

The WAYZGOOSE GAZETTE

A Newsletter of the International Printing Museum



FOUNDED IN 1988 BY DAVID JACOBSON AND ERNEST A. LINDNER, THE PRINTING MUSEUM IS A PUBLIC CHARITY DEDICATED TO EDUCATION THROUGH THE PRESERVATION OF PRINTING HISTORY

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Leather Apron Guild Going Strong: 2007 Docent Doings

Since the first Docent Saturday on April 2, 2005, the IPM's Leather Apron Guild Docents led by Trustee and Docent Director Dr. Leland Whitson have contributed mightily by their volunteer efforts to making the Carson facility into a vibrant working museum. Thanks to all the Docents for helping to turn our warehouse, Book Arts Institute lab, Library, the Main Gallery and the Heritage Theater into attractive, well-organized museum spaces. They have helped to maintain and catalogue the myriad of machines and printing paraphernalia of Southern California's stand-out and increasingly well-known repository of printing history. While we can't recount here all the Leather Apron heroics since that first Docent Saturday, we devote a good part of this issue to highlighting 2007's Docent doings and distinctions.

Ray Ballash: Docent of the Year

Ray Ballash is a man with a passionate love for machines of a bygone era; how else can you describe a man who has nearly twenty typesetting machines of various makes and models? Just as impressive as that love for the machines is his knowledge of how these mechanical marvels work, developed during his long tenure as a Linotype operator at Jeffries Banknote in Los Angeles. On countless occasions, Ray's machinery know-how has solved a problem for the Printing Museum. To a museum full of operating machines the technical savvy fielded by Ray as well as that of many others like him is indispensable.

From the beginning of the International Printing Museum in 1988, Ray has been one of our most dedicated volunteers, constantly contributing his knowledge and assistance to the museum. For some of our machines that seemed to be beyond repair and hopelessly broken down, it was only Ray's patient hands that gave them life again.

But Ray doesn't just do printing. As a teenager in the 1950's Ray also devel-

oped a passion for trains, leading him to found the Orange Empire Railway Museum along with several other young men. Ray's decades of experience with establishing and operating an all-volunteer museum have given him a storehouse of wisdom that we often go to. Socratic gems like his favorite



Ray Ballash receiving his award, a beautiful limited-edition artistic rendering of the Linotype, from Museum Director, Mark Barbour, to his right, and Dr. Leland Whitson, Docent Director.

saying "find the tools, fix the tools, get the job done!" have helped us deal with the constant challenge of how to keep track of things and get projects done.

Thank you, Ray, for your many years of dedicated service, friendship and passion. On behalf of the International Printing Museum's Board of Trustees,

it is truly an honor to recognize you as our 2007 Docent of the Year

Main Gallery Gets a New Floor

It was a busy, dusty October Saturday for eighteen Docents, three staff, and a passel of youngsters who helped to dust, wipe, clean, vacuum and polish all the equipment and displays in the Main Gallery of the International Printing Museum after installation of new epoxy floor covering. The new floor covering was the result of a generous donation by John & Virginia Hedlund and the Weingart Foundation.

Luis Garcia, Gary Miller, John Robinson, Al Rodriguez, Phil Soinski, Marjorie Wilser, John Hedlund, Wendy Emery, Peter Small, Dwight Antioch, Tim Gould, Donna Colmby, Phil Lewis, Ray Ballash, Noah Barbour, Zack Smith, Dan Snelen, Trustee Jim Thompson all pitched in enthusiastically to move, clean and install the equipment and furniture following the week-long installation process. The old, stained carpet had to be removed and the adhesive on the concrete tediously ground off.

New Floor... (continued from page 1)

Near the end of the day it was amazing to see the Main Gallery almost ready for visitors with most of the



equipment and displays in place. The new floor covering gave a brighter appearance to the gallery and sets off to advantage all the equipment from the Lindner Collection. At day's end,

Curator Mark Barbour heartily agreed with Docent Director Leland Whitson's boast: "The Docents have done it again!"

See more pictures at www.printmuseum.org

More '07 Docent Doings....

August - September

Peggy and John Beth shared the honors for helping to set up the Museum's new library space. Our library had recently been moved to the Book Art Institute building located behind the Museum's main building. Much of



the collection was still in boxes and many items not even cataloged. It was a mess severely in need of attention! Thanks to Peggy's regular volunteering, not only on Docent Saturdays but

numerous other times, the library was put in good order. Now any item can be found in the computer listing and then located in the shelves. Peggy also had a pivotal role in planning and executing the floor plan for the new library space as well as the adjoining reading room. Her woodworking husband John, owner of *John Beth Fine Woodworking*, and a specialist in hand-crafted furniture, ably directed the reassembly of all the shelving and took on numerous additional carpentry, electrical and plumbing projects throughout the Museum. The beautiful oak book cabinets and table in the new Reading Room were custom built by John with funding from a grant by the Ahmanson Foundation.

The couple, who recently celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary, feels that the mutual aid and comradeship offered by all the members of the *Leather Apron Docent Guild* make the Museum a very positive place to volunteer. And we appreciate all that this hard-working couple does for the International Printing Museum!

May

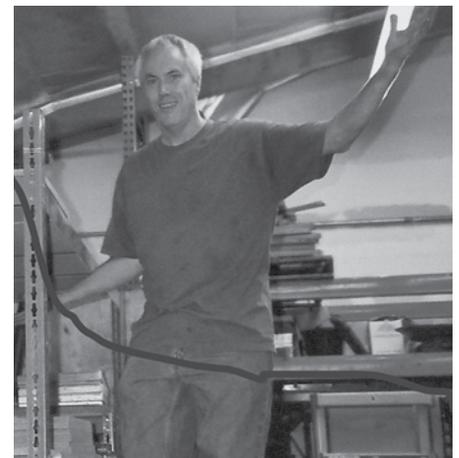
Marjorie Wilser volunteered at the IPM on the first Docent Saturday in April, 2005, coming all the way from her home up the coast in Goleta, near Santa Barbara. A printing history buff and talented printer in her own right, she owns a print shop, The 3 Toad Press



(www.the3toads.googlepages.com). She also regularly volunteers at the History Park Print Shop in San Jose. An active docent, she assisted with IPM exhibits at several conventions during 2006. Marjorie brings her talents to interests that include costuming, sewing, tatting, and quilt making. "Marjorie's willingness to participate and the energy she brings to her Docent work at the Museum are much appreciated," wrote Docent Director Leland Whitson in her Docent of the Month citation.

April

In **Tim Gould's** Docent of the Month citation, Leland Whitson wrote: "Tim is a Carson resident who discovered



the Museum driving by one day. He stopped in and literally has been volunteering each Saturday since." Tim's background in legal proof reading has been put to good use proofing an ongoing book project at the Museum. He is a personable, enthusiastic, well-read chap who has been bitten by the letterpress bug, and we love having him here!

The Leather Apron Docent Guild



*Docents welcome every Saturday.
Open to all!*

*Please call (310) 515-7166 or e-mail
to mail@printmuseum.org
for more information.*

Luis Garcia: Master of the Mergenthaler Linotype

A couple of years ago, Luis Garcia and his wife Elizabeth visited the Museum for the first time when Dr. Leland Whitson, our Docent Director, happened to be giving the tour that day. Entering the area where the Linotypes sat, Leland felt a tug on his sleeve and heard Elizabeth say: “You know my husband is a Linotype operator and used to own four!” Leland immediately invited Luis to set a few lines. “We became instant, special friends,” he recalls. Soon after he persuaded Luis to join the Museum’s *Leather Apron Docent Guild*.

And what an asset Luis has turned out to be for the Museum ever since Day One when fate brought him to our door! Luis has been here almost every Saturday and more, expertly manning the Linotype, bringing it to life thanks to his more than three decades of experience as an operator both in his native Mexico and in the US, becoming indispensable along the way to the success of challenging Museum projects and special events, thanks to his skills and helpful nature.

One of his first projects at the Museum was to correct and set over 180 galleys on the Linotype for a book project that Leland had been working on for nearly a year.

At Museum special events, like *Dickens Day*, the *Ben Franklin Banquet*, and Leland’s *65/25 Birthday Party*, Luis always makes linotype slugs of visitors’ names that he then brings to Leland, a letterpress aficionado who enjoys demonstrating to visitors how to print their names on the Vandercook proof press; together they create a keepsake for the guest to take home along with their slugs. “It’s proved very popular with all,” says Leland.

Another task our *Docent of the Month* has taken on willingly is that of troubleshooting the Museum’s

Model 5 Linotype in the Main Gallery, the machine that our “Ben Franklin,” Phil Soinski, affectionately refers to as the “Lemon-type.”

Recently, Luis has also been instrumental on a special book project of Docent Gary Miller’s for which he set both English and Latin type. The book



deals with two letters of Pliny the Younger describing the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in the year 79 AD, newly translated from the Latin by Kenneth Martin, with illustrations by Adare McAllister. Luis used the Museum’s 12, 14 and 18 point Kenntonian, Intertype’s version of Kennerly.

It’s quite a distance in time and geography from today’s Carson, California to Mexico City’s daily newspaper, “El Universal,” where Luis, working alongside his father, got his start as a teenaged Linotype operator in the 1950’s. And from Chicago, where he was enticed to move by Reliance Typesetting’s Berth Carniol, so impressed by Luis’ skill that he enticed him to the Windy City even though Luis spoke little English. He worked there for the next 17 years.

Drawn back to Mexico City in 1968, Luis set up his own Linotype shop. When offset printing started to cut into the hot metal business, Luis’ company continued make “perfect

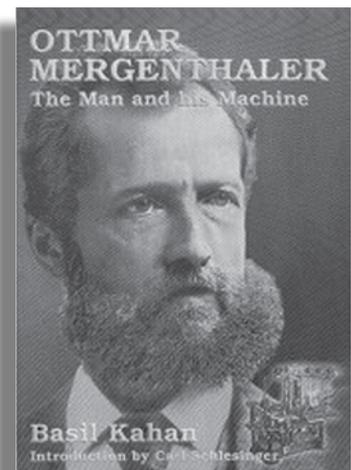
proofs” on the Linotype which would then be photo engraved and printed offset. But finally, when “we were put out of business by computerized typesetting” as he puts it, Luis and his family returned to the States in 1996.

Retired today, Luis lives with wife Elizabeth not far from the Museum in Redondo Beach. They celebrated their 50th anniversary in 2006 sailing around the Hawaiian Islands. Docent Director Whitson says that it “was a special treat to have his children and grandchildren come to the Museum” for a first chance of seeing Luis operating his machine.

Leland Whitson sums up how rewarding he finds working with Luis: “Personally I feel very close to Luis and look forward to seeing him each week. Each week as he leaves his post at the machine, Luis always says something like, “Thank you, Leland. Operating the machine makes me feel young again!”

Leland speaks for all of us in saying how much he appreciates you, Luis! Thank you for all you do and hearty congratulations on being named our *Docent of the Month*.

Available in Our Bookstore



Biography of Linotype Inventor

Price: \$35

Order from www.printmuseum.org

'Twas a Dickens of a Holiday Celebration

The 2007 holiday season is long gone but we would be remiss in not chronicling for our readers the Museum's various *Dickens Day* celebrations in December when more than 100 guests crowded into the Main Gallery festooned for the occasion with wreaths and garlands by "Super Docent" *Dwight Antioch*, filled with the sounds of seasonal music thanks to Curator *Mark Barbour* and his talented kids, and redolent with the aroma of bangers, the traditional English plentiful-sized sausage, sizzling on a grill tended by *Ruth and Hal Wessels*.

Peter Small dressed in a Victorian cut-away coat, as usual edified and delighted visitors with his gallery tours and demonstrations of Victorian printing techniques. Docent Director and trustee, *Dr. Leland Whitson* entertained the onlookers by bringing *Dr. Franklin Miles* to life with a historically accurate portrayal of the good doctor, who a century ago diagnosed both a new disease that he called "neurasthenia" and, famously, the alcohol-laden concoction named *Miles Nervine* as the cure for it.

Miles also secured a place in printing history, thanks to the proof presses he gave to country newspapers, with the name of his medicine cast into them..

Ushered into the Museum's Heritage Theater for curtain call, guests were treated to a special one-man Dickens show by our own talented thespian, *Phil Soinski*. Assuming the



persona of the famous author himself, *Phil* brought many of the familiar characters in Dickens' beloved *A Christmas Carol* to life; he even drafted members of the audience to play the rest. Awed by *Phil's* versatility ("how does he do all those parts?"), visitors variously described his performance

as "amazing," "moving," or "exciting."

Accommodating the overflow crowd required two performances, so a group of costumed Dickens actors, imported from Riverside, diverted the audience between shows with an interlude of caroling and banter, while gingerbread, cider and bangers were served to all.. *Mr. Pickwick*, pictured left with *Charles Dickens* was in rare form as he regaled guests with stories from his *Pickwick Papers*.

Edified and entertained, guests departed in the best of holiday moods, clutching Christmas cards individualized with their names, thanks to *Luis Garcia*, who cast visitors' names on Linotype slugs, and costumed *Wendy Emery* and *Colin Browne* who helped them print their two-color cards on a Victorian Parlor Press.

Filled with good cheer, colorful characters, and good will toward all, the Museum's 2007 *Dickens Day* could have sprung right out of the pages of one of the author's novels. It was indeed a real Dickens of a celebration!

Dr. Miles, his Proof Press, and the Selling of Miles Nervine

As evidenced by your local newspaper, printers always need a method to check their work for those elusive "typos"; this has been traditionally the case. Proofing printer's type prior to the mid-19th century utilized a rather simple technique. The compositor placed the composing stick or galley of metal type on top of the composing stone and then inked it by rolling a brayer over the type. After a sheet of paper was positioned over the type, he then placed a felt covered wood plane on top of the paper and



struck it with a mallet, with hopefully enough pressure to create a satisfactory impression. The quality of the image varied and certainly wasn't used for reproduction, but it served the purpose of checking for errors. This technique required a skilled hand to create the image without smashing the type in the process. In smaller shops or when saving time was a factor, this process of proofing was used as long as letterpress remained king of printing methods,

well into the middle of the 20th century. But in 1850, R. Hoe & Co. devised a simple press that would perform the function of proofing and with superior results over those with the mallet and plane. It was called a galley proof press and consisted of a heavy cylinder and an iron bed measuring about 10" x 38" with iron rails on each side of the bed. The galley of type would be placed in the bed of the press and then inked up by hand with a brayer. After a sheet of paper was placed on top of the type, the heavy cylinder would be rolled along the iron rails over the type to print an image on the paper.

Hoe's press was probably one of the simplest presses ever designed.

The legend goes that one of Hoe's employees came across the idea by accident when a cylinder rolled over some type, creating an impression.

The early Hoe galley press was successful but unfortunately few survive today; more common are the improved models from around 1870. Because of its simplicity and low cost, the press was copied by various manufacturers such as the Challenge Machinery Co., the Cincinnati Type Founders and others. The improved model was similar to the original but it had a lighter and larger diameter cylinder. They were sometimes made large enough for a twenty-inch wide galley.

Sometime in the 1890's, a patent medicine doctor by the name of Dr. Franklin Miles from Elkhart, Indiana, approached the Challenge Machinery Co. with a novel idea. He asked them to make a quantity of the improved-style proof press for him, but rather than having the name Challenge cast into the frame, he wanted his name and product: *Miles Nervine* at one end of the press bed and *Miles Pain Pills*

at the other. Miles had an alternate Nervine casting made, one that used the phrase *Miles Heart Cure* rather than *Miles Pain Pills*. Dr. Miles and his agents then traveled the country and offered his proof presses to editors of country newspapers in exchange for free advertising space, promoting the curative power of Miles Nervine. Though his medicine was probably closer to a straight shot of whiskey than genuine medicine, Miles's advertising techniques must have met some degree of success since many of the presses survive today as well as the Miles Laboratory (bought out by Bayer some years ago).

Besides making the printing presses, Miles Laboratories used the power of the press to convince the public of the quality of their Nervine. One hundred years ago, the Miles Laboratory had one of the largest



printing plants in the country, with more people employed on the printing than the pharmaceutical side. The in-house printing shop at Miles Laboratory in Elkhart produced and distributed printed literature such as almanacs, cookbooks, joke books, calendars and more; sent to homes all across America, these millions of pieces of paper casually mentioned Miles Nervine or Pain Pills or Heart Cure following good recipe or weather report or humorous story. Miles Laboratory became a household name.

Considering the potency of Miles Nervine and the reputation of printers to be inclined to the bottle, those country newspapermen may have been Dr. Miles's best customers, ensuring his financial success. Miles Nervine presses can still be found today among hobby printers and collectors. Alka Seltzer, though, has replaced that restorative Nervine!

The Doctor Is In: Dr. Miles Visits Printing Museum

Dr. Franklin Miles, the inventor in 1884 of Miles Nervine (and, incidentally, of neurasthenia, the set of real or imaginary symptoms that it was designed to relieve) also earned a niche in printing history for using the humble proof press to market his highly alcoholic brew.

Unexpectedly, the good Dr. Miles appeared in the IPM's Main Gallery during our Dickens Day celebration this past December, channeled by our own Docent Director, *Dr. Leland Whitson*, himself a practicing physician here in the South Bay. The full-bearded Whitson, nattily attired in period costume including top hat and weskit, delighted and edified our *Dickens Day* crowds with his sales pitch for Nervine. What attracted our Doc to the character most was that Miles was a "real

M.D.," not a snake oil salesman, and also because his marketing skills used letterpress printing, something Doc Leland himself enjoys. Like any other entertainer, Doc Whitson thrives on audience reaction. He enjoyed being in a historically accurate costume. "I am

used to public speaking but not doing so in character. It was a kick, for sure," he says. His act also led him to discover an interesting fact or two about *Moxie*, a beverage introduced in 1884 when Dr. Miles began selling Nervine. Both Moxie and Nervine share one plant root as the key ingredient.



Dr. Miles in the Museum with bottles of Moxie for sale.

Playing the historic Dr. Miles has only upped Leland's respect for his predecessor's sincerity, investigative bent and the fact he was not a charlatan. And, he points out, though Miles was not a printer, his company had one of the largest printing shops in the English speaking world. Thanks, Doc, for the insights and we hope you'll bring back Dr. Miles again to delight museum-goers!

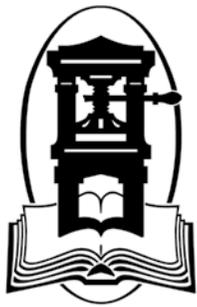
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celebration held annually around August.*

Mark Barbour & Henry Randolph, Co-Editors
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Museum hours: Sat 10–4 pm or by appointment during
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