numbers stand at 94 persons and 8 groups. Renewal reminders are being sent out this week. There were 11 new members and 2 re-instated members in the last fiscal year.

Nigel could not attend the meeting, so Margaret read out the summary he had sent after the August meeting:

- The website will be updated shortly. (It has been done, as of this date).
- This year's meeting agenda will be posted, as well as the year's program calendar. (Peggy assured us that the agenda has been posted. Rhiannon says the programs are there, also.)
- Coleen will write a letter to the membership – either posted, or as an article in *Gold Leaf* – explaining: 1) that the website will list those members accepting commissions and providing a means of contacting them, either directly or indirectly. 2) that the website will provide a link to any member who has a website of their own and would like to have it listed.
- He calls for photos of past exhibitions to be sent to the webmaster at [nigelpgore@gmail.com](mailto:nigelpgore@gmail.com), (or on CD by snail mail), to be put on the web. He will add more pictures of books, as well.
- Links to send email to board members will be added but will list only the chair position, not the name of the actual member, [as:secretary@handbookbinders.org](mailto:as:secretary@handbookbinders.org)

Nigel added the items below as things to consider:

- It is possible to add a password protected area of the site to restrict access – the question is how would the board see such a capability used?
- the “[hbc-emaillist@yahoogroups.com](mailto:hbc-emaillist@yahoogroups.com)” email list is a closed list and in general is restricted to members of HBC who have signed up to join. But once something is on the website, it is open to the world. Information on the web is like the genie in the bottle – very hard to get back once it is out.
- There is a general email list that is closed and restricted to members who have at one time provided us with their email address. We do not often use this list, but it is available for urgent

messages to everyone who has given their email address even if they have not joined the “hbc-emaillist@yahoogroups.com” list. Nigel asks Board members to contact him or Coleen with thoughts about the above, or with copy or content they would like to see on the website.

- Coleen has suggested adding a list of updated links to other organizations, such as DB, AAB, CBBAG, GBW, SFCB, SoB, etc.
- Peggy suggested links on the website for ads to bookbinding suppliers and the like, at a small fee.
- Bob wanted his corrected email address noted: bobrosen@sbcglobal.net
- Judy has a disk of GBW Foundation Session material she is sending to Rhiannon for use in planning workshops. Margaret, also, has GBW Standards handouts for her for that purpose.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 pm in order for Barbara to present a number of the Book Club Treasures for inspection. None of these bindings had been shown to this group before and they were of great interest. We thank Barbara for choosing these and presenting them with all the information about them.

The meeting was followed by the usual welcome refreshments, brought by Judy, which gave us a chance to meet with the two new members present. They were served from the new bar in the elegant new rooms of the Book Club.

Respectfully submitted, Margaret H. Johnson, Secretary

P.S. An email notice from Margaret corrected a misunderstanding with the Society of Bookbinders (UK) group. They are not the Craftsman Binders. “SOB is still SOB. Craftsman Binders is the address of Graham Lampard who has taken over as the SOB Newsletter Editor.” -*Hilary Henning*

# the Hand Bookbinders of California

## HBC Master Techniques Workshops

### *Foil Stamping & Embossing*

with John DeMerritt

November 6 & 7

The foil stamping press has been used in library and edition binderies since the mid-19th century. It is an extremely useful piece of equipment that can produce surprising results. In this workshop, we will explore this very versatile process of relief printing with heat and pressure.

Fees: \$235 for HBC members + \$20 materials fee to Instructor

Held at: San Francisco Center for the Book, 300 DeHaro Street, San Francisco

Registration: [www.handbookbinders.org](http://www.handbookbinders.org)

### *Restoration of head caps, corners & joints*

with Sandy Good

January 22 & 23

A book's most vulnerable areas are the head caps, the corners and the joints. Learning techniques for treating damage to these areas will result in prolonging the useful life of a book. These treatments apply to both cloth and leather bindings.

Fees: \$235 for HBC members + \$10 materials fee to Instructor

Held at: San Francisco Center for the Book, 300 De Haro Street, San Francisco

Registration: [www.handbookbinders.org](http://www.handbookbinders.org)

### *A Week with Monique*

with Monique Lallier

February 28 – March 4

The class will cover two days of making decorated paper, with a technique that Monique has developed using gouache, acrylic and watercolor. Then participants will learn how to make a binding that is very popular in Europe titled "Extreme Oriental Binding." The bindings can be made with leather or paper.

Fee: \$750 for HBC members

Held at: San Francisco Center for the Book, 300 De Haro Street, San Francisco

Registration: Judy Kohin: [aab@ahhaa.org](mailto:aab@ahhaa.org) (American Academy of Bookbinding)

# the Hand Bookbinders of California

## 2010 Annual Members' Exhibition



*These are 2 pictures from the San Francisco Village tour taken by Dawn Ming, a SFV member and fellow print maker. Left photo is of Signa Houghteling and exhibited books; right photo is Signa with Glady Thacher.*

Signa (Judy) Houghteling conducted 3 tours of the HBC exhibit for Friends of the SF Public Library, and 2 private tours for friends and for San Francisco Village, an organization helping people to “age in place.” Sandy Good also gave a tour in June. They were all very well attended and very popular.

Judy reports: “People are really interested in learning about bookbinding, and very enthusiastic! I brought various props such as books for people to handle, tools and samples of tooling on leather and the skin in the background which I picked up in Morocco. I will be giving a little slide show on the ancient tanneries in Morocco at the November meeting and will tell you all about that skin!”



*Photos from the opening of the 2010 Annual Members' Exhibition.*





## Members' Exhibition Updates

The 2011 annual exhibit will open at the Book Club of California in early July, and the deadline for entering will be May 1. Vanessa Hardy is still working on the follow-up venues. The Mechanics Institute is interested in hosting, though there are some space and access issues to work through. She will have updates soon, and membership will be advised of the full schedule. The exhibition will likely run from July through the fall of 2011.

Looking forward, 2012 will be the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Hand Bookbinders of California. This will be a great opportunity to show our best work, present and past. An ad-hoc committee will address the special program needs surrounding this special anniversary event. Ideas so far have included:

- Having a section of the show reserved for an historical exhibit of bindings by past members
- A "set book" exhibition
- A themed exhibition

With more than a year's lead time, there will be an opportunity for members to do something special.

Vanessa reports: "I have contacted Anthony Bliss at the Bancroft Library, suggesting they host us and also show some of the Cobden-Sanderson bindings, Doves Bindery plackets and patterns, and so on. C-S wrote so inspiringly about binding, I thought it would be a good time to remind our members of the ideals of the craft. If anyone has an "in" there and would like to plug the idea, go for it! I know Stanford also has a great collection of modern French bindings, so I am thinking of proposing something similar there. Again, if anyone has connections, let me know."

"I would also like to see if we could connect more closely with Mills and the Center for the Book, perhaps coordinating an exhibition with student work. It would be great to have your thoughts on that."

# the Hand Bookbinders of California

## Member Profile



Klaus-Ullrich Rötzscher  
by  
Signa Houghteling

Ulli, or Klaus as he is also known, was born in Leipzig, East Germany, a decade after World War II and lived there until the age of twenty. First, a little reminder of what East Germany was like in those days is in order.

East Germany was one of the most controlled and secretive of the “Iron Curtain” countries until 1989, when the Berlin Wall—which had effectively separated East from West— was torn down. The central government exercised firm control over every aspect of society, the ubiquitous Stasi or secret police (estimated at one police for every 166 citizens) kept an eye and ear on everybody so that citizens led schizophrenic lives, never able to trust anybody and watching every word they spoke. The economy was subject to central planning, the effect of which was that there were scarcities in almost every commodity (except cheap beer). For example, bakers were subject to a limit on flour, etc, so that when they ran out, they couldn’t make any more bread. The result was that people lined up for hours before the nine o’clock opening to get their allotment before the supply ran out a short time later. A lot of time had to be spent by some member of each family to gather together the few available products to keep life going. Public spending on housing and development was capricious and largely non-existent except

where the central authorities saw some benefit for themselves or their cronies. The overall effect on Ulli growing up in this environment was a pervasive discomfort and a constant effort to get ordinary things done, very often through non-official means, and in surroundings drab and without much hope for change.

Ulli was lucky that his father was a physician and his family had a large apartment. Both his parents worked, but his grandmother, who lived with them, was able to spend the essential time gathering food and other essentials to keep daily life going in the collectivist state.

Primary education was carefully controlled by the central government, and included obligatory student work in factories. And since this was serious labor designed to help fulfill government industrial-plan targets, there was no fooling around—speed and accuracy were mandatory. Ulli remembers learning welding, pipe threading, and other industrial skills. He hated the repetitive, dull work and the smelly, dirty factories and found the people who worked in them also dull and uninteresting.

As he was about to finish secondary school, Ulli had no clear idea of what he wanted to do. Though he loved working with his hands, he was determined not to work in an industrial factory, so his father suggested he apply for training as an apprentice bookbinder. He would need to enroll in a technical school and find a place as an apprentice, one week at school and alternate weeks at practical work for two years. Ulli's father knew a bookbinder who was the master of his own shop in the back of an apartment building with two employees. In the late 1960s, the government had decreed that companies with fewer than seven employees could operate somewhat independently, without most state regulations, and this was one of them. According to the central planning scheme, however, the shop was short one apprentice. The apprentice was supposed to be a female, but as it turned out, (possibly with an assist from his physician father) Ulli had arthritis in both knees and this counted as an official disability, and bookbinding was an eligible craft for the disabled. Ulli was given math and color tests—even his hands were examined to determine that they were not sweaty (not desirable in a bookbinder!)—and then he was allowed to try out for three weeks during summer vacation. The boss pulled a few strings and promised that Ulli could sit part of the time at his work, so he was allowed to take the position and enter training to become a journeyman bookbinder.

This bindery produced various high quality gift shop articles like albums, bookmarks and frames and also produced the parchment panels used on the walls for the Leipzig Opera House. Interestingly, money was not in short supply in East Germany at this time. Wages were reasonable, but there were very few goods to buy. (There was an 18-year wait to purchase a car, so parents signed up when a child was born. The car was available just about when the child could get a driver's license.) Thus, this shop had a brisk market for their fine products. The apprentice had to supply his own tools. Fortunately for Ulli, his mother worked in an import-export firm and had contacts in West Germany. Good West German tools could be brought into East Germany during the semi-annual trade fairs in Leipzig. Ulli saw that the others wore white lab coats so he got one of those too. Apprentices weren't really supposed to have the honor of wearing a white coat, but he did.

All the work was performed as a three-man production team. Ulli was of course low man as the third apprentice, and he was assigned all the hardest jobs—cutting, folding, and gluing components for the two senior employees who expected to be working at full speed, and always under the watchful eyes of the master. They used mostly potato starch paste, which arrived in a bucket and had to be thinned to the proper consistency. Hot hide glue was of such poor quality and needed so many dangerous additives as well as a complicated gluing set-up to make it workable, that it was seldom used. He had to work furiously from seven in the morning until five in the afternoon. As one of the other employees waited for a part, he would knock his bone folder against the bench top impatiently—a sound Ulli still remembers vividly. Speed and efficiency were of paramount importance, and perfection was assumed. His industrial training early on helped to prepare him and he learned to cut extraneous motions and work faster and more efficiently. German traits, to be sure, but hard work at which Ulli excelled. Fridays he had to thoroughly clean up the shop and scour and polish the glue pot. He thought often of quitting, but his mother encouraged him to continue, and as a result, he learned how to do everything, and to do everything well.

The test for journeyman designation involved making several assigned books and an original work and to fit them all into a custom-made box. He also wrote his thesis on *The History of Perfect Binding*. Ulli gained his certificate. He continued to work at the same establishment because by now his parents had divorced

mother was to marry a West German. Ulli knew that eventually he would obtain an exit visa, so he bided his time until he accompanied his mother to West Germany with her new husband in 1976.

Ulli was happy in the more prosperous and freer atmosphere of West Germany, but money was in short supply. Seeking a job, he looked in the German equivalent of the yellow pages for bookbinders and found one in Frankfurt who hired him, knowing that with his training and East German background, he could work hard and probably for low pay. Ulli commuted one hour by train and a further 40 minute walk to work, 8AM to 5PM every day. At first there were four employees, then the staff was reduced to two—producing the same amount of work. After two more years of this grueling labor, Ulli's mother encouraged him to apply for his master's degree. The course at the Munich Academy of Applied Arts was two years, and openings were available only every two years. With luck, Ulli applied and was accepted, fulfilling the complicated age and experience requirements which included an apprenticeship of two years, four years work as a journeyman, and a minimum age of 25 years at completion. A family acquaintance rented him a studio apartment outside Munich. He had to pay for his own materials and feed and house himself. He often existed on pasta with ketchup, and many times went hungry. He was always thrilled when his mentor invited him for a real meal!

The curriculum for the class of twenty-six students was rigorous and comprehensive, aimed at preparing the students for any and all work in the field. It included management, banking, accounting, estimating jobs, artistry and the history of bookbinding—and of course, all aspects of bookbinding by hand and machine. Typography studies included a thorough knowledge of the equipment, type setting, offset printing and silkscreen. Two degrees were available, industrial and hand bookbinding. Ulli completed both, passing rigorous written and oral exams involving realistic work situations including how to set up folding and sewing machines, and estimating a complicated production schedule factoring in all aspects of the work including possible employee sick-outs—all in a limited time. In addition, he had to bind three assigned book blocks in the French style, considered the most complicated and sophisticated bookbinding style at the time (although he had to accomplish all the steps himself): half leather, full leather, a slipcase and one binding of his own design; both hand and machine gilding were requirements as well. At graduation, Ulli received the award of

Master of Bookbinding. This beautiful diploma in hand calligraphy hangs prominently in his shop in Berkeley. Ulli was fully prepared but also owed the state the costs of his schooling.

Before completing his studies he had read about a bookbinder in San Francisco who was looking for a German bookbinder. Ulli felt confident he would soon have his diploma, and wanted to visit San Francisco, so he applied for the position. The firm was Schubert Bookbindery, and the German founders wanted to keep the firm in German hands with German standards of craftsmanship. A representative came to Germany to interview ten applicants and Ulli got the job. Ulli left with his new Masters Diploma and a debt to the German government which was eventually paid through grants from the German government he received after working for some time in California.

Although when he came to California he did not intend to stay forever, a six-month trial at Schubert developed into six years of employment. Without any English, Ulli took nearly three years of night school learning English, and got his high school diploma and GED. During this time, Ulli got to know many of Schubert's customers and they got to know his work. He was also married and his wife was pregnant with their second child; Ulli thought of buying the Schubert firm. But his boss wanted to maintain too much control and presence in the business. Concurrent to his work at Schubert, he worked on his own at home. At one point, Julie Holcomb commissioned an edition of 26 books which Ulli completed at home at the kitchen table. Julie was working as a printer at the back of a stationery store and invited Ulli to join her as a binder. He had established many other contacts through the fine work he produced, and decided to open his own business on January 1, 1987. He borrowed money to buy cutters, presses and other various binding equipment in Germany and began to produce fine books and boxes for photographers, printers and designers in the Bay Area.

In 1988, Schubert sold their business, and several of their customers sought Ulli out to do work for them because they knew his work. Ulli rented a space in the newly opened Print Center (established on Third Street in the old MJB Coffee headquarters). This was a very big step, but the word was out that he was the man for high end quality binding, and he was always busy. At one time he had four employees including John DeMerritt. Ulli is proud that he taught John skills and that John eventually surpassed him and now operates his own successful bindery. Ulli was working long

hours and commuting one to one and one half hours to his home and family in Martinez.

In the meantime, Ulli regularly had a booth at the Antiquarian Book Association of America's biennial book fair in San Francisco and the annual Printers' Fair at Fort Mason, sponsored by the Pacific Center for the Book Arts (PCBA). He kept in touch with Hand Bookbinders of California and other book-related organizations in the Bay Area such as The Colophon Club.

After the Bay Area earthquake in 1989, Ulli had already begun to think that he ought to be nearer his family in case of another such emergency. In 1991, the U.S. economy tanked. High end, quality bookbinding was not rebounding well, and in 1993 Ulli learned that the Pettingell Bookbindery in Berkeley was for sale. However, the owner, Theodore "Ted" Hirschberg, wasn't ready to sell until after his wife died the following year. Ulli bought Pettingell Bookbindery as its fourth owner, and started work on April 1, 1994. Hirschberg, who had the reputation of being a difficult man to get along with, stayed on with Ulli for six months. Ulli was very fond of him and they worked well together.

All of Ulli's life he has been a high-energy, hard working taskmaster. Shortly after his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2005 he suffered a serious heart attack. During his convalescence, he was advised to get an assistant. He had several employees who stayed for varying lengths of time. Diane Newell came to work and has been at Pettingell for about four years.

Ulli's daughter and son have graduated from UC Santa Cruz and are both working in the Bay Area, so he has much to be proud of. With his mother and brother in Germany, and his roots firmly in Germany, Ulli has visited many times. He finally gave up any idea of returning to live in his native country a few years ago when he became an American citizen. He finds it somewhat irritating that his German friends complain about reductions in government benefits when compared to the American system, they have it "very easy."

Ulli remains a prominent member of the Bay Area book arts community. He served as president of Hand Bookbinders of California from 2008-2010 and presently serves as an officer of The Colophon Club. He continues to run a thriving bindery, and finds more and more pleasure in creating his own work. Perhaps that early dislike of repetitive work has finely caught up with him.

*Author's note:* Dear friend George Kane introduced me to Ulli in 1991 when I was looking for a way to bind my first book, an edition of 13 of a family trip album based on family diaries and pictures. I have been at it, more or less, ever since.

# Articles & Reports

*Following is a verbatim reprinting (typos and all) of the HBC Bylaws. Members are encouraged to read these and if you feel any updates are necessary, submit suggestions to the President for discussion and voting by membership at the annual meeting (see Article 9).*

## The Bylaws of the Hand Bookbinders of California

### Article 1. Name

The name of this non-profit, educational organization shall be THE HAND BOOKBINDERS OF CALIFORNIA.

### Article 2. Objectives

Section 1. To provide a forum where persons interested in the study and/or collection of bookbindings can gather together to discuss and increase their knowledge of the art of bookbinding.

Section 2. To educate through discussion, talks, slides, exhibits, and demonstrations all persons interested in the art.

Section 3. To promote exhibits of hand bookbinding in museums, libraries, or other suitable locations in the San Francisco Bay Area where such exhibits would be of interest and educational benefit to the public.

Section 4. All disbursements from the funds of the organization shall be solely for its benefit and furtherance of its objectives No member of the organization shall at any time receive any remuneration or honorarium from these funds other than for actual disbursements authorized and made on behalf of THE HAND BOOKBINDERS OF CALIFORNIA.

### Article 3: Memberships

Section 1. There shall be three classes of member: local, out-of-town, and honorary.

Section 2. There shall be no restrictions of membership as to race, color, creed, or numbers provided that the applicant has an interest in the study or collection of hand bookbinding. Upon application to the organization and payment of full annual dues for the year in which the application is made, such an interested person will be granted membership.

Section 3. Annual dues are payable each calendar year no later than April 30. Members who have not paid these dues by April 30 will be sent a final notice by the Treasurer that they are delinquent and that unless payment is received within 90 days their names will be dropped from

the membership roster and mailing list.

#### Article 4. Officers

Section 1. The President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and eight (8) additional members elected by the membership shall comprise the Board of Directors of THE HAND BOOKBINDERS OF CALIFORNIA.

Section 2. Any three members of the Board shall constitute a quorum.

Section 3. The Board of Directors will meet as necessary to discuss and plan all matters related to the organization's activities.

Section 4. The officers shall be elected for a period of one (1) year at the April meeting by a majority vote of the members present. Interim vacancies occurring in any office shall be filled for the balance of the unexpired term by selection by the Board of Directors.

Section 5. In February of each year the President shall appoint a nominating committee comprised of three (3) members, including a chairman.

Section 6. The nominating committee shall nominate their candidate for each of the positions on the board. Such names shall be reported by the chairman of the nominating committee at the annual meeting held in April, at which time nominations will be received from the floor, provided such nominee's consent has been previously obtained.

Section 7. If there is a single candidate for office, election shall be by voice vote; otherwise, election shall be by ballot and a majority vote shall prevail.

Section 8. All officers shall hold office for one (1) year, or until their successors are elected. Their term of office shall commence immediately following the close of the Annual Meeting held in April.

Section 9. In the event of a vacancy in the office of President, his successor to complete his term of office shall be elected by the Board of Directors. All other vacancies shall be appointed by the President.

#### Article 5. Duties of Officers

Section 1.

(a) The President shall preside at all meetings of the organization, the Board of Directors, and any social meeting.

(b) The President shall perform as chief executive officer of The Hand Bookbinders of California and, as such, shall carry out, or cause to be carried out, all duties and management pertaining to the normal activity and best interests of the organization.

(c) The President and the Vice-President shall be authorized to sign checks on the organization's bank account(s), but only if the Treasurer is unable to sign.

Section 2.

(a) The Vice-President shall, in the absence of the President, perform all duties pertaining to the office.

(b) The Vice-President shall maintain and up-to-date copy of the Bylaws of the organization and, in the event of any misunderstanding or dispute, shall rule thereon as described in Article 8.

Section 3.

(a) The Secretary shall maintain Minutes of each Board meeting, as well as the permanent record of any business proceedings that occur at the regular monthly meetings.

(b) The Secretary shall perform all other secretarial duties as directed by the President.

Section 4.

(a) The Treasurer shall be responsible for carrying out the duties described in Article 6, Sections 2,3, 4, and 5.

(b) The Treasurer's accounts shall be reviewed within one month of the annual meeting held in April by a committee which shall be appointed by the President.

Article 6. Finances

Section 1. The Board of Directors shall establish categories of membership and dues.

Section 2. The Treasurer shall maintain the financial records of the organization, including an itemized record of all revenues and expenses.

Section 3. The Treasurer shall be responsible for depositing all funds into the organizations' bank account(s), and for the payment of all liabilities incurred in behalf of the organization by any properly authorized member.

Section 4. The Treasurer shall present a Statement of Financial Condition to the Board of Directors at each of its meetings, and to the membership at its annual meeting.

Section 5. The Treasurer shall be responsible for preparing and submitting to the Internal Revenue Service and other authorities forms and returns applicable to a tax exempt organization.

Section 6. Funds received by the organization shall be applied at the discretion of the Board of Directors to further the objectives of the organization.

Section 7. A finance committee appointed by the Board shall prepare an annual budget of estimated income and expenses for approval by the Board of Directors, and shall prepare from time to time supplemental budgets or proposals to supplement income as considered necessary. The Treasurer shall serve as permanent chairman of such a committee.

Section 8. Should there be at any time a dissolution of The Hand Bookbinders of California, usual accounting practices shall be followed in the liquidation of the organization's assets and liabilities, and any funds left surplus to the liquidation of the organization's liabilities shall be donated to the rare book collection of the San Francisco Public Library.

## Article 7. Meetings

Section 1. Meetings shall be held monthly, or as deemed appropriate, at a location to be determined by the program chairman, and announced to the membership by the program chairman unless otherwise ordered by the President or the Board of Directors.

Section 2. The regular meeting in April of each year shall be known as the Annual Meeting, and shall be for the purpose of receiving reports and discussing matters of interest to the society.

Section 3. Special meetings may be called by the President or by any three (3) members of the Board of Directors, or by written request of at least fifteen (15) members in good standing. At least seven (7) days notice shall be given to the membership and business conducted shall be restricted to that described in the call.

## Article 9. Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended at any regular business meeting of the society by a 2/3 vote of all members present, provided that the number present is not less than fifteen (15) and also that the proposed amendment has been submitted to the President at the previous regular meeting, at which time the proposed amendment shall be read aloud to the attending members.

# Calendar

## Events

### *Marking Time*

The Guild of Bookworkers juried exhibition on the theme of time.

Online catalog: <http://67.199.119.197/gallery/markingtime/index.html>

EXHIBIT SCHEDULE

through March 20, 2011

Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

### *Material Meets Metaphor: a half-century of book art by Richard Minsky*

Richard Minsky, pioneering contemporary book artist and founder of the Center for Book Arts in New York City, is known for his conceptual approach to hand bookbinding and commitment to changing the perception of the book arts from craft to fine art.

More information at: [http://minsky.com/yale\\_2010.htm](http://minsky.com/yale_2010.htm)

EXHIBIT SCHEDULE

through November 29, 2010

R. B. Haas Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut

## Save the Date

### *Third Biennial Codex International Bookfair*

February 6 - 9, 2011, at University of California, Berkeley

Visit: [www.codexfoundation.org](http://www.codexfoundation.org)

### *44th California International Antiquarian Book Fair*

February 11 - 13, 2011, at Concourse Exhibit Center, San Francisco

Visit: [www.sfbookfair.com](http://www.sfbookfair.com)

### *Focus on the Book Arts*

June 22 - 26, 2011, at Pacific University, Forest Grove, Oregon

Visit: [www.focusonbookarts.org](http://www.focusonbookarts.org)

## Call for Entries

**Deadline:** extended to October 31, 2010

### *The Thread that Binds: Interviews with Private Practice Bookbinders*

The 2010 Bind-O-Rama will return to the codex form and feature Pamela Leutz's recent book, *The Thread That Binds*, published by Oak Knoll Books. In the last issue, *The Bonefolder* introduced the book with the chapter on Craig Jensen. Due to an unprecedented response on the part of the binding community the unbound version has sold out, but fear not, it is being reprinted and both the

hardcover and paperback versions can be easily rebound. "Non-members are welcome to submit work if they pay the membership fee on top of the entry fee.

Visit: [www.philobiblon.com/bonefolder](http://www.philobiblon.com/bonefolder)

**Deadline: March 15, 2010**

*The Thread that Binds: Interviews with Private Practice Bookbinders*

The Guild of Book Workers' Lone Star Chapter is also organizing an exhibition of bindings on *Thread That Binds* that will open in Dallas, at Southern Methodist University's Bridwell Library, in 2011. Membership in both the Guild and its Lone Star Chapter is required to participate in the Lone Star Chapter's exhibition.

Details at: <http://gbwlonestarchapter.wordpress.com>

**Deadline: digital images in January 2011**

*'Pictorial Webster's: A Visual Dictionary of Curiosities'*

The New England Chapter of the Guild of Book Workers announces a juried bookbinding competition. *Pictorial Webster's: A Visual Dictionary of Curiosities*, printed by the Quercus Press, has been selected as the set book. Membership in both the Guild and its New England Chapter is required to participate. Notably, an exhibition in the Boston area will coincide with the Guild of Book Workers Standards of Excellence Seminar in October 2011.

Details at: [www.guildofbookworkers.org](http://www.guildofbookworkers.org), see New England chapter

## Announcements

*J. Hewit & Sons (UK) has moved*

Just a quick note to advise that we have almost completed the warehouse move to our new factory in Livingston; we have begun to dispatch orders. We thank you for your patience during these slightly chaotic times. Photos of the move can be found in the 'news' section of our web site at [www.hewit.com/news](http://www.hewit.com/news), and if you scroll to the bottom of the 'news' page, you can view a 'YouTube' video. - *David Lanning*

*Talas providing a new product: Pre-Split Goat Skins*

In the last few years we have been receiving more and more requests for skins that were pre-split to reduce one's paring work. Finally the wait is over. We are now stocking a range of pre-split French Goatskins. These skins are vegetable tanned, aniline dyed, and split to 0.5mm - 0.6mm in thickness. We are currently stocking seven colors in 1st and 2nd quality. They are also incredibly well priced at \$10.85 and \$8.85 per

square foot respectively. Visit: [www.talasonline.com](http://www.talasonline.com).

## *Bindery Equipment for Sale*

Items available include:

- A large antique “wine press” style standing press
- Lying press with stand
- Wood plough
- Sewing frame

Available for sale by John Ohala: [ohala@berkeley.edu](mailto:ohala@berkeley.edu)

## Tips and Techniques

### What “wood” you do?

Liz Conley, a book artist, printmaker, and illustrator, recently sent this query to a group list, looking for advice, and has given us permission to reprint it in hopes that it will inspire some additional suggestions:

I’ve recently become interested in using wooden covers to bind some of my books. I recall that in the past this list has discussed a variety of bindings at which wooden covers would be used for. What I’d like to know is how to make those covers! After spending hours in the lumber yard I eventually picked something I felt might work and gave it a try. It turned out quite well, but as I’m a complete beginner with wood I’m sure it was mostly luck. I was hoping someone on the list might offer me the benefit of their experience.

Does anyone have recommendations about what sort of wood is best for making wooden covers? Is there a specific kind or cut of wood that works better? What thickness do you find works best for you? Any recommendations on species, e.g., oak, pine, etc? Is plywood ever a good option? Do you have problems with warping and how do you prevent that? When working with book covers what sort of varnish do you think is best? Or do you use any? I’m very new to working with wood so any information people could give me about this would be very helpful!

*She received the following reply from Bill Minter:*

As an alternative to solid wood, I would suggest looking at a wood veneer. I have a number of examples where I used veneer, especially since I had seen a number of early books where the boards had split along the edge of a quarter-leather binding. Obviously, the end result with veneer is not a true “wood” cover, but the board is very stable.

To explain: I had been told that I had to use quarter-sawn beech as it is not an acidic wood, like oak. Finding the correct wood, finding the correct cut, as well as naturally dried was too much, so I settled on veneer. Museum mat board was laminated to a suitable thickness; the edges were covered with veneer and cut flush; the sides were covered allowing a step (recess/transition) for the leather; the wood was sanded, stained and sealed. The boards were then laced on and the leather was attached in a standard manner.

The use of veneer was especially useful for a book that was 14” x

20”—now, where can you find a suitable wood for that size? I also want to say that at one time I was planning to use veneer on a very early book. At about that time, I happened to be in England and was telling the famous book conservator, Sydney Cockerell, of my plans. Whereupon, he reached under his bench, handed me two pieces of 1/4 sawn, naturally aged, English oak, and said, “Here, you can’t use veneer on a 13th c. book”. I gladly accepted his generous offer and worked the boards to fit that special book. So, special books need the real thing, but sometimes veneer offers a suitable alternative.

You can see Liz Conley’s work here: [www.lizconley.com](http://www.lizconley.com)

## A world of good advice

One of the things to love about the book arts community is the generosity with which people share their knowledge and experience. Location doesn’t matter with email; information can come from anywhere in the world. Here is a good example—another “string” of questions and answers recently posted on the list server of the Guild of Book Workers.

**The Question:** I’m wondering if anyone on the list has had experience with replacing the rubber pad that sits beneath the clamp on some models of Jacques board shears? I know there is a great variety of models, many that don’t have a pad, but I’d appreciate advisement from anyone who has replaced this feature successfully.

### The Answers:

- *From Jerusalem:* On my Jacques, the old (rotten) bit pulled out easily and I replaced it with a strip of some sort of weather-stripping material that fit perfectly into the groove. It’s been fine for the last 30 years.
- *From New York:* If it is like mine, just a long rubber tube, it is surprisingly difficult to remove the remains of the old one, which adhere with an almost epoxy-like tenacity to the channel, then thread the new tube in place. ACE Grinding in NYC sells replacement parts. It was one of those jobs where I thought it would take 30 minutes, and ended up taking over 3 hours...
- *From places unknown:* I went to an auto supply store and took a sample of my old rubber and found an excellent replacement there at a very reasonable price. It is still useful after 4 years.
- I have not replaced that pad on my Jacques but Paul Brubaker has fine tuned mine on one of his trips out West and he is extremely knowledgeable with the shear. His e-mail: [paul@binderytools.com](mailto:paul@binderytools.com) or phone 717.733.0115.

*(Thanks to Marnie Powers-Torrey, Yehuda Miklaf, Jeff Peachey, Bob Nelson, and Nancy Bloch.)*

# A Lifting Knife in One Hour

by Peggy DeMouthe

Recently a metals conservator showed me a drawer literally bulging with antique carbon-steel dinner knife blades, and wondered if I could do anything with them. Could I! Immediately I thought of paring knives, purse knives (like the one I carry), patch knives, clay sculpting tools, letter openers--and of course several kinds of bookbinding knives.



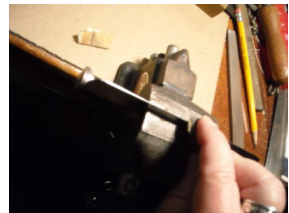
Some HBC members may have a little round-edged lifting knife made from a recycled hacksaw blade; folks love them for their flexibility, ease of sharpening, and ambidextrous versatility. These dinner-knife blades offer these benefits in addition to better steel and a more substantial and durable form.

Here are easy instruction for making a lifter from a dinner knife blade; tools used included common household ones such as files and sandpaper and a good-quality sharpening stone.



Step 1: cut off the tang and file the end smooth. (Note that this is good Sheffield carbon steel!)

Step 2: File most of the cutting edge flat, except about one inch toward the tip. Use a medium-grit sandpaper to smooth and round the rough edges; this makes the knife safe and comfortable to hold.



Step 3: Sharpen around the entire end of the blade and the one-inch cutting edge. Keep the angle very flat, as shown. Sharpen both sides of the blade, turning often to keep the edges even—if you prefer a single bevel, sharpen the side of the blade that will face up when you use it (this will vary depending on whether you are right- or left-handed).

Step 4: Enjoy your new knife. With a little more time to spend, you can keep part of the tang and add a wooden handle for a more comfortable grip.



## Joining the Hand Bookbinders of California

*Membership* in the Hand Bookbinders of California is annual, running from September each year. The Membership Fee is \$30, and a second member under the same listing is \$5.

*Benefits* of membership include Regular Presentations & Workshops, the opportunity to exhibit in the Annual Members Exhibition, copies of the bi-annual *Gold Leaf* and the annual Membership Roster, invitations to Special Events, and dialogue through our Monthly Meetings and the HBC Mail Group at Yahoo! Groups.

*There are many ways to join:*

- visit the HBC website; the website has the necessary downloading pdf form to join: [www.handbookbinders.org](http://www.handbookbinders.org)
- write us: the Hand Bookbinders of California  
P.O. Box 193216  
San Francisco, CA 94119
- contact our Membership Coordinator, Lang Ingalls:  
[membership@hbc.org](mailto:membership@hbc.org)

*NEW!* The bi-annual *Gold Leaf* is being offered in pdf format. Please let Lang Ingalls ([membership@hbc.org](mailto:membership@hbc.org)) know if you would prefer to receive it in this manner. If she does not hear from you, be assured you will receive the hard-copy, as always.

## the Gold Leaf Colophon

The *Gold Leaf* is produced bi-annually by the Hand Bookbinders of California. This journal was designed and typeset in Adobe InDesign in various sizes of Slimbach. Recycled papers have been utilized.



[www.handbookbinders.org](http://www.handbookbinders.org)