



Annual Report of the
Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America
2008

Book Fair Committee

The Book Fair Committee would like to thank the Chapter Book Fair Committees and our show promoters for putting together three successful fairs this past year. In 2007, our three book fairs saw profits totaling almost \$90,000.

Submitted by: Brad Jonas, Chair

By-laws Committee

The By-Laws Committee had a quiet year after a flurry of activity in 2006-2007. One pending matter is the amendment of By-Laws Art. III, Sec. C (h) requiring the Nominating Committee to include “two Governors serving in their last year of office.” Because governors in their last year of office may now stand for a second term, the By-laws need to require that any governor seeking to serve a second term be ineligible to serve on the Nominating Committee.

This By-Law change was discussed at the Los Angeles Board meeting in February 2008. It will be polished by the Committee and submitted to the membership in due course as it is not so urgent as to require a separate mailing.

Submitted by: Stuart Bennett, Chair

Ethics Committee

Article III, Section B, of the By-laws requires the Committee “to accept and consider all written complaints from any individual or organization against any member of the Association;” the Committee “may on its own initiative investigate alleged violations of the Association’s Code of Ethics.” Article V, Section I, authorizes the Committee to present its findings to the Board, with a recommendation for action, if it concludes by a 2/3 vote that reasonable cause exists to conclude that a violation may have occurred.

During the past year, no matters have come before the Committee requiring any action by the Board.

Submitted by: David Lesser, Chair

Finance Committee

During 2007 the finance committee completed the re-organization of the ABAA’s budgeting process, so that we can now produce consistent budgets in-house. This, besides saving some money in accounting costs, should allow committee chairs to more closely monitor their expenditures during the year. Committee member Bruce Barnett drafted an investment policy statement, which the Board adopted at the November meeting.

The ABAA’s investment portfolio showed a 7% gain for 2007. Currently our asset allocation is approximately: Cash-58%, equities-23%, fixed income-19%.

Submitted by: Thomas Goldwasser, Chair

House Committee

This has been a very productive year for the ABAA office.

June 2007 - Annie Mazes joins us as Membership Assistant.

August 2007 - We moved out of our home on the 4th floor of 20 W. 44th St to a new, modern office on the 5th floor. This may not sound momentous, but when you downsize three rooms down to one, there is a lot to deal with.

November 2007 - Susan Benne out on maternity leave.

Annie produces a magnificent effort on covering the office and moving ahead in issues like the Directory.

December 5th 2007. Mae Benne is born.

February 2008 - We expand Annie's role in the organization to Manager, Chapter & Membership Relations, with a corresponding title change.

Submitted by: David Lilburne, Chair

Internet Committee

The Internet Committee's attention has focussed on the feasibility of adding a metasearch function to the ABAA web site that would search the ILAB sites for ABAA member's listings and also search the individual members' web sites but not search the for-profit sites such as ABE and ALibris. The Committee has also begun discussions with Rockingstone about archiving all ILAB listings of books so that ILAB members only will have access to a comprehensive database of books sold. It would be a huge advance over the current resources available to member booksellers in pricing truly arcane and books that only rarely appear on the market. Such a private, for-members-only database would be a significant added reason for joining the ABAA and would, we think, help recruitment.

Submitted by: David Szewczyk, Chair

Membership Committee

At present, the ABAA has 451 full members, 91 associate members and 46 emeritus members. This represents a slight overall decline from last year; the 2007 MC report noted 454 full members, 99 associate members and 54 emeritus members.

From April 2007 through March 2008, the Committee reviewed 31 applications for the Board of Governors: of these 15 were approved for full membership; 4 for associate membership; and, 3 for emeritus membership. Other applications include the transfer of an associate membership and requests for new entities. The following members also submitted their resignations: Lynette Bohling (Bohling Book Company); Edward Brodzinsky (Atelier Books); Doris Frohnsdorff; Maurizio Martino; James Sanford (Metacomet Booksellers); Edward D. Nudelman; and, Gregory Powers (Powers Rare Books).

We note with sadness the death of Douglas O'Dell (Chapel Hill Books); Madeline Stern (Rostenberg & Stern); Bea Siegel (Bea and Peter Siegel Books); Sheldon Tarakan (Visible Ink); Jeffrey Thomas.

The Public Relations Committee issued a useful pamphlet called "The ABAA & You" aimed at colleagues considering ABAA membership. We hope members will distribute them at area book fairs and elsewhere and continue to encourage able young booksellers to apply.

As a result of new by-laws approved last fall, governors now may sponsor membership applicants. A question arose at the November meeting of the Board of Governors as to whether it would be appropriate for a governor who is acting as a sponsor to recuse him or herself from the vote on the application. At the request of the Board, the Membership Committee considered the issue and decided governors should not recuse themselves. However, the Committee suggested that to ensure governors could vote freely on such applications, the Board vote by paper ballot. The Board approved the suggestion.

My thanks to my fellow committee members for their diligence and good work on behalf of the Committee: Stuart Bennett, Eric Kline, John Thomson, Michael Thompson, Jett Whitehead.

Submitted by: Sarah Baldwin, Chair

Nominating Committee

209 ballots were cast in the recent election, and the results are that the slate of candidates for President, Vice President and Secretary – Stuart Bennett, Sarah Baldwin and John Thomson – have been elected by overwhelming majorities.

Also, the three candidates for the Board of Governors – David Lesser, John Waite and Tom Nicely – were elected by overwhelming majorities.

Submitted by: John Crichton, Chair

Public Relations Committee

The PR Committee plans to increase efforts to reach a wider public via the Internet, the print media, and at book events. We are focussing both committees on getting as much return on investment as possible, pulling away from traditional venues like book collecting magazines and other venues where we are already well known and trying to reach out into areas where we are not regularly seen.

Submitted by: John Windle, Chair

Publications Committee

The Publications committee issued the new directory for 2008 in time for the LA Book Fair, and has begun planning the Directory and advertising for 2009 which will involve a major edit, especially of the specialties. We decided not to put resources into long-term projects that have no immediate impact on the membership at large, such as creating a video archive of booksellers' memoirs.

Submitted by: John Windle, Chair

RBMS Committee

The Southeast Chapter sponsored a booksellers' showcase at the RBMS Preconference in Baltimore last June. Both ABAA exhibitors and RBMS attendees found the showcase worthwhile. In November the Committee proposed that the ABAA organize showcases from headquarters as of 2009, the Southern California Chapter already having agreed to organize a booksellers' showcase for the 2008 RBMS Preconference in Los Angeles. The Board of Governors decided the proposal should have a three-year limit to allow the Board to revisit the showcase and its viability. With this change, the Board approved the proposal. The Rare Books and Manuscript Section of ALA looks forward to the booksellers' showcase becoming a permanent feature of the Preconference.

The ABAA, as usual, contributed to the opening night reception of the RBMS Preconference in 2007 and a number of ABAA members attended. A highlight of the Preconference was a session on ephemera conducted by aGatherin' and Margolis and Moss with considerable verve and erudition.

Susan Benne has developed a database of collegial organizations, which will prove useful to the ABAA as an organization and to members as individuals.

The Committee hopes to develop further ideas and proposals to enhance ABAA relationships with the rare book world. My thanks to committee members Mary Gilliam, Howard Rootenberg, Michael Thompson and David Szewczyk.

Submitted by: Sarah Baldwin, Chair

Security Committee

There are no Security matters to note.

Submitted by: John Thomson, Chair

Benevolent Fund and Woodburn Fund

Since February of 2007, the Benevolent Fund has taken in \$48,818.08 in donations and \$1,314.59 in interest. The Woodburn Fund was split from the Benevolent Fund and has received a total of \$2,975 in donations since February 2007 for a total of \$5,475.

Submitted by: John Crichton, Trustee

Chapter Reports

Mid-Atlantic Chapter

In September of 2007 the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the ABAA hosted a continuing professional education session on the eve of the Rochester Book Fair, with the chapter meeting & social cocktail hour followed by a buffet supper after which Dan Gregory of Between the Covers gave an excellent program regarding the practical uses of digital photography in bookselling, especially regarding the Internet and catalog printing. The event was well attended by ABAA members as well as other dealers, which went hand-in-hand with our continuing efforts to promote the benefits of joining the ABAA.

The chapter web site was completed thanks to the work of past chair Shirley Solomon and members and customers now have the valuable resource list of members, locations and links easily accessible on the internet.

The MAC Book Fair Committee has worked hard to make the annual New York Antiquarian Book Fair the best event of its kind in the world and the future shows in New York promise the same level of excellence for dealers and customers alike.

2008 promises to be a good year for events and activities for the Chapter.

Submitted by: George Krzyminski, Chair

Midwest Chapter

Our Chapter has nothing new to report save that we still do not have regular meetings nor has any one member come forth to volunteer their time for office. So.....status quo for us.

Submitted by: David Aronovitz, Chair

New England Chapter

The New England Chapter remained active with two newsletters during the course of the year as well as two general meetings this past year, with the second one being a nice tour/lecture/lunch involving the John Hay Library Rare Books Dept. at Brown University. The Boston Book Fair was successful and involved numerous meetings by the active book fair committee. Attendance was up to almost 3,900 from 3,580 in 2006 and booths increased from 106 to 113. Attendance is up for the third year running. The Chapter sponsored breakfast during the book fair was a success once again and now will be a permanent part of the Boston Book Fair, and the video history project continues to progress. The New England Chapter is alive and well and moving along.

Submitted by: Joseph Phillips, Chair

Northern California Chapter

Northern California Chapter 2007 highlights included welcoming almost 6,000 attendees to the 40th California International Antiquarian Book Fair in San Francisco in February, conducting our first electronic chapter meeting in September and concluding with the traditional and festive December Holiday meeting/dinner, where some \$3,000 was raised for the ABAA Benevolent Fund.

Sadly, the Chapter bid farewell to longtime member Jeffrey Thomas in June.

Submitted by: James Bryant, Chair

Pacific Northwest Chapter

The Pacific Northwest Chapter added a new member in Priscilla Lowry-Gregor of Lowry James Rare Prints & Books and

saw the return of Ed Smith.

We voted on launching a chapter web site which is now in beta. It includes a blog for chapter members to share what they wish and includes links to member web sites who host with Bibliopolis. Eventually it will contain a shopping cart so members books can be sold directly from the chapter web site.

No other news to report.

Submitted by: Michael Lieberman, Chair

Southeast Chapter

The Southeast Chapter now has 51 full members, 9 associate members and one emeritus member.

Advertisements: The Chapter placed ads in the programs for the Washington Antiquarian Book Fair and the Florida Antiquarian Book Fair. John Thomson is helping organize a block co-op ad in *The Washington Post* prior to the 2008 Washington Antiquarian Book Fair. We hope to run a similar ad prior to the Baltimore Antiquarian Show and Book Fair with the help of Kevin Johnson.

Directories: The Chapter published a new directory, distributed it to members, and regularly offers it via ads etc. to the public.

RBMS Preconference: The bookseller showcase hosted by the Southeast Chapter met with warm approval from RBMS attendees. 24 members, 12 chapter members and 12 from outside the Chapter, participated.

Web Site: Bibliopolis hosts the Southeast Chapter web site. In 2007 a web page highlighted the booksellers' showcase at the RBMS Preconference and links were added to Rare Book School, via Libri and the Library of Congress as well as to ABAA and ILAB.

Submitted by: Sarah Baldwin, Chair

Southern California Chapter

The past year was an interesting and successful one for the Southern California Chapter. At the end of 2007, we had forty-six full members and twelve associate members. This is the same number of full members and four less associate members than we had at the end of 2006.

There wasn't the rash of moving that our chapter experienced in 2006, but there were a few changes. Chic Goldsmid sold his open scholarly book shop and moved his business completely to his home, dealing only in better books and appraisals. California Curio moved from its office in Beverly Hills to a larger and more impressive location across the street from the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Gordon Hollis of Golden Legend made plans to move his office, though the move was not complete until early 2008. Linda Tucker from Black Sun Books, formerly of New York, moved to Indio, California, and we welcome her to the Southern California Chapter.

Our principal events this year included the establishment of our new Southern California Chapter web site, participation in the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books, and planning for the California Book Fair in February of 2008. The web site project was chaired by Gordon Hollis, and other members of the committee included Roger Gozdecki, Carol Sandberg, and later, Steve Gertz. We decided to use Bibliopolis, for design and web hosting, and we found that, after initial set-up fees, we could maintain our site for a reasonable \$600 a year. We were up and running by May. Some of our members were interested in exploring the idea of a chapter-wide search engine, and in August Bibliopolis' Luke Lozier agreed to give us one free for the first year. He had made the same agreement with the Mid-Atlantic Chapter, and was talking about similar arrangements with other chapters. We agreed, and the search engine is now active, as well. We regularly check traffic to the site to see how helpful it is to us, with an eye to whether we want to pay for it at the end of a year. We haven't come to any conclusion yet,

but the site is clearly getting more activity as the months go on.

In April, we again participated in the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books, hosting a book evaluation booth. Steve Gertz was in charge of this project, and probably a dozen of us participated in the event. Steve instituted a raffle, in which five visitors to the booth won copies of Carter's ABC for Book Collectors. We also got a long list of names and addresses of interested people, and when the L.A. Fair came around in 2008, we sent them promotional material. We passed out both local and national ABAA directories to interested parties. Our several years of participating in the Festival of Books had an added benefit: it was a factor in getting us the sponsorship of the Los Angeles Times for the 2008 California Book Fair. That sponsorship brought the ABAA valuable advertising.

We of course spent a good part of 2007 planning for the 2008 California Book Fair. The committee, headed by Michael Thompson, included Ken Karmiole, Gordon Hollis, Howard Rootenberg, Roger Gozdecki, Ed Postal, and Carol Sandberg. The fair was again held at the Century Plaza Hotel, and with the help of our wonderful fair organizers, Winslow and Associates, we instituted a number of new features, including new exhibits, new seminars, and the reintroduction of Discovery Day, which we haven't hosted in Los Angeles in a few years. This chapter believes in doing everything it can to develop new book collectors. A major innovation was our special exhibit, Great Books from Great Institutions. We saw this as a way of involving rare book librarians in the fair more than ever before, and the response was very good.

At the end of 2007, we began serious work on the Southern California printed Directory, which was published in time for the February fair. We owe a debt to Jeff Weber, who did the typesetting.

We again donated \$750 to UCLA for the Campbell Book Award, a book collecting contest that the Southern California Chapter has supported for some forty years. (Our colleague, Ken Karmiole, was an early winner.) We did not have any extra money to give the California Rare Book School, but members presented a panel discussion on the place of the bookseller in building rare book collections. The panel was moderated by Carol Sandberg, and the other participants included Ken Karmiole, Howard Rootenberg, and Michael Thompson. We were allowed to distribute local and national ABAA directories and the flyer, "What is the ABAA?"

As in 2006, we were only able to have one chapter meeting, which was in September. The chapter paid for a very good dinner at Buddha's Belly Restaurant on Beverly Boulevard. The meeting was well attended, lively, and enjoyable.

The year's end found us looking forward to two new projects. The first is drawing up a new slate of officers, to be elected in April, and the second is our projected hosting of the ABAA booksellers' showcases at the 2008 RBMS Preconference, which will be held in Los Angeles. Howard Rootenberg is in charge of the latter event.

Submitted by: Carol Sandberg, Chair

Southwest Chapter

The Southwest Chapter of the ABAA held no meetings and conducted no business during the year 2007.

Submitted by: Kevin MacDonnell, Chair