

**Editor/President**

Dr Mark Ferson  
4 Sofala Ave  
Riverview NSW 2066  
02 9428 2863  
m.ferson@unsw.edu.au

**Secretary**

Bronwyn Vost  
59 Gladstone St,  
Enmore NSW 2042  
bronwynvost@bigpond.com

**Designer**

Mary Keep  
PO Box 555  
Dulwich Hill NSW 2203  
tnabs\_mkeep@hotmail.com

**The Society's 7th Annual General Meeting and 'Show and Tell'**

The 7th Annual General Meeting took place on the evening of Wednesday 11 June in Better Read than Dead Bookstore, Newtown (Sydney), thanks to the interest and generosity of Pat Corrigan AM, the bookplate collector and donor who just happens to be the bookshop's proprietor.

After the minutes of the previous AGM were confirmed, the President provided his report, noting the main events of 2013, in chronological order: the 'Show and Tell' on 27 February, held at the Art Gallery of NSW Research Library, with six interesting presentations, was a very successful yet informal event, thanks to Bronwyn for organising it; the 6th AGM held in the Dymock's Building

in May, a successful function on account of a fascinating and enthusiastic talk by engraver John W Thompson on his work in England and Australia, and followed by many questions from the audience; the Society's first exhibition, held at Kogarah Library from 24 July to 11 August and opened by Pat Corrigan – and the President recorded his thanks for the immense support of the organising committee of Nick Ingleton, Bronwyn Vost, Ronald Cardwell; his involvement as a judge for the University of Technology Sydney Library bookplate design competition for students of the University, showing that some of the entrants were able to understand the essence of a bookplate with submission of some excellent designs.



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Pen and ink design by Blake Twigden for Patrick Corrigan, 1976

Thanks as always are due to Mary Keep for her consistently wonderful design of the *Newsletter*, which continues to receive positive comments, and for designing the AGM invitation card which features four bookplates on a floral or garden theme. I would like to thank Mike Carter – always keen to contribute ideas and discussion on ways to promote the Society – for his service over many years in the role of Vice President,

and unfortunately Mike has had to step down due to illness. It is worth noting that the Society finished 2013 with 83 members of whom six had joined that year, and also that there is a clear background of interest in bookplates in the community, evinced by the appearance in various publications of 17 articles on or mentioning bookplates – one by your President published in the Print Council of Australia journal *Imprint* led to some new members. In closing the President thanked all members and office holders of the Society, and spoke his especial gratitude to Pat Corrigan and the staff at Better Read Than Dead, who provided a lovely venue and made the Society most welcome.

The Treasurer then presented his report indicating that the Society had a small surplus at the end of the year. This prompted discussion on ways in which the Society could raise further funds; the Treasurer suggested that the Society hold regular informal café meetings of members, who would each contribute ten dollars and the Society retain the amount left over after payment of the tea or coffee consumed by members – this gained general agreement from those present. After further discussion it was agreed to raise the subscription from \$30 to \$40 in 2015.

Prior to the formal election of office bearers, the President put the proposal that he take on the additional duty of Treasurer and that Ronald Cardwell take the position of Vice President (and a vote of thanks was given to Mike Carter in absentia for his contribution to the Society since its formation). Bronwyn Vost was willing to remain as Secretary. In the absence of other nominations, these positions were voted unanimously by those members present. In addition, Mary Keep and Nick Ingleton were voted onto the Committee, the former reflecting her role as Designer.

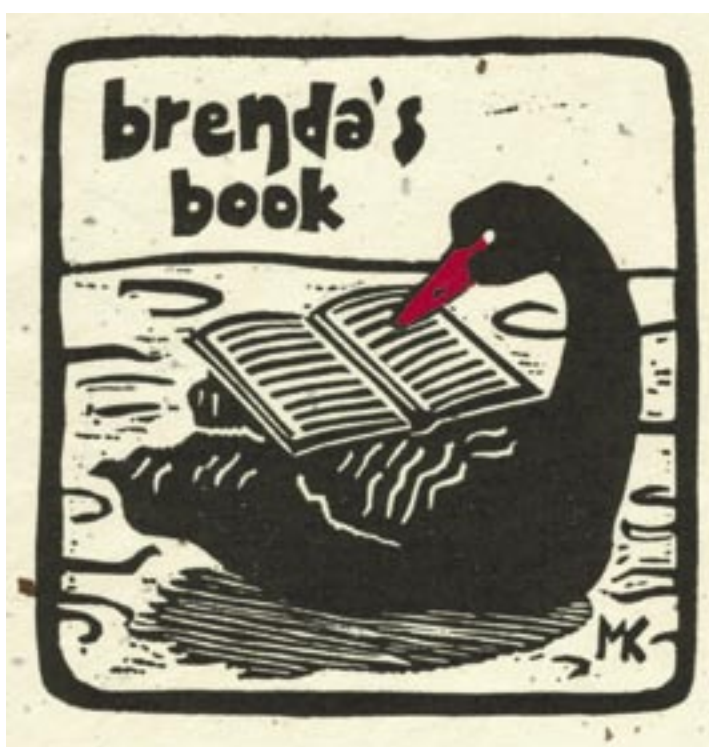
With formal business concluded, the ‘Show and Tell’ portion of the meeting begin, appropriately, with Pat Corrigan reflecting on the state of the bookselling business at the present time. Pat finished his chat and distributed to each of those present a copy of his 1976 bookplate signed by the artist Blake Twigden. This was an excellent signal for Douglas Stewart to introduce the new Douglas Stewart Fine Books publication *Bookplates for Pat Corrigan & family*, a finely printed book in an edition of 215 copies. The production of the book in the United Kingdom under the supervision of Robert Littlewood is virtually complete and it is to be launched in Melbourne on 24 July. Douglas graciously provided those present with a copy of the very handsome 4-page prospectus.

Nick Ingleton gave out examples of his beautifully designed bookplates which reflect each area within the overall Ingleton collection and place vintage illustrative elements within modern typographic settings. Brenda Heagney showed some interesting plates from her collection, including her personal linocut bookplate executed for her recently by Mary Keep; it depicts a black swan in reference to Brenda’s West Australian origins. Jean Anderson showed volumes of the *Journal of the Ex Libris Society*, dating from 1897, which had arrived that day from London, whilst Juanita Hattersley showed the engraved ex libris by O Tarrant for her great uncle, a mixed armorial and pictorial design lettered ‘Thomas Lane Mullins, Captain & Adjutant, N.S.W. Field Artillery’. Ronald Cardwell displayed the bookplate from the



Above: Printed design for the Ingleton Collection, 2014

Below: Linocut by Mary Keep for Brenda Heagney, 2014



Oakleigh Mechanics Library, an example of a typographic plate used by libraries in the nineteenth century; whilst in the final presentation Pamela Horsnell spoke about her friend and new member Zora Ragulic setting up her own letterpress facility, Flying Wolf Press, the logo of which Pamela had designed, and it was intimated that Zora was hoping to execute some bookplates in the near future.

## XXXV International Congress of Ex Librist, Catalonia

By Andrew Peake, Adelaide

The 35th FISAE Congress got off to a good start on 22 April at the Mediterranean sea-side resort of La Pineda Beach, Vila-seca, Spain, which is located a few kilometres from Tarragona, in turn located about 100 kilometres to the west of Barcelona. There were about 214 delegates, from 23 countries, with good representation from continental Europe, the Far East (China and Japan), the United States and a sprinkling of people from the southern hemisphere, Australia (one – me) and Argentina. Lack of representatives from England were noticeable, even though it is understood that they are interested in hosting the 2020 Congress.

It is probably of some interest to know the names of those from the English speaking world: Bill Butler and his wife Mariann (New York, USA); James Keenan (Mexico/Arizona, USA); JoAnn Pari Mueller and her husband Dan (Oregon, USA); Henry Klein and his wife Lyn (California, USA); Andrew Peake (Australia); and Tatiana Koopman and her husband Mihael (Canada).

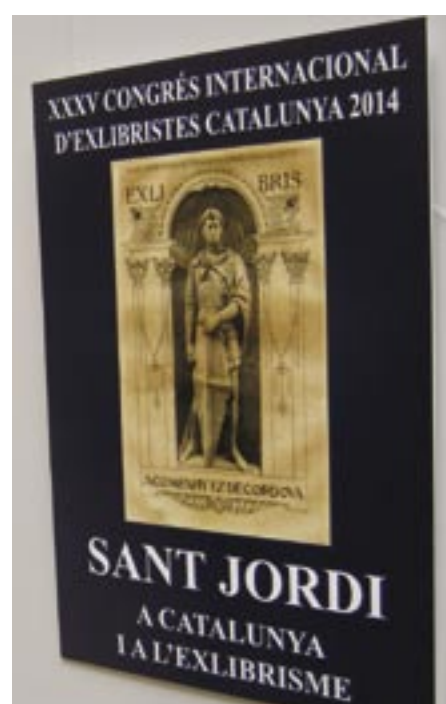
The Congress was held in a seaside resort catering for tourists interested in this type of holiday, with indoor and outdoor swimming pools, gymnasiums and all manner of social entertainment. Most, if not all attendees, resided at the resort complex, which provided full board, with buffet meals complete with complimentary wine at lunch and dinner. The food and wine were both great and being able to have a meal with other Congress delegates added to the conviviality of the occasion.



The Author beside the Congress poster  
Right: Poster for the St Jord (St George) Exhibition at Tarragona

The organisers, the Associació Catalana d'Exlibristes, delivered a full program, with a series of lectures, generally presented in both Spanish and English, as well as excursions to Tarragona, Barcelona, the Monastery of Poblet and Reus, so that there was some interest for the spouse accompanying the bookplate aficionado. The primary feature of the Exchange Hall was buzzing with activity from shortly after breakfast till the end of the day.

This was the first Congress that I have attended where there were a significant number of lectures. All fairly short and with only a small audience, but excellently presented. Topics included, 'Exlibrism and literature in Argentina', 'Presentation of the book, *Oriol Maria Divi*', and 'The action and communication of colour in ex-libris'. A number of exhibitions were held associated with the Congress. The main exhibition, displayed at the Port of Tarragona Museum, was based around the 1153 bookplates submitted by 365 artists for the competition which is always held at each Congress for designs executed since the previous Congress. Six prizes were awarded, 12 plates received special mention and 109 plates were selected for display. It was interesting to note, however, that none of the winning plates or those selected for display were in the form of 'computer guided design', a reflection of the continuing elitism of plates



using one of the intaglio techniques, such as etching and engraving. Other exhibitions associated with the Congress were on the theme of St George (and the dragon), the patron saint of Catalonia, and on bookplates in the medium of xylography (wood-cut). The only problem with the exhibitions was that they were all held in Tarragona, and while a bus trip was organised to visit the city, it was not possible to re-inspect the exhibition at another time. However, comprehensive printed guides were produced on the exhibitions.

The Exhibition Hall was crowded on all days and there was a continuing exchange of bookplates and also the opportunity to meet artists and, if desired, to commission

a bookplate. For those interested, the going rate was about 500 euros for an edition of 50 plates produced by an intaglio process.

At each Congress there is always a meeting of FISAE member societies to discuss bookplate issues and to also confirm the location of the two following congresses. For those interested, the 2016 Congress will take place in Vologda, Russia, between 22-27 August. Vologda is a smallish city between Moscow and St Petersburg, and the only difficulty is that it is not served by air and so it is necessary to take an overnight train from either of the two large cities. The 2018 Congress will be held in late summer or early autumn on dates yet to be decided in Prague, Czech Republic. Thereafter the congress venue is uncertain, but the Bookplate Society (UK) is negotiating to hold the 2020 Congress in England (even though the English seem rarely to attend the congresses!) and Turkey is also interested in 2020 (although the 2010 Congress was held in Istanbul), and the American Society of Bookplate Collectors & Designers expressed interest in holding the Congress in San Francisco in 2022 (the centenary of the founding of ASBCD).

All in all, the Tarragona Congress was well organised and the venue was excellent, with a good range of lectures and social activities, such as tours to neighbouring historic sites and cities. The only criticism has been the lack of a list of delegates, which previous organisers have been able to provide with the use of computer technology. [A listing in spreadsheet format is now available on the website – *Ed*]

For those interested in bookplates, think about attending the Vologda and Prague congresses. The Prague congress in particular is likely to be very popular, with easy access and the likelihood of a range of associated tours.

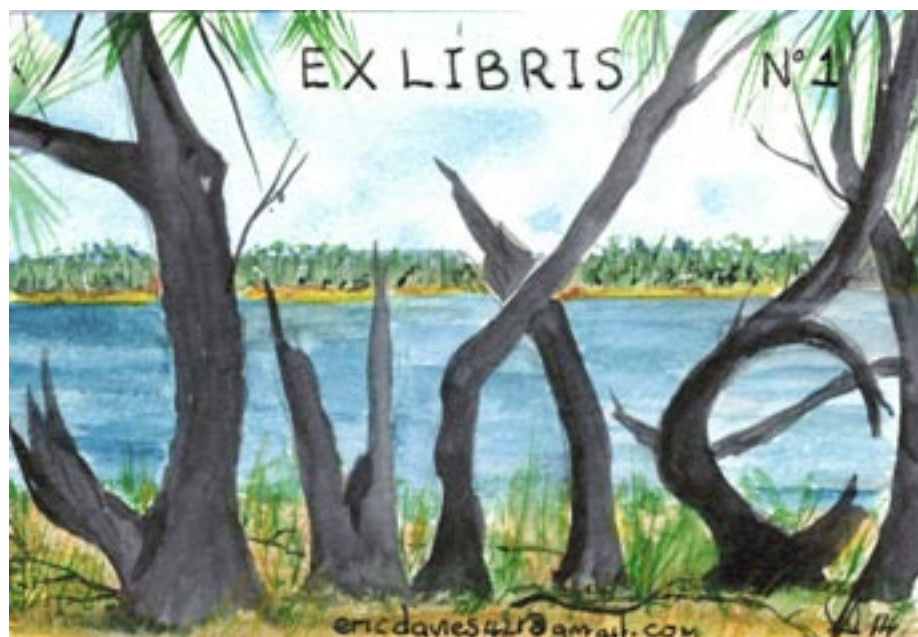
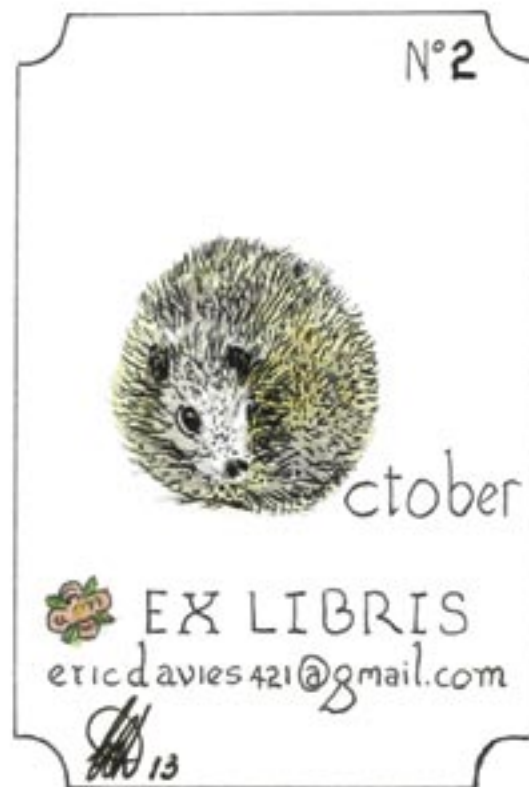
Hand drawn and painted bookplates by Eric Davies for October and December 2013 and June 2014

## Bookplates and my interest in them

Eric Davies, Ulladulla, NSW

I am not a collector of bookplates, even though I have quite a few in the books that have found their way into my studio. I do like to find a plate in a book, or even writing, as I think it adds to the history or journey, or what collectors call provenance. But what I do like about bookplates is to make them.

I have made many bookplates over the years in many mediums, as I have been honing my art skills in journal making and book arts. A couple of years ago I escaped from the city to the coast, where I met printmaker Malcolm Fellows. Malcolm was running a course on etching, and the subject was making a bookplate. I thought it would be good to do a



bit more etching and joined the course as I don't have etching equipment and I would meet like-minded people. It turned out that Malcolm and I have similar interests, so after the course finished we arranged to meet once a week to go out sketching, or if wet, to print at his place or do lino-printing and bookbinding at my studio. Malcolm encouraged me to join the Society and put some plates in for exhibition, as I don't exhibit much now.

I do like to keep my skills up and in August 2013 I started a project to make a bookplate for each month of the year. The inspiration for these has been from my daily nature walks. I would make each in a limited edition of eight. As the project gathered momentum I thought about what I would like to do with the plates. As a reader of books I like to browse at book fairs, garage sales and op shops. I like to think that the books find me, and what better, than when I have finished with them, but to repair them and put them back into circulation with a limited edition bookplate and make them into collectibles. I would give them to friends or leave them on shelves where there are free book exchanges.

I have started making an artist's book based on all the plates and it will include the thought and inspiration behind each plate. I hope to have the artist's book finished by the end of the year.

[Eric has very generously sent me a copy of his latest, beautifully hand-painted bookplate each month and it is such a treat to receive them; we reproduce some examples, all showing his love of the natural world – Ed]

## Characters in Australian bookplate history: William Moore

Mark J Ferson, Sydney

William Moore (1868-1937), after a somewhat peripatetic actor's life in England and the United States, settled in Sydney in 1919 having been attracted there by the activities of Sydney Ure Smith and *Art in Australia*. He was present at the exhibition devoted to bookplates which opened at



C Web Gilbert completing sculpture of William Moore, 1905-06

Tyrrell's Galleries on 18 May 1923 and expressed the hope in a notice published a few days later in the *Daily Telegraph* that the interest which the exhibition had aroused and the appearance of a number of foreign bookplate societies would quickly lead to the formation of a bookplate society in Sydney. Moore was present at the meeting held in Tyrrell's on 14 June to form the Australian Ex Libris Society, but never joined (although he did join the New Zealand Ex Libris Society). He marked the Society's foundation with an article 'Charm of the bookplate' in the August 1923 number of *Art in Australia* which concludes on a prophetic note: 'There is no reason why the bookplate should not become a vogue in Australia'.

Through his art columns in Sydney's *Daily Telegraph* (to which post he been recommended by Julian Ashton) and the *Brisbane Courier*, he played an important role in drawing to the attention of members of the public the activities of the Society and of Australian and New Zealand bookplate designers. On nine occasions Moore wrote about bookplates in his columns 'Gallery & studio' and 'The art world' in issues of the *Daily Telegraph* published between June 1923 and November 1925. His references are mainly to the Society

and its annual reports, but also to the bookplates of W S Percy, Raphael Clint, Lionel Lindsay and to Australian designs in international publications. Moore left the *Telegraph* in 1926 and transplanted his column, renamed 'Art and artists', to the *Brisbane Courier* where it appeared up to August 1933. During this time, bookplates and bookplate artists are mentioned on 11 occasions, again covering references to the Australian Ex Libris Society, to New Zealand artist Hilda Wiseman and the formation of the New Zealand Ex Libris Society, to George Perrottet and to the New South Wales Bookplate Club and its international competition. The Australian Ex Libris Society committee considered that these articles were having some impact on public interest in bookplates, as the minutes of the meeting of April 1927 record that a Moore article in the *Brisbane Courier* had led to two and possible three new members from Brisbane. It is likely that there are other mentions of bookplates in Moore's newspaper columns which the writer is unaware of due to the lack of a specific sub-heading related to bookplates or bookplate artists.

In addition to his newspaper criticism, Moore contributed articles on the topic to F W Preece & Sons' short-lived literary



Wood engraving by Adrian Feint for Barbara Rixson, 1930

magazine *Desiderata*, in which he reviewed seven years' achievements of the society. Perhaps most importantly, in view of the longevity and seminal role of the work in Australian art historiography, *The story of Australian art* devotes a number of paragraphs to bookplates in both volumes and includes a reproduction of Feint's one hundredth bookplate, that for Barbara Rixson. Moore did not confine his promotion of bookplates to his writings, but also undertook this work in person. In the society's report for 1928, honorary secretary P Neville Barnett states:

*Ex Libris were brought before the public in various ways, and we note, that there is a projected exhibition to take place a little later on in New Zealand. This is a direct result of the advocacy of Mr William Moore, while touring the Dominion recently, when he set himself actively to stimulate interest in ex libris there.*

It is reported that his collection of bookplates, 'rediscovered by his widow in cartons under a bed' was dispersed at a Geoff K Gray Pty Ltd auction in Sydney in 1982. After a 15-year search, I recently located among the collections of the National Library of Australia the catalogue of this auction 'Rare books and manuscripts to be held ... on Tuesday, 29th June 1982'. Unfortunately, no bookplates are recorded in Moore's name, his widow Dora Wilcox had died in 1953, and although the catalogue lists full sets of Australian Ex Libris Society annual reports and Barnett's bookplate books, it mentions neither Moore nor his cartons of bookplates.

References are available from the author.

## Editorial

The Society year is more than half over, and we have held a unique and successful Annual General Meeting, which has made the front page of the *Newsletter*, if not that of other journals of record. The Meeting was marked by the generosity of those offering the venue as well as of those members who handed out delightful mementoes during the accompanying 'Show and Tell' session. To go a slight way to making up the loss for members unable to get there I have enclosed a copy with the *Newsletter* of one of my father's bookplates, designed in the 1970s by George and Lotte Galewski of G+L Studio, Sydney. This issue also brings attention to international bookplate events with Andrew Peake's report of the 35th FISAE Congress held in Tarragona, Spain in April. From Andrew's report it feels like it was an excellent balance of good bookplates, good company, good location and good food, and gives me a real appetite to attend the Congress in future!

A unique contribution to the present issue is Eric Davies' description of his bookplate design project, in which for two years he drew or painted a bookplate in a very small edition each month, inspired by his experiences on his nature walks. Eric is turning the set into an artist's book, and that is something I hope Eric will be able to display one day at a Society 'show and tell'. The last article, a further instalment in the series 'Characters in Australian bookplate history', focuses on art historian William Moore, who through his art column in various newspapers did great work in promoting awareness of bookplates in the Australian public. If you are wondering about the bookplate in the front page mast head, it is for renowned Australian baritone Robert Allman OBE AM (1927-20013) recently picked up at, appropriately, the Fine Music Book Fair, and found in B Harding, *Magic fire: the story of Wagner's life and music* (Harrap, 1954).

MF

Any bookplate designer wishing to be the subject of a Designer profile or to have work reproduced in the *Newsletter* should contact the Editor on 02 9428 2863 or by email. The Society's website may be found if you go to [www.bookplatesociety.org.au](http://www.bookplatesociety.org.au)