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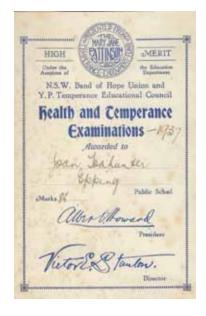
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CONTENTS

Books and bookplates in a time of war: a last hurrah on the centenary of the Great War 2

Obituary: Glen Ross Ralph 3

Notes and happenings 5

Editorial 6

Bookplate preservation

By Debra Parry, Melbourne

Bookplates, like other paper objects, can be damaged through improper handling, storage and display. Therefore it is important to always be careful when handling your bookplates and to consider how they are stored or displayed.

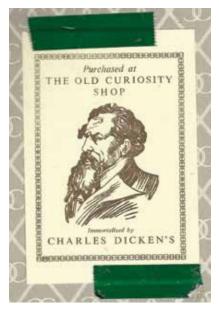
On television programs such as 'Who do you think you are' people are often shown wearing cotton gloves when handling paper items and books. This is not necessary and wearing cotton gloves makes it difficult to handle small pieces of paper such as bookplates. It is more important to make sure you have clean hands, so washing your hands before handling bookplates is essential. This is because hands can transfer oils and dirt to paper objects. While working as a conservator at the National Archives, we always washed our hands before handling any items, and because many of the files were quite old, and had previously been stored in unsuitable places, we washed our hands again once finished and before handling food. The other important practice to follow is not to have food and drink around when you have your bookplates out. It is especially important not to have your coffee or tea next to your bookplates as it is too easy to spill it and cause staining.

For storage of bookplates it is important to consider what materials are used for storage. If bookplates are kept in plastic sleeves then the plastic used should be **polyester**, **polypropylene** or **polyethylene**. These plastics are safe for storage of paper items and photographs and will not cause damage to the enclosed items. The plastic that must be avoided is PVC. Up until the 1980's PVC was the plastic commonly used in sleeves for documents and slides (photographic transparencies) and is still used in some sleeves today. The problem with PVC plastic is that approximately 25% of it

is composed of plasticisers to make the PVC flexible. As PVC ages it tends to deteriorate and the plasticisers leak out and stick to the items within, making it very important to avoid this plastic. Plastic bags such as zip lock bags (made from polyethylene), and other food grade plastics, are suitable for storage.

If bookplates are stored in boxes then consider the material the box is made out of. Brown cardboard tends to be poor quality and acidic. Over time this acidity can transfer to items in contact with the box surface. Such boxes can be lined with archival paper or alternatively use a box made of good quality card.

If bookplates are on display then it is important to consider how much light falls on them. Keep bookplates out of direct sunlight as this has high levels of ultraviolet light. Ultraviolet light is the part of the spectrum that is damaging and it causes damage to the molecular structure of materials. This deterioration can cause fading



It may be difficult to remove sticky tape without causing damage

or darkening in paper. Spiral energy saving fluorescent light globes also emit some ultraviolet light, as do some halogen lights. LED lights are the safest and do not emit ultraviolet light. Ultraviolet light damage is cumulative so be aware and keep bookplates out of sunlight as much as possible.

For the difficult question of how to remove sticky tape from bookplates, there is no simple answer. If the sticky tape has been there for a long time then the adhesive may have gone hard or brittle and lost its tackiness. The tape carrier can then be easily removed. However, by this stage the adhesive may have already stained the paper a mustard yellow colour. If the sticky tape has not been there so long the adhesive may still be very tacky. Sometimes the plastic carrier can very slowly and carefully be peed off. But it is not always possible to do this. Heating the tape may soften the adhesive and so make it possible to peel the tape off. A hairdryer can be used to heat up the tape. Cover unaffected areas of the bookplate with card and heat the taped areas for a few minutes and then try to peel the carrier off. If it is possible to remove the plastic carrier then tacky adhesive will still be on the bookplate and may be able to be removed by careful dabbing with a crepe eraser (available in art supply shops), or with a white Staedtler type pencil eraser. Use the eraser by carefully stroking in one direction only, do not rub back and forward as it is very easy to tear the paper.

With any attempt to remove sticky tape or the residue adhesive it is very easy for skinning of the paper surface to occur, with fibres in the top layer of paper becoming detached. If the tape has been placed over printed areas then the print can be lifted off the bookplate. Sometimes there is no alternative but to leave the sticky tape over printed areas.

If anyone has further questions about preservation please contact me at Melbourne Conservation Services by email melbourneconservation@gmail.com or by phone on 0403 809 366 or (03) 9440 6899. Our website is at http://melbourneconservation.com.au/

Books and bookplates in a time of war: a last hurrah on the centenary of the Great War

Jürgen Wegner, Librarian, Sydney

It always pays to look at the minor items in any antiquarian bookshop as they are often the most interesting ones. I was recently in an antiquarian bookshop in Berlin — my favourite — where I discovered the following for the princely sum of two dollars:

Köster, Bernhard E. Bücher und Exlibris im Weltkrieg, 1914-1918: Sonderheft anlässlich der Tagung der deutschen Exlibris-Gesellschaft in Haltern am See vom 1.-4. Mai, 2014 / [Text und Idee: Bernhard E. Köster]. Haltern am See, Germany: Stadtbücherei Haltern am See, [2014]. [24] p.: ill. (chiefly col.), ports. (some col.). (Aus der Bücherei der Stadt Haltern am See; Mai 2014). Title translates as: Books and ex libris in the World War. 1914-1918.

The above publication was produced in commemoration and on the folly of the First World War. The item constitutes a special number of the journal issued by the city library at Haltern am See, the location of the 2014 annual conference of the German Exlibris Society. Amongst the many illustrations there are nineteen



Cover of Bücher und Exlibris im Weltkrieg 1914-1918 (2014)

reproductions of bookplates relating to the First World War.

The contents of the issue deals with many interesting aspects of books and bookplates in time of war - a subject which is overlooked in favour of more obvious military themes. Before a brief summary of the contents, a quick note on the 'frontispiece' to the work on the inside of the front cover: an illustration of the Australian bookplate from the militaria collection of Robert Simon. The unsigned bookplate is in the Jugendstil style and shows a young Australian digger in a trench. The walls of the trench are constructed from big heavy leather tomes and he is aiming his rifle through a spyhole left in the books for shooting. Quotations appear on two of the books, in Arabic and Latin respectively. A further book bears the date 1916, perhaps a depiction of trench warfare in Gallipoli?

Als die Welt zu Brennen began ... (As the world started to burn), p. [1]:

Introduction with the note that this was the first war in which bookplates were used as propaganda.

Bücher sollten die Völker mit einander verbinden ... (Books are intended to unite peoples with each other), p. [2-4]:

Germany seems to have been singularly inept when it comes to its modern history. On the eve of the First World War it was a global powerhouse almost second to none with everything to lose. It had the second largest economy in the world. Its GDP was only surpassed by that of the USA as was also the case with its industrial production. It was in a spirit of boundless optimism that the Internationale Ausstellung für Buchgewerbe und Graphik (International Trade Fair for the Book Industries and Graphic Arts) — also known as the BUGRA - was conceived. For 1914 — on the very eve of the War. In his opening speech, Ludwig Volkmann of the Deutscher Buchgewerbeverein (Ger., German Book Trades Association) spoke of the unifying power of the book and voiced his opinion that the future would be characterized by printers' ink and not gunpowder. This was July 1914.

Die Zerstörung der Bibliothek von Löwen (The destruction of the library of Leuven), p. [5-8]:

The magnificent and ancient library of the city of Leuven soon fell victim to the necessities of a senseless war. A number of soldiers had been killed by sniper fire and there was resistance to the occupation. As a result, its inhabitants were forced to leave and any building showing evidence of resistance was set on fire. This included the priceless library - one of the greatest war crimes of its day. Three hundred thousand books perished including eight hundred incunabula and twelve manuscripts. A later sign spelt it out: 'This is where German culture ends'. The shock at this senseless act had been so great that there was a special clause inserted in the Treaty of Versailles requiring restitution. A number of personal bookplates are illustrated which portray the arson. There is also an illustration of the bookplate which was inserted in all books supplied by Germany in restitution. The Leuven library had singular bad luck. In 1940 it was subjected to German artillery fire and again burnt — this time with a loss of close to a million books. It was again rebuilt but in 1971 again 'destroyed' as a result of the ethnic tensions in Belgium. The library was split between the Flemish (Dutch) and the Walloons (French).

Geistespflege im Felde oder die Mobilmaching der Bücher im Krieg (Nourishing the spirit at the front or the mobilization of books in the field), p. [9-10, inside back cover]:

To boost morale, soldiers were provided with reading material in the field. There were already lists of approved reading for soldiers available. The famous pocket publisher Reclam now issued a special hundred volume field library — the tiny Reclam series of books are famous for being literally shirt pocket sized. Three photographs of these *Feldbuchhandlungen* are reproduced here.

Die Erfindung der fahrbaren Feldbücherei (The invention of the mobile field library), p. [11-12]:

Transportation in the field was problematic and so a special horse drawn "bookmobile" was invented. These were widely used to bring books to the troops.

Bücher fürs Feld (Books for the field), p. [13-14]:

How do you get sufficient books out to the estimated five to six million soldiers? As well as to field hospitals and others, eg prisoners of war? A Central Committee for the Distribution of Reading Matter in the Field and in Hospitals was created. It is estimated that by March 1917 ten million books were thus distributed. School children were sent from house to house. A Reichsbuchwoche (Imperial Book Week) was instituted and people encouraged to donate. Two generic bookplates are illustrated.

Amerikanische Plakate und Exlibris als Propagandamittel (American posters and bookplates as propaganda), p. [15-16]:

The same was true for the USA. The article includes a reproduction of a poster from the American Library Association showing a US soldier climbing upwards towards a better future on a track paved with educational books. A number of different versions of the War Service Library bookplate ('for the men who fought for democracy'), posters asking for half a million books and *Halt the Hun!* (also alluding to the destruction of the Leuven library) as well as a generic bookplate: *Property of the libraries for U.S. soldiers and sailors*, are illustrated.

Exlibris und Kriegssammlungen (Bookplates and militaria collections), p. [17-18, inside front cover]:

The end of the war brought about a great interest in and the collecting of books about this terrible 'Great War. Many people had bookplates made for their collections — both Allied and German. Four militaria collection bookplates are illustrated.

Kriegsgefangenenbibliotheken, ein Zeichen der Hoffnung (Prisoner of war libraries, a sign of hope), p. [19-24]:

One of the more unusual aspects of books at war is the creation of libraries in prisoner of war camps. Over ten million became either prisoners of war or were interned. Two and a half million foreign prisoners were held inside Germany alone. And over three and a quarter million German soldiers were held prisoner. One such camp of German prisoners was Camp Stobs in Scotland. Here four and a half thousand were interned or



Pen-and-ink bookplate for Robert Simon, 1916

held prisoner. The camp library contained two thousand seven hundred titles.

A thoughtful contribution by the German Exlibris Society on the hundredth anniversary of the beginning of the 'war to end all wars'.

Obituary: Glen Ross Ralph (28 January 1932 – 5 April 2018)

By Andrew Peake, Adelaide

Glen was born on 28 January 1932, in the depths of the Great Depression, at the local hospital in Peterborough, a railway town in the north of South Australia. His parents were Reginald Grove Fowell Ralph ('Reg') a locomotive engine driver for the South Australian Railways and Stella Irene Sherman. When he was seven the family moved to Thebarton in Adelaide and Glen attended the Thebarton Primary School. At about this time his grandfather, who was

the secretary of the Thebarton Institute, which had a substantial library, gave Glen and his brother, Gilbert, subscriptions to its library which they both availed themselves of with fervour. He subsequently joined the Children's Library, behind the State Library, in North Terrace, Adelaide. This became the foundation of Glen's love of books and literature.

Glen gained his Intermediate Certificate and his father pushed him out into employment. Over time he moved into the book-keeping and accountancy sphere and he had a number of positions in this profession. During this time Glen started to frequent new and secondhand book shops and to assemble a library. He was a regular customer of Colin Jones of the Book Centre in Rundle Street, Adelaide. He was also a regular customer at the Beck Book Co. in Pulteney Street, and the Mary Martin Bookshop in Grenfell Street. His interest in book collecting burgeoned at this time under the influence of these booksellers.

By chance Glen heard that his old school, Thebarton Primary, was to celebrate its centenary at the end of that year and wished to publish its history. The fee offered was \$20 and a copy of the book when published. The Thebarton book was completed by the school's anniversary date in 1979, and was re-published in 1992 as *Thebarton Primary School: 113 years of community service.*

He was awarded a BA in Library Studies from the South Australian Institute of Technology (now the University of South Australia) in 1978 and a Graduate Diploma in Religious Education in 1987, but remained a staunch atheist. In about 1979 he secured employment at the Australian Society of Accountants as a part-time librarian and remained there until he retired in 1994.

In the early 1970s Glen met Marjorie Rapson and he maintained a close friendship with her up until her death in 1981, when he learnt that he had been left virtually her entire estate. He decided to sell his house at Henley Beach and live at Marjorie's house at Lockleys. Plans were drawn up for a library building to be erected at the rear of that house. The library was named the Wilmar Library to honour Marjorie

and her first husband, Will Brufton-Smith. Its mission was to provide a free library service to members of the public for scholarly purposes, and to publish books. An appropriate brass plate was installed at the entrance, and the Library was officially opened on 18 September 1984.

In 1987, when Glen was working in the library of the Australian Society of Accountants, he learnt that the Audit Office had sought to have a history written but had abandoned the idea when it became apparent that the fee to be charged would be too great. Glen offered to write the history for nothing, and was authorised to do so by the Auditor-General, Tom Sheridan. A matter of independence was completed in three years, printed by the Government Printer, with a foreword by the Premier, John Bannon, and launched in February 1991, in the week in which the State Bank of South Australia collapsed. Later, a massive personal index to the Auditor-General's 18-volume, 3 000 page work: Report of the Auditor-General on an Investigation into the State Bank of South Australia, was published in 1994.

In 1991 Glen was put in touch with Marie-Claire Bouhey, who had a pottery at Pezenas in the south of France. After a period exchanging letters, Glen and Marie-Claire were married the following year.

In 1993 Glen heard about an autobiography written by Ron Beck, an old fisherman, and he took on the task of re-writing and editing it, and published it with the title, *Fishing under sail*, the first of the Wilmar Library

publications. Wilmar Library then published a translation into French of *Piccaninny Walkabout*, a photographic book about two aboriginal children by Axel Poignant, Angus & Robertson (Sydney, 1957). Marie-Claire interpreted Poignant's photographs as linocuts and they called the book *Histoire de deux enfants aborigènes*. The Library also published in 1997, *Thebarton Cottage. The home of Colonel William Light and the great controversy surrounding it*, by John Tregenza and Dr Charles Fenner, with an introduction by Glen for the Thebarton Historical Society.

Between 1995 and 2005 a number of editions of Wilmar Library Notes and Curieux were published. In 2014-15 three editions of, Bookshelf: the magazine of the Book Collectors' Society of South Australia, appeared, largely written by Glen. A number of other research projects occupied his time, which he published 'on demand', Sir Josiah Symon (1846-1934): A chronicle of his life and notes for researchers (2000) and in the following year, Sandeman Scrapbook.

The Book Collectors' Society of South Australia asked Glen to write a book on some of Adelaide's better-known booksellers, but he decided in the end to concentrate on just one bookseller. When the research was well advanced, he learnt that he had cancer, and thought that he might die before he could finish the book. The Society agreed to publish the research notes, and, *Charles Platts (1813-1871) Adelaide's first bookseller*, appeared in a limited edition, given to members and research libraries.

Glen commented on his collection:



'Selfie' (I-r) of Mark Ferson and Glen Ralph at the Wilmar Library, March 2014

In relation to my collection, I can't honestly say that I've ever collected by any 'method.' I have never tried to collect, for instance, the whole works of an author, or material relating to a writer's opus. Nor have I sought to collect works on any given subject so as to comprise a working reference collection in that particular area. Starting from the age of thirteen I bought books new and second hand as they became available if they fell within the scope of my widening interests, provided of course, that I had the money for them. Money was always a problem. Even when I started employment in 1949 I didn't have much money for books, and throughout life I have always been in receipt of a modest income. Reading stimulated reading, and as time went on, I expanded the subject-coverage of my collection. I sought catalogues from Australian and overseas booksellers and regularly made purchases.

The Library currently holds about 14,000 volumes, an eclectic collection of the literature of many countries, religion, erotica, history, including local history (mainly South Australian), Australiana, and a collection of books in French. There is also a significant collection of postcards dating from 1901, which includes three or four collections which I bought from an auctioneer, and others which I purchased in Australia, Switzerland and France.

There is a collection of thousands of newspaper clippings on subjects of sociological interest, which date from 1954, and have often been used for newspaper reference by visitors to the Library.

Following his death his library was dispersed. There are lessons to learn from what happened for those who have assembled a significant collection of books. Prior to his death he had given some consideration as to what would happen to his library. He wanted to auction his more valuable books, and intended to create a catalogue of these books. However, rather than just a simple listing with details of author, title, publisher and date, he wanted to include other information, which took much time and he wasn't to be deterred that this

was un-necessary and time-consuming. As a consequence the catalogue remained incomplete at the time of his death. The bulk of his library were of books purchased at second-hand book shops and sales, which in this day and age have little intrinsic value and will probably be destined to the garage sale, and what can't be sold in this way, as pulp.

Glen's wife Marie-Claire is an accomplished artist who has had a number of individual and group exhibitions in Adelaide. He asked her to create a bookplate for his library. She created a linocut of Glen reading a book under an English elm in the Botanical Gardens, and many of these plates are to be found in his books. Marie-Claire went on to create at least three other bookplates for friends.

Glen was a Founding Member of the New Australia Bookplate Society and contributed a short description of the Wilmar Library to issue 30 (September 2013) of the *Newsletter*. As with most libraries founded on books found in the second hand market, many of the volumes contain personal, library and prize plates. Prior to his death Glen prepared a manuscript of those books containing personal plates, together with details of the books. It is hoped that this manuscript eventually will be published by the Society.

This obituary is based on Glen Ralph's self-written entry in volume V of Charles Stitz's *Australian book collectors* (2016).

Notes and happenings

FISAE international bookplate congresses 2018, 2020 and 2022

Many members will be aware that the International Federation of Exlibris Societies (FISAE) coordinates a program of biennial bookplate congresses, organised on each occasion by one of its member societies; we generally publish short reports of each meeting in the *Newsletter*.

The 37th Congress is being held in Prague, Czech Republic, from 28 August

to 2 September 2018 under the auspices of the Association of Collectors and Friends of Exlibris (see www.sspe.cz/fisae-2018/english) and the 38th Congress is scheduled for Cambridge, UK, over 12-16 August 2020, hosted by the Bookplate Society (UK) (see https://bookplatesociety.org/2020home.htm). Our friends across the Pacific, the American Society of Bookplate Collectors and Designers, are preparing to 'pitch' at the Prague meeting for the 2022 Congress to be held in San Francisco, and have already commissioned a beautifully designed wood-engraved logo in anticipation (see image page 6).

Society promoted at ArtsOpen, Mount Alexander Region, Victoria

Member and printmaker Rhyll Plant, who generously contributed multiple copies of her magpie linocut bookplate for inclusion with *Newsletter* no. 47, helped to promote the Society and bookplates generally at her Speargrass Studio, Castlemaine, in March as part of the Mount Alexander Shire's Arts Open 2018. As you can see from the photograph, Rhyll's display included her own named and universal bookplates, text blocks about the history of bookplates and a selection of the Society's materials.

Publications

Ron Lawrence]

CHRISTOPHER ALLEN. Masterpieces from the bookshelf. *Weekend Australian Review*, 21-22 Apr 2018; pp. 10-11 Review of 'Inside the cover: the bookplates of Adrian Feint' exhibition at Carrick Hill, Adelaide, with 5 Feint bookplates illustrated

CHRISTINE BELL. Victor Singer Bookplate Collection. *La Trobe Journal*, no. 100, Sept. 2017; pp. 78-9

[thanks to Colin Cohn and Joan &

Brief description of detective work to locate a fabled Australian collection and bring it to the State Library of Victoria. Images of bookplates by E Orlik, F Erler, M Fingesten and F Brangwyn

CAROLINE BERLYN, ANNA JUG, KATE DAVIES. Inside the cover: patron and painter, the bookplates of Adrian Feint [exhibition catalogue]. Carrick Hill, Adelaide, 2018



Wood-engraved logo by Richard Wagener for the 39th FISAE Congress 2022, proposed for San Francisco Bay

Sections comprise 'Precious: a brief history of the bookplate'; List of works; and 'The man inside the cover: Adrian Feint (1894-1971)'. Illustrated with photographic portrait of the artist by Max Dupain, and 6 bookplates.

DEBORAH BOGLE. Fashion plate. *SA Weekend*, 31 Mar.-1 Apr. 2018; p. 19
Brief review of Carrick Hill exhibition, 'Inside the cover: the bookplates of Adrian Feint' with photographic portrait of Feint and 4 Feint bookplates reproduced [thanks to Andrew Peake for letting me know about this]

Pamela Horsnell. The art form of bookplates. *Newsletter (Australian Society of Miniature Art (NSW), Inc.),* Jan.-Feb. 2018; p. 4

Note to members that an article on bookplates is planned, calling members to submit examples.

Pamela Horsnell. The art form of bookplates follow up. *Newsletter (Australian Society of Miniature Art (NSW), Inc.)*, May-Jun. 2018; p. 3

Notes response to the request in the January/ February issue by ASMA member Sandra Williams, showing two of her bookplate designs

MARK FERSON. The art form of bookplates. Newsletter (Australian Society of Miniature Art (NSW), Inc.), Mar.-Apr. 2018; p. 4 Short article about the New Australian Bookplate Society drawing attention of ASMA members to the (miniature) art of the bookplate; illustrated with examples by Timothy Ferson, Justin Watson, Pamela Horsnell and Marina Bishop

[MECHANICS' INSTITUTES OF VICTORIA].

Ex libris — from the shelves of a mechanics library. *Useful Knowledge (Magazine of the Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria, Inc.)*, no. 46, Autumn 2018; pp. 28-9

Describes some books for the Nhill Mechanics' Institute & Free Library, with bookplates still in situ, c. 1880s, images shown.

EMILIE NG. How a Queensland priest's private collection became the University of Queensland's greatest treasure 50 years ago. *Catholic Leader*

Describes the formation and acquisition by the University of Queensland of the major collection of books and related material, including bookplates, of Father Edward Leo Hayes; includes photograph of Fr Hayes and an image of the bookplate marking items in the University of Queensland's Hayes collection

[RICHARD BLAIR]. Walter Stone's bookplate. Biblionews and Australian Notes & Queries, no. 397, Mar. 2018; p. 21 This issue of Biblionews reproduces many of Walter Stone's writings; this page reproduces the image of Stone's bookplate by Raymond Lindsay

Bookplate competitions — International Exlibris Centre Sint-Niklaas, Belgium

The Society has received notice from the city of Sint-Niklaas, Belgium, which conducts regular bookplate design competitions through the International Exlibris Centre Sint-Niklaas, regarding two competitions: the 'International biennial bookplate and small printmaking competition' for designers born prior to 2001, and the 'International bookplate competition for teens and children'. Prizes range from €750 to €1250 for the adult competition and €250 for the youth competition. Further details and copies of the competition rules are available from the Editor, at https://musea. sint-niklaas.be/exlibris/grafiekbiennale (in French, German & English) or by email to museum.competition2019@sint-niklaas.be

Closing date: 1 November 2018

Editorial

This issue has been brought to you by some regular contributors as well as new ones. I am grateful to conservator Debra Parry for her article giving excellent advice on the preservation of bookplates, a topic of perennial interest to collectors and of value to anyone seeking to keep paper-based materials for a life-time or longer. Jürgen Wegner has uncovered on his travels a sobering modern record, prepared by the municipal library of Haltern am See in association with the German Exlibris Society, of the various innocent and not-so-innocent uses that bookplates were put to during World War I.

Marking a sad occasion, Andrew Peake has prepared an obituary for one of the Society's founding members, Glen Ralph of Adelaide. I visited Glen in 2014 and found him a gracious host and one very willing to share the wonders of his very eclectic Wilmar Library (and I even came away with some pamphlets on Australian library history). Not long before his death, Glen had prepared a manuscript describing the books in his library marked with personal bookplates; once we have images organised, it is planned to publish this document. Our quartely 'Notes and happenings' column records not just a burst in bookplate-related publications, some of which were prompted by the excellent Adrian Feint exhibition held at Adelaide's Carrick Hill, but also other bookplate events - large and small scattered across Australia and the globe.

Finally, I it is my hope that this Newsletter will be delivered by early July, and so members should note that the Society will be holding its Eleventh Annual General Meeting on the evening of Wednesday, 18 July, at the rooms of Sydney Rare Book Auctions, on the corner of Wattle and MacArthur Streets, Ultimo (where there is plenty of parking); see you there!

MF

