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On the removal of bookplates from books

Bryan Welch, London

On 18 December 1897 (at a time when interest in bookplate collecting was at its height) the *New York Times* published a pungent article entitled 'Collectors who are Vandals'. The anonymous author decried those who collected bookplates taken from books and the destruction of books for their bookplates, referring to the massacre of 18th century books for their armorial bookplates. "What can be the charm of this vice?" asked the author, and "Why should any human being possessing a book that was once Washington's or Paul Revere's or Byron's deliberately separate the plate from the book, thus lessening the interest, and, we should think the value, of both?" Wilmarth Lewis, who spent a lifetime re-assembling the Strawberry Hill Library of Horace Walpole, wrote in 1958 that before 1925 Walpole's bookplate was worth half a crown to booksellers who used to soak it off books of little value and in poor condition and sell it (or stick it in another book). Any bookplate in a book identifies the previous owner, telling us something of the history of that particular book – what John Carter described as "The pedigree of a book's previous ownership". Removing the bookplate destroys this vital evidence and may reduce the value of a book; not just because of the loss of association but also because of consequent damage to the book.

That is the case *against* removing bookplates from books. The case for removal is that fine and interesting bookplates may be found in valueless books, and that the past ownership signalled by the bookplate may be by someone whose name inspires no interest in the book's pedigree. We may also be able to feel a second bookplate under the first. Clearly the older the book the more caution we should exercise before contemplating removing a bookplate. It is always wise to try and find out something

about the owner before removing the bookplate, rather than afterwards.

When I started collecting, I sought out bookplates in my library and tried to remove a number of them in order to fill up my empty album. At least one I damaged slightly and later decided that because of the interest it added to the book I had been foolish to remove it. So I stuck it back in. Both bookplate and book can be damaged by removal: some bookplates were printed on very thin paper (some by Eric Gill for example), so removal has a high risk of damaging or even destroying the bookplate. There are some glues which are resistant to removal and there are those dreadful modern self-adhesive bookplates. I have never tried removing one and wonder if it can be done. Stamp collectors may have advice on this now that self-adhesive stamps are available.

All methods I know of to remove bookplates from books use liquids which can damage the book. The end paper may become discoloured, ink inscriptions may run, the board may be warped or the facing free end paper cockled. If the bookplate is on the free end paper or inside a paperback there is a very high risk of ruining the cover or being unable to flatten out the endpaper. Finally there is often an unsightly pale mark where the bookplate was removed and sometimes a mark on the facing end paper too.

There are times however when the book appears to be of little value or is badly damaged, or an odd volume and the owner's name appears to add no lustre to the book and we decide to proceed. There are three methods which I have tried: steam from a kettle, soaking with water, or stamp lift. The first is effective but the steam will very likely ruin the cover of the book (assuming the bookplate is on the front board).

This method can certainly not be used on an end paper. In fact I do not recommend this method at all. To soak a bookplate off with water first open the book and support the board so that it is level. This stops the water running down into the gutter of the book. Cover the bookplate with absorbent kitchen paper, cut a bit larger than the bookplate. Pour water over the paper and leave it to penetrate. Use a flat blunt knife to lift the bookplate off. Be patient and careful or the bookplate will get torn. This method is slow and not always effective. The longer the wet paper is in contact with the book the more water soaks into the board with a risk of damage and warping. I used to use water before I found a product called stamp lift or stamp remover. This removes bookplates quickly with less liquid which is a great advantage. Apply the stamp lift fluid onto the bookplate neat with a small sable brush and the plate should start to come away quickly. Lift the edges up with a flat blunt knife and apply more fluid as needed on the bookplate or underneath. When you have lifted the plate off put it in a bowl of water and wipe the place where the plate was with a piece of moistened kitchen paper to remove glue residues. Dry off with another piece of kitchen paper. Then put two or three thicknesses of kitchen paper in between the board and the end paper, close the book and leave it to dry for a few days under a pile of other books. Do not close the book with the board damp or you will spoil the facing endpaper.

Rinse off the bookplate and carefully remove the remaining glue from the back of the bookplate. Pat dry on more kitchen paper. I then use a stamp drying book. This has shiny sheets to which the stamps will not stick and blotting paper to absorb the water. Put the back of the bookplate on the shiny sheet and cover with a couple of sheets of the blotting paper. Press under a weight till dry. I sometimes use an old tie press to press bookplates flat but a weight or pile of books should do. Beware if the bookplate has a plate mark as too much pressure can flatten out the plate entirely and destroy the plate mark.

Some of this advice is also relevant to pasting bookplates into books. I use a simple flour paste: boiling flour in water whilst stirring it till it makes a paste. This allows the plate to be moved into the right position before it sticks and it doesn't leave marks. Excess glue can be wiped off with a damp cloth. Don't use a glue stick as it leaves some glue round the edge which is hard to remove neatly. After pasting bookplates in with flour paste (or any other wet paste) you must leave the book open to dry or the water will go into the facing end paper and it will cockle. Using flour paste will also make it easier for a future owner of the book to remove your bookplate!



An Australian bookplate repatriated

Jeff Bidgood, Sydney

Some time ago my friend Bryan Welch sent me an e-mail asking would I like an Australian bookplate for "Kathrine (sic) Shaw of Wooriwyrite" and, as a collector of such, I naturally said "yes". The name Wooriwyrite was unknown to me, so I set out to find out more about the person and the town. My search has turned up many enigmas and has turned out to be an interesting story. The bookplate is one that had previously been unknown, as far as I can ascertain, to Australian collectors.

It is contained in Cassell's National Library edition (1905) of *The battle of the books and other short stories* by Dean Swift.

As you can see from the illustration below left, the plate depicts two books, a lamp, something joining the book to the lamp and the quotation "The Book is the Soul of the Author". The first mystery is the quotation which seems to be one of Kathrine's own as I can find no other source for it. Bryan felt that it might be "not the obvious riposte as some authors have many souls!" One of the books may be Don Quixote as a D and a QU are visible. A second puzzle is the hooked object joining the lamp and the book. It certainly does not appear to be used or have been used in the wool industry. But more of that later.

Who was the artist? Without too much imagination one can see an 'L' in the scroll around the name and, as an Australian, one would hope it to be a member of the Lindsay family, but it is not in the style of any of them. There does not appear to be any other clue to its artist. [Or it may be a 'C' – does any reader know? – Ed]

Kathrine Shaw was, I believe, Katherine Shaw the granddaughter of Yorkshireman Thomas Shaw senior, a wool expert. In 1843 he came to Australia with his son, Thomas junior, at the request of Robert Campbell & Co. of Sydney as their wool was not bringing the expected prices. He started work at the Campbell property, Duntroon, now the site of the Australian Royal Military College, examining sheep breeding practices and the environmental conditions of sheep rearing. Both then spent some years in the Victorian Western District, where Thomas junior bought Wooriwyrite in 1854 in partnership with Thomas Anderson. Unfortunately, or not, depending how you see it, Anderson was killed in a riding accident also in 1854. Anderson's wife died in 1855 and the property defaulted to Thomas junior.

Wooriwyrite is therefore not a town but the name of, what was, when the Shaw family was in occupation, a pastoral holding of some 30,300 acres occupied as a sheep station. The property lies near Darlington west of Geelong, which in the 1850s was

the main port in Victoria probably due to its proximity to the gold diggings. In those days it was three weeks' travel by bullock cart, three days by dog trap and two on horseback. Now the property is still occupied but not by the Shaws, and it is two hours by road from Geelong. The name itself is a derivation of the Aboriginal word, Wuuriwuuriit, meaning banksia trees and wild honeysuckle, both of which grew on the property.

Another enigma: in the Shaw family tree are two Katherines and one Catherine, but in the family writings they seem to be eclectic in the use of Cs and Ks and there are no Katherines without the "e" after the "th"! The first Katherine, in the family tree I have seen, was Thomas Shaw junior's wife in the years 1854–88 which would seem too early for the bookplate. The second, Catherine (1862–1946), I think, by elimination was the owner of the plate. The third Katherine was the third child of Catherine's brother, Thomas, who married in 1888. I would therefore, as his third child, place her birth date around 1893. She married, I would assume, somewhere around 1914 or earlier and then ceased to be a Shaw. Ladies on pastoral properties, in the main, were dependant on other pastoralists' children as partners and it was quite typical for them to marry early. The second Catherine, the Kathrine of the bookplate I suspect, as did some of her other sisters, left Wooriwyrite after her father's death in 1907 and settled in Dorset. There she apparently held open house for Australians in England. It could also explain how Bryan came to find the book in the bargain basement of Any Amount of Books in Charing Cross Road, London.

Returning now to Thomas senior who was an inveterate writer of pamphlets and letters to the papers extolling the need for an Australian Merino which would not only provide a large fleece but would also be able to survive the dry areas of Victoria and southern New South Wales. Thomas senior is credited by J L Currie, a local pastoralist with whom he worked, as having created what was to become the "Australian Merino Sheep" also known as Peppin sheep. (It is

called Peppin as it was developed further on the property of George and Fred Peppin.) This was achieved in conjunction with Jonathon Shaw, Thomas senior's second son, who also followed his father's calling. The wool from this strain was the backbone of the Australian wool industry for many years.

Sometime around 1860, Thomas Shaw senior, apparently feeling he had done his bit in Victoria, drifted off to New South Wales and Queensland. In 1862 there was a pamphlet published entitled *Sheep breeding and wool growing* which gave his address as Darling Downs (in Queensland). But, after that, there is nothing known of Thomas senior. Herein lies the final enigma: this person, who did so much for the industry on which Australia rode "on the sheep's back" has no known date of death or final resting place!

By the 1890s when "our" Katherine Shaw still lived on the property, Wooriwyrite had prospered – it featured its own croquet lawn, tennis court and a nine-hole golf course in the back paddock. It must have been some golf course as in 1899 Agnes, Thomas junior's youngest daughter and Katherine's sister, became Amateur Lady Golf Champion of Australia.

So, while my search led me to uncover the bookplate's owner and her family history, I am none the wiser as to the name or purpose of the object that joins the book and the lamp. Nor do we know why she may have created or chosen the quotation for her bookplate. Nevertheless, thank you Bryan for the bookplate and this interesting look into an area of our history that I knew little about.

References

- Australian Dictionary of Biography – Online Edition, Thomas Shaw snr (?1800-?1865) <http://adbonline.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020396b.htm> and Thomas Shaw jnr (1827-1907) <http://adbonline.anu.edu.au/biogs/A060125b.htm>
- Mary Taylor Shaw, *On Mount Emu Creek*, Robertson & Mullens, Melbourne, 1969
- G Day and J Jessup (eds), *The history of the Australian merino*, Heinemann, Melbourne, 1984

The bookplate collection in the University of Western Australia Art Collection at the Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery

Sally Quin, University of Western Australia

A collection of 1220 bookplates by Australian artists was donated to the University of Western Australia's Art Collection in 2000 by the late Jeremy De Rozario. The works were produced between 1892 and 1984 with a major focus on examples from the revival of relief printing in Australia in the 1930s. The collection includes bookplates which can be identified broadly as heraldic, calligraphic or pictorial. Most works appear to be privately commissioned but the collection also encompasses a series of bookplates produced for schools, libraries, universities and also armorial crest and ecclesiastical bookplates.

Significant works from the nineteenth century include Percy Spence's 'Library Interior' commissioned by John Lane Mullins in 1892 and Tom Roberts's plate for Barbara Lane Mullins, a process bookplate from a pen drawing which depicts a woman in oriental costume reading a book. There are particularly excellent representations by artists Eric Thake, Adrian Feint, George D



Wood-engraved design by Lionel Lindsay for Hans Heysen, 1923

Perrottet, and Norman and Lionel Lindsay. Eric Thake is represented by 27 bookplates which demonstrate his interest in modernist design. There are 93 works by Adrian Feint in the collection including a 1927 bookplate for Dorothea Mackellar from 1927 and for HRH Edward Prince of Wales from 1934. From the 1930s and 1940s there are examples of the work of George D Perrottet including Japanese-inspired linocuts together with bold modernist designs. From Lionel Lindsay the collection holds bookplates ranging from the 1920s to the 1950s including the 'Dr Johnson' plate which Lionel Lindsay drew for Camden Morrisby and which was reproduced in *The Studio*. There is a particularly charming plate by Lindsay for Hans Heysen which depicts his name engraved into a tree characteristic of Heysen's painting style. A number of bookplates by Norman Lindsay recall characters from the *Magic Pudding* and date from the late 1890s to the late 1940s. Other artists well represented in the collection include P Neville Barnett, L Roy Davies, Ella Dwyer, William Hunter, Allan Jordan, Philip M Litchfield, Eirene Mort, Pixie O'Harris, and G Gayfield Shaw.

Further information on the collection can be obtained from Sally Quin, Curator, Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, at sally.quin@uwa.edu.au or by phone on 08 6488 7095. The earliest acquisitions for the Art Collection were made in the late 1920s, and it has since become a nationally significant collection of Australian modern and contemporary art. For further details of the Gallery and Collection see www.lwgallery.uwa.edu.au

Designer profile

No. 5: Jennifer Rogers

During March we received an enquiry from someone who had seen the Society's website and expressed interest in joining. This someone turned out to be Melbourne printmaker Jennifer Rogers who had visited the State Library of Queensland bookplate exhibition and was inspired to turn her hand

to bookplate design, using the technique of wood engraving.

Jennifer studied Printed Textile Design at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology followed by later studies in Education and Printmaking at Queensland University of Technology. After a few years as a freelance textile designer she began teaching in secondary schools in Victoria and Queensland, where she was Head of Art at Loreto College, Brisbane.

In Germany, where she and her family lived and worked for two years, her interest in relief printmaking was stimulated by the close proximity to the many famous woodcut artists, from Albrecht Dürer to the German Expressionists Ernst Kirschner and Erich Heckel. She pursued her own art practice in printmaking and has exhibited regularly in group and solo exhibitions since 1981, mostly in Brisbane. More recently, she has been refining her wood engraving at the Australian Print Workshop and Gallery in Fitzroy, Melbourne, where she presently exhibits. She also shows with the Society of Wood Engravers in the UK.

When I probed the origin of her more recent interests, Jennifer provided a few clues as to the sources of her interest in wood engraving and bookplates:



Linocut bookplate by Ron Lilburne, late 40s to early 50s

I was introduced to bookplates by my father, Ron Lilburne, whose bookplate I remember admiring because of the likeness to him and I remember him explaining the term ex libris. As my father died in 1962, I never had the chance to have adult conversations with him, so I am unsure when he made the bookplate. He began his studies in painting at the National Gallery School in Melbourne shortly after the war. As far as I know, the school did not have printmaking facilities so I assume the most likely printmaking influence was his very active membership of the Victorian Artists' Society, where he exhibited regularly. He was on the Council there until his death. I know that the printmaker and bookplate designer Allan Jordan was a member and exhibitor there also, along with other printmakers such as Noel Counihan and Murray Griffin. The style of the plate makes me think it was done early in his career.

Although I was very familiar with the wood engravings of Lionel Lindsay and the New Zealand engraver E Mervyn Taylor, both of whom were great bookplate artists, there is a very long gap between this and my visit to the bookplate exhibition at the Queensland State Library, prompting me to look through some of my father's art books to find his bookplate. It was that exhibition which motivated me to do a couple of plates for family and friends and I have done one commissioned plate since then, through the Australian Print Workshop. The bookplate for the Japanese designer Kaoru Hiyama, who lives and works in Sydney, was a composition derived from her early career as a fibre artist, her family far away in Japan, adolescence in Canada and recent arrival in Australia.

I am delighted to find an active Bookplate Society in Australia to belong to. My interest as an artist is not only to make and collect bookplates, but I find that I am also joining a large and august band of artists who over the centuries have made exquisite miniature prints.



4/10 Jennifer Rogers '08

Wood-engraved bookplate by Jennifer Rogers for Peter Rogers, 2008



4/50 Jennifer Rogers '09

Wood-engraved bookplate by Jennifer Rogers for Kaoru Hiyama, 2009



4/10 Jennifer Rogers '09

Wood-engraved bookplate by Jennifer Rogers for herself, 2009

Bookplate stories:

Stuart Braga, Hale School, Perth and more ...

At the beginning of November 2008, peripatetic bookseller Peter Thomas, who knows of my bookplate interest, offered me a book with a bookplate in it and included as an extra a bookplate for Stuart Braga, with a tantalising note “Stuart Braga is an historian and writer and was headmaster Trinity College, Sydney.” Naturally I made a further enquiry of Peter who replied to say that Mr Braga had been his history teacher in the 1960s, and provided an email address. Stuart’s story was that his bookplate was based on a block of the Sydney University clock tower, borrowed from the Inter-Varsity Fellowship of Australia with which he had been associated some 45 years earlier. Stuart took up the story:

The block had been used on the Fellowship’s letterhead, and caught

my fancy as I did my first degree at the University of Sydney, finishing in 1960. The block was heavily worn and had possibly been used since the early 1930s, when Sydney was the only university in New South Wales. If you look closely, you will see that there are palm trees in front of the clock tower. I would think they were removed many years ago.

I went to teach in Western Australia the next year, and if memory serves me right, I borrowed that block in my last year at Sydney University. I went to a printer and had the bookplate run off. A later printing, c. 1969, was on much better paper. While I was at Hale School, Perth, I had a bookplate designed for the library there. It was quite small, diamond-shaped, and was designed by the school architect who did a lovely job on it. I think I have a copy somewhere, and will

send it to you if it turns up. It was placed in all books in the school library between 1961 and 1962. I returned to Sydney in 1963 to teach at Barker College.

In one of those coincidences which seem to occur in collecting, a few days later and completely out of the blue I received a letter from Perth member Peter Schoch, enclosing two local bookplates. They included one for Hale School – but not the one referred to by

Ex Libris



Stuart Braga

Photomechanical design for Stuart Braga, 1960

Stuart Braga. Stuart recognised the school crest and motto 'Duty' and the signal flags with Admiral Nelson's message before the Battle of Trafalgar, 'England expects that every man with do his duty'. The school was founded in 1858 as the Bishop's Collegiate School by Dr Matthew Blagden Hale, first Anglican bishop of Perth. The name was changed in 1929 to Hale School, see www.hale.wa.edu.au/Welcome/Our%20History/Pages/default.aspx

Through the good offices of the Hale School librarian, Robin Wake, and archivist Bill Edgar, a copy of the bookplate commissioned by Stuart Braga from architect Tony Brand recently came to light. When I sent Stuart a scan of the design asking if it was the one in question, he responded:

Seeing it again brought memories flooding back. I must say that I like it better now than I did then, when it seemed to be too crowded. The symbolism is obvious enough, except for the Tuart Gum leaves set in a geometric pattern around the school's crest. I think I mentioned that it was designed by the architect of the new school buildings which opened in January 1961 at Wembley Downs.

Stuart has sent me another bookplate with a family link, and has promised a further design associated with his book *Kokoda commander* (Oxford University Press, 2004). These stories shall have to await a future *Newsletter* issue.

Australian bookplate bibliography, 2008

Mark Ferson, Lane Cove

After much activity in 2007 in the publication of articles, notes and other references to bookplates, 2008 was considerably quieter. There may have been some works published which were missed by your Editor and his scouts, so please send me an email or give me a call if you are aware of any recent published material.

- 1 **CONTRIBUTORS, The.** The Sydney Show & Tell meeting held on 1 December 2007. *Bibliotrends and Australian Notes & Queries*, no. 357, Mar. 2008, pp9-10

Notes Mark Ferson's words describing the ground-breaking books on bookplate subjects by Robert C Littlewood; also the relationship between the Australian Bookplate Society and the New Australian Bookplate Society.

- 2 **[KARMEL, Joanna (ed.)]** Little treasures – Bookplates. National Library of Australia, Canberra, 2008

Concertina fold booklet with 15 designs from the Library's collections reproduced, by P Chapman, J Coburn, A Feint, K Jack, A Jordan, L Lindsay, N Lindsay, E Mort, P O'Harris, GD Perrottet, G Shaw, E Thake and B Whiteley. Reviewed in *Newsletter* 12.

- 3 **STUBBS, Jenny and Michelle WITHEYMAN-CRUMP (eds).** Ex libris bookplates, in *Fuel your mind: Children's Book Week 2008*. Ipswich District Teacher-Librarian Network, Ipswich (Qld), 2008, pp12-13

Among ways of interesting children in reading, this section inspired by the bookplate exhibition at the State Library of Queensland October 2007 to January 2008.

Notes and happenings

First known bookplate

Peter Tinslay has sent me the link to an on-line article depicting the first known bookplate, a hand-coloured woodcut placed by Brother Hildebrand Brandenburg sometime in the 1470s in books he donated to his Carthusian monastery at Buxheim. One volume in this collection eventually found



EX LIBRIS



Design for Hale School, Perth

Design by Tony Brand for Hale School, 1961

its way into the Robert D Farber University Archives & Special Collections at Brandeis University, Massachusetts, USA.

For a beautiful description of the plate and its role in identifying the provenance of an important medieval manuscript see – brandeisspecialcollections.blogspot.com/2009/04/first-bookplate.html



First known bookplate, hand-coloured woodcut for Hildebrand Brandenburg, Germany, c. 1470s

Eric Thake in the State Library of Victoria

One of Jurgen Wegner's regular email notices on all topics bibliographical directed me to the web pages of the State Library of Victoria, where I stumbled across the site comprising 'A place called Victoria', subtitled 'People, places and events seen



Linocut design by Eric Thake for BR Richardson, 1930

through the collections of the State Library of Victoria'. Artist Eric Thake is featured with 30 of his bookplates, together with a short description of each, reproduced at victoria.slv.vic.gov.au/ericthake/artofbook/bookplates/bp.html

Adrian Feint exhibitions, Sydney and Adelaide

The owners of the **Artarmon Galleries**, Sydney (479 Pacific Highway, Artarmon, tel: 02 9427 0322) have unearthed a number of sketches and fully formed works by Adrian Feint (1894-1971), a result of the long association between the gallery's founder John Brackenreg and the artist. According to Philip Brackenreg, the exhibition, which opened on 20 May, is evolving and it is planned to put prints and photographs on display later in the exhibition.

The preview booklet from the auctioneers Bonhams and Goodmans included a notice of an Adrian Feint exhibition, to be held from 1 August to 1 November at **Carrick Hill Estate**, Adelaide (46 Carrick Hill Drive, Springfield, SA, Tel: 08 8433 1700). The estate was established by Sir Edward and Lady Ursula Hayward, who built up its art collections over three decades from the late



Wood engraving by A Feint for Christine McGregor, 1937

1930s, including the purchase of historical and contemporary Australian works. Feint was one of the artists befriended by the Haywards, and this exhibition will focus on his landscapes and floral still life paintings and additionally will make reference to his work as a designer and printmaker. Director Richard Heathcote intends to include 50 of Feint's bookplates in the exhibition, including the colour wood engravings executed in 1937 for Lady Hayward (see below) and for her mother and sisters.

Recent publications on bookplates

Fletcher, Brian H. *Magnificent obsession: the story of the Mitchell Library, Sydney*. Allen & Unwin, State Library of NSW, Sydney, 2007 p[ix]

As with all the recent outpourings related to the centenary of the Mitchell Library, the armorial bookplate of D S Mitchell with motto 'Eureka' is reproduced.

Ives, Alan. Robert Thornton Turnbull; his bookplate by D H Souter. *Margin*, no. 77, April 2009, pp39-40

Margaret Hetherington kindly rang me to ask whether I was aware of this newly published bookplate item, which has interesting notes on the provenance of a book picked up at Lifeline Canberra's



Wood engraving by A Feint for Ursula Hayward, 1937

50th book fair. Editor and publisher Victor Crittenden informs me that further notes of this type are likely to appear in future issues of *Margin*.

Forthcoming books on bookplates

Biographical journeys: 100 favourite bookplates, by Ian Thwaites. A limited edition of 100 copies has been printed by John Denny of the Puriri Press, Auckland, for publication by subscription. As there will only be a small number of unsubscribed copies available, those wishing to obtain a

copy should contact Ian at igt@extra.co.nz or by post at PO Box 56541, Dominion Road, Auckland 1446, NZ as a matter of urgency.

Jeff Bidgood has in preparation a small book entitled *Mark Ferson: bookplate artist* for publication later in 2009 by the Book Collectors' Society of Australia. This will be number 7 in the series *Studies in Australian Bibliophily*. A publication date has not been set yet, but those interested in securing a copy should, in the first instance, contact Jeff by email on bidgood@bigpond.net.au

A calligrapher's bookplates

Erstwhile member Geoff Ford kindly left with me some time ago some examples of his calligraphic bookplates, which I have neglected to bring to the earlier notice of readers. I am now correcting this oversight with some examples of Geoff's work. Geoff, a Sydneysider, reports that he was very involved in calligraphy design and teaching during the 1980s and 90s, and was also much interested in heraldry, in which fields he amassed the necessary collection of volumes of reference. He has been an active member

of the UK Society of Heraldic Arts and of the Australian Society of Calligraphers. During the early years of the 21st century he became a watercolour painter and consequently built up a library in that subject.

Between 1986 and 2007, Geoff had designed six bookplates for his various books with themes of calligraphy, heraldry, genealogy, art and life; most had calligraphic lettering and some a pictorial element as well. We show two examples of his very original work.



Above: Calligraphic design by Geoff Ford for himself, 1986

Right: Design for his own use by Geoff Ford based on a watercolour, 2007



Editorial

For those readers who begin on the back page, welcome to the 13th edition of the *Newsletter*, containing what I hope is a more than interesting range of articles and notes. Bryan Welch, who has become such a frequent contributor as to warrant honorary appointment as 'our London correspondent', has provided advice, at once both thoughtful and practical, on reasons for and means of safely removing bookplates from books. I do not think that the suggestions have exhausted the topic and would be pleased to hear other tips on removing bookplates, as well as any comments on the 'ethics' of this practice. Jeff Bidgood provides an interesting story in unravelling only some of the puzzles associated with a rare Australian bookplate, sent to him in the first place by Bryan after its discovery in a Charing Cross Road bookshop. We continue our series on Australian bookplate collections with a description of the collection in the University of Western Australia, kindly provided by curator Sally Quin. After a lapse, we return with a new 'Designer profile', this time of new member Jennifer Rogers, who makes beautiful wood-engraved bookplates. I hope that you also enjoy the first foray into an occasional series 'Bookplate stories' which emphasises yet again how bookplates are about people – owners, artists, friends and lovers. And even if the designs themselves are not always superlative, the stories they hold are personal and of abiding human interest. Because I have spent many late nights at work in the past 2 months working on the public health response to human swine influenza, I thought it not inappropriate to include a porcine-themed bookplate on our front page, courtesy of owner Brenda Heagney. So, if you can forgive me for further crossing my work-leisure boundary, I close by encouraging you to wash your hands and cover your coughs to keep healthy this winter.

MF