It’s a document every American can recognize, and one that stirs national pride and identity. Engrossed (written in a large and readable script) on parchment, with the clear signature of John Hancock, Benjamin Franklin and 54 others, the image of the Declaration of Independence is familiar to all of us. But did you know that the written and signed document on parchment is not the original copy of July 4th, 1776?

Following several drafts of the Declaration by young Thomas Jefferson and the Committee of Five, appointed by the Congress, the Congress debated the final version for three days beginning on Monday, July 2nd. It was unanimously adopted by the colonies represented and signed by President of the Congress John Hancock and Secretary Charles Thomson. Congress then ordered the Committee of Five that included Benjamin Franklin, to have the document printed so “that copies of the declaration be sent to the several assemblies, conventions and committees or councils of safety, and to the several commanding officers of the continental troops; that it be proclaimed in each of the United States, and at the head of the Army.”

Jefferson and Franklin most likely were the ones to take that amended document to the printing shop of John Dunlap, the official printer for the Congress. Dunlap’s shop at 48 Market Street was only blocks away from the Pennsylvania State House. Feverishly through the afternoon and evening of July 4th, Dunlap handset in type the words that would form a new nation. Ironically, the Declaration was set in the typeface called Caslon, the most popular typeface in all of England and one very familiar to the King. By late evening and into the following morning, between 100 and 200 copies of the Declaration had been printed by Dunlap on paper.

It was Dunlap’s broadside printing of the Declaration that was distributed throughout the colonies, informing the new citizens of the fledgling nation they were now a part of. As a printed document in multiple copies, it was to ensure that every colony was to read the same text, without change or alteration. It was read aloud from state houses, meeting rooms and churches. Whether you could read or not, you would have heard the great announcement of America’s independence. Even two copies made it back to England, ensurring the King himself would read the Declaration by his now former colonists: Vice-Admiral Lord Howe in August from his ship in the harbor of Staten Island.

On July 17th, the Second Continental Congress ordered that a copy of the Declaration be engrossed on parchment. Commonly thought to be the handwriting of Thomas Jefferson, the beautiful penmanship is credited to Timothy Matlack of Pennsylvania, assistant to Congress Secretary Thomson. It was on this document that the 56 Founders affixed their signatures.

The names of those fifty-six men were relatively unknown by the general public until the Declaration was again officially printed as a broadside after January 18th, 1777, by Mary Katharine Goddard, a woman printer and publisher in Maryland. Goddard’s broadside has the names of each signer set in type rather than as a facsimile of their signature.

Copies of this version were sent to each state. Only eight have survived, as have twenty-five copies of the original Dunlap broadside. And despite the popularity of the movie “National Treasure,” the engrossed copy on parchment is still securely held by the National Archives.

Following the printing in January of 1776 of Thomas Paine’s book, Common Sense, a bestselling book that united the colonies in opposition to the tyrannical King of England, the printing of the Declaration of Independence is the next most important printed document to emanate from the presses in America. And as a document that has been printed over and over again, the Declaration continues to inspire and motivate individuals throughout the world. Printing, the “Art Preservative of All Arts,” proved to be a pivotal tool in establishing our great democracy, and the printed word will remain one of the linchpins for freedom in our civilization. —MB
The International Printing Museum Foundation has elected printing industry veteran Dan Freedland as President of its Board of Trustees. Dan concurrently serves as Vice President of Business Development for Costa Mesa-based Primary Color, one of Southern California’s leading providers of printing, prepress and marketing automation services. During his tenure on the Museum’s Board, Dan has been instrumental in developing support for the Printing Museum and expanding connections in the industry and the South Bay area of Los Angeles, where he resides.

As President, Dan Freedland will be leading the Printing Museum’s Board of Trustees at a critical time as the International Printing Museum celebrates its 20th Anniversary this fall. The Museum houses one of the world’s most significant collections of antique printing equipment and brings history to life through working demonstrations and theater presentations for all ages. Since 1988, over 400,000 visitors have toured the museum, learning about the history of books and printing, great inventions and inventors that changed our world.

The Printing Museum’s Board of Trustees is charged with overseeing the operation of the Printing Museum, securing its financial position and broadening its support in the community. The Board is working to expand the financial support for the Printing Museum’s public display in Carson and its education programs that reach 25,000 students every year. The Museum’s annual budget is nearly $350,000 with two-thirds needing to come from personal contributions, corporate support and grants. As President, Dan Freedland will be leading the International Printing Museum Foundation’s efforts to develop this support and inspire more donors to help the Museum fulfill its mission of “Education Through Preservation.”

As we move towards the upcoming 20th Anniversary Celebration for the Printing Museum, consider how you can personally help the Museum meet its annual budget through a generous contribution. The Printing Museum has grown and prospered over the past 20 years because of focused dedication to our mission and the support of so many Friends. If you haven’t done so already, consider becoming at least a Friend of the Museum with an annual contribution of $50 or $10; but we also need many Lifetime Friends or Franklin Fellows at $500 or $1,000 to sustain our annual work. We are working hard to preserve the heritage of printing and to make it relevant and meaningful to current and future generations.

Since 1988 when Dave Jacobson of the annual Gutenberg Festival (printing equipment trade show in Southern California) started the Printing Museum, we have worked hard to develop a world-class museum where our industry veterans can hang their hats with a sense of pride, knowing that future generations will appreciate the printed word and the industry that provides it. Do your part to help the Printing Museum and support Dan Freedland’s efforts to lead the International Printing Museum Foundation’s Board of Trustees.

Rachelle W. Chuang Joins IPM as Book Arts Institute’s New Director

Having joined IPM only in May as the new Director of our Book Arts Institute, Rachelle has already breathed new life into her new charge. The debut last month of Family Pop Up Book Day earned her accolades from Museum Curator Mark Barbour and participants of all ages (see following story.)

Born and raised in Southern California by Hong Kong emigrant parents, Rachelle is a graphic designer, teacher and fine artist who has exhibited nationally. She holds a BA in Graphic Design from Biola University and an MFA in Printmaking/Book Arts from University of the Arts in Philadelphia. She has taught book arts, paper making and letterpress to people of all ages both here and on the East Coast.

Her own letterpress studio is housed at the Irvine Fine Arts Center. Rachelle lives in Orange County with husband Di and son Jeremiah. She belongs to San Diego Book Arts and is an adjunct instructor at Saddleback College and Chapman University.

Rachelle recalls first visiting the Museum in 1989 in Buena Park as an undergraduate graphic design student. She remembers then thinking, “printing is magic!” She is excited to contribute her skills to developing the Museum “and to make wonderful new friends.” Welcome back, Rachelle!
On Saturday, July 5th, the Museum began its summer series of Family Days with a hands-on workshop exploring the amazing world of pop-up books. The guests filling the Museum were treated to the finer points of 3-D paper manipulation by instructor Rachelle Chuang, who kept three tables of busy craftspeople of all ages enthralled by the intricate sculptural effects of the simple cut and fold. Even the smallest guests were able to use safety-scissors, color markers and glue sticks to create little masterpieces of paste-on appliqué, while the older kids, like Reuben Barbour, pictured as right, (he’s the son of Museum Curator Mark Barbour) tackled more intricate challenge of bringing Ben Franklin’s venerable face leaping from its heavy paper ground with the fold of a page.

A few daring souls among the first-time pop-uppers even created leaping salad dishes, floating chambered nautilus shells and a groovy 60s-furnished pad, all executed to perfection under Rachelle’s attentive gaze and patient guidance. Inspired, more than one parent was seen abandoning the observer role for the hands-on experience of creating one of these mechanical wonders!

Anyone interested in learning more about the resurgent artform of pop-up can contact Rachelle by email or here at the Museum, for pointers on how to get started and also a list of online resources for the popular craft. For other hands-on activities scheduled at the Museum’s Book Arts Institute check out our Family Saturdays 2008 calendar above, or go to www.printmuseum.org for all the latest information.

—TG
In this issue:
A Printer’s Patriotic Declaration
Dan Freedland, New IPM Foundation President

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