Limited Editions Club History

The Limited Editions Club, one of the major fine press/publishing houses, was established in 1929 by George Macy (1900-1956). It employed nearly all the well-known book illustrators worldwide and even some famous artists not known for book illustration. The book designers and fine printers who created the Limited Editions Club books...

Story continues on page 6

Standing Boys Series

Rare Books and Special Collections at NIU houses the world’s most comprehensive collection of materials by Horatio Alger, numbering over 4,000 volumes. The Horatio Alger Collection contains most of the first, hard-cover, soft-cover, and variant editions; serialized titles; manuscripts; letters; and the archives of the Horatio Alger Society. Some of these materials have been digitized and are available through our Horatio Alger Digital Repository (http://libguides.niu.edu/rarebooks/alger). ...

Story continues on page 14
Balancing the Books: NIU’s Textbook Affordability Task Force

Stoic philosopher, Epictetus, famously declared that, “Only the educated are free.” Unfortunately, that kind of freedom comes with a high price tag for twenty-first-century students—especially where textbooks are concerned. The College Board reports that American college students were confronted with an 82 percent increase in textbook costs between 2002 and 2013, and that is in addition to a steady rise in the expenses associated with tuition, fees, and room and board. With these kinds of economic pressures, it is not very surprising that greater numbers of students are struggling to make ends meet—even though many work and take out school loans. More and more students are feeling they have little choice but to skip buying their required textbooks—a decision that puts their academic success in serious jeopardy.

Founders Memorial Library is at the heart of campus and at the center of the issue of textbook affordability. In Fall 2017, Dean Fred Barnhart of NIU Libraries formed the Textbook Affordability Task Force and tasked it with educating the campus community about strategies for combatting this astonishing increase in the cost of textbooks and expanding access to required course materials by boosting the number of items placed on reserve at Founders.

Since its creation, the Textbook Affordability Task Force has accomplished a great deal—creating a research guide which points faculty and students to library resources, textbook alternatives, and open educational resources (OERs); working with other groups across campus who are committed to the issue of textbook affordability in order to find new ideas to tackle the problem; and developing a pilot program which purchases high cost textbooks for high enrollment classes and places them on two-hour reserve within the library.

The Reserve Pilot Program selected texts based on faculty recommendations and input from both the NIU and Village Commons Bookstores. In total, the Task Force purchased 33 textbooks or other required materials for classes from 14 different departments/programs in 5 different Colleges for use in Spring 2018. Thanks to continued funding from NIU Libraries and a donation from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the pilot program is continuing this term—we are currently taking textbook purchase recommendations for Fall 2018 courses.

The campus community has shown a commitment to getting much-needed texts into more student hands, not only making use of the Pilot Program and research guide, but by providing desk copies to be placed on print reserve and putting readings on electronic reserves. At the end of week five, Reserves reported a 192 percent increase in the number of items placed on print reserve—as well as an increase in the number of departments and programs represented. In addition, faculty and instructors are also starting to explore the next important step on the journey toward textbook affordability: open educational resources (OERs). NIU Libraries has hosted a series of workshops to help faculty learn more about the OERs and the Open Textbook Network (OTN)—an alliance of academic institutions dedicated to expanding the use of open textbooks in higher education—and to encourage faculty to create their own free and downloadable course materials.

The Textbook Affordability Task Force was created to make an immediate impact on student access to required course materials. The greatest mark of its success is how we have expanded the conversation about textbook affordability—encouraging faculty, staff, and students to find creative solutions that promote academic growth and student achievement. Higher education may not be free for students, but textbooks could be.

Dee Anna Phares, Chair, Textbook Affordability Task Force
Thank you to our Life Members (donating $1000.00 or more)

Paul & Jean Burtness
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New Acquisitions in Rare Books and Special Collections

Through the generous support of the James B. Pick and Rosalyn M. Laudati Endowment, the University Libraries was able to purchase books for Rare Books and Special Collections (RBSC):

An exciting addition to the extensive Beadle’s dime novel collection held in RBSC is the first UK edition of *Beadle’s Sixpenny Recipe Book: and Directory for the Parlour, Nursery, Sick Room, Toilet, Kitchen, Larder, etc.* by Mrs. Metta Victoria Fuller Victor (c. 1865). Once cataloged, it will be the sole holding on this side of the pond as the only other copy on record is at Oxford. This copy is unique from our holding of *The Dime Recipe Book*, the American edition of this title first published in 1859, is because it has been retitled for a British audience and also has a wonderful illustration on the cover, which is absent from our American edition.

Metta Fuller Victor was one of Beadle’s most faithful writers composing over 100 wildly popular dime novels for the publisher. She is credited, alongside her husband Orville J. Victor, with originating the dime novel. Her foray into dime novels began in 1860 when she penned three stories: *Alice Wilde, The Raftsmen’s Daughter*, and *The Backwoods Bride*. One of her most notable dime novels is a tale about slave life entitled *Maum Guinea, and Her Plantation “Children”* (1861), which received praise for being “as absorbing as *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*” from President Abraham Lincoln.¹ Under the pseudonym Seeley Regester, Mrs. Victor wrote her most well-known work, *The Dead Letter* (1866), which according to historians bears the credit of being the first full-length detective fiction published in the U.S.

Metta Fuller Victor penned many other novels during her later years. She commanded high prices for her very popular stories, including a price of $25,000 for a group of works published in the *New York Weekly* in 1870.

Acquisition of *The Caribbean Poetry of Derek Walcott and the Art of Romare Bearden* (1983) strengthens two collection areas in RBSC: African-American literature and

The Limited Editions Club holdings within the Private Press Collection. This book had a limited run of 2000 numbered copies and is signed by both Walcott and Bearden. Our newly purchased copy also contains one of 275 original numbered lithographs by Bearden.

Derek Walcott passed away in March of last year. He retired from Boston University after two decades of teaching literature and writing. Walcott was well-known for his poetry and plays and won many literary awards including the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1992 and the T. S. Eliot Prize, Poetry Book Society (UK) in 2010. The book’s illustrator Romare Bearden is a noted African American artist whose resume includes an exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in 1971 and the National Medal of Arts which was awarded a year before his death in 1988.

Other items secured through the endowment were volumes from the Casket of Juveniles series. These acquisitions supplement the dime novel collections in RBSC, mainly the Johannis Collection that is particularly strong in Beadle & Adams publications. The series contains a collection of stories written by James O. Brayman for the Beadle’s publication Youth’s Casket which were reprinted by other publishers (an amalgamation of Phinney, Blakeman, and/or Mason). The six volume Casket of Juveniles series credits Brayman as the author since none of his short stories in Beadle’s Youth’s Casket were signed. Interestingly, Brayman was the editor of Beadle’s Youth’s Casket. Why he did not sign his own articles, as he clearly had ample opportunity to do so, remains a mystery.

Editions of the Casket of Juveniles titles are generally bound in this manner, with variation being either red or blue cloth.
Limited Editions Club History

Continued from cover

...have been referred to as “an honor roll of the elite of the fine printing world of the 20th century.”¹ The books are lovely in every respect and embody the ideals of 20th century book design. The materials used to make the books and their bindings “have a distinct flair.”² Each publication was issued in a slipcase. The LEC aimed for equally high standards when choosing texts for their books. New translations, new editions, or updates to prior versions were often commissioned. Nearly all the introductions and prefaces were provided by recognized experts in the field. The LEC did not limit its productions solely to the western classics. Important works from other cultures were also published according to the LEC’s exacting standards. The books were issued in a series consisting of twelve books with the goal to send one book a month to subscribers. Each book was issued in an edition of 1500 copies and the colophons were usually signed by the artists who did the illustrations. In some cases the artists died before the books were published and the edition was left unsigned. Over the course of its more than 80-year history the LEC produced over 600 titles. One of Macy’s greatest supporters was William Kittredge of the Lakeside Press of Chicago. The NIU Rare Books & Special Collections holds a sampling of LEC books in the Private Press Collection that represent the more than five decades of operation.

The prospectus for the Limited Editions Club was printed in 1929 by D.B. Updike at the Merrymount Press, Boston. The booklet outlines the aims and objectives of the Limited Editions Club and includes an application form at the end. The

²Ibid.
prospectus begins by summarizing the club’s goals:

“To furnish to lovers of beautiful books, unexcelled editions of their favorite works ... to place beautifully printed books in the hands of booklovers at commendably low prices ... to foster in America a high regard for perfection in bookmaking ... by publishing for its members twelve books each year, illustrated by the greatest of artists and planned by the greatest of designers ... this is the purpose of The Limited Editions Club.”

George Macy’s choice of printer for the prospectus demonstrates his commitment to excellence. He chose D.B. Updike (1860-1941) who was an eminent American printer and type historian, and owner of the Merrymount Press, which was recognized for its painstaking attention to details, even though it was not a private press. One of the two partners reviewed every sheet printed before they were delivered to the customer.

Macy effectively managed his publishing house through the perilous business climates of the Great Depression and World War II. In 1952, he became the first living publisher to have an exhibition of his books mounted by the British Museum. The first book the Limited Editions Club issued was an edition of *The Travels of Lemuel Gulliver* by Jonathan Swift (1667-1745). It was shipped to subscribers the week the New York Stock Exchange crashed in October 1929. The illustrations were created by Alexander King, and the introduction was provided by Shane Leslie, an Irish-born diplomat and writer who was a first cousin of Sir Winston Churchill. The text was printed by Norman T. A. Munder & Company of Baltimore, and it was the only book they printed for the LEC.

Other notable Limited Edition Club books held by NIU Rare Books & Special Collections include a

copy of *The Cricket on the Hearth: a fairy tale of home* by Charles Dickens (1812-1870) printed in 1933 by the Golden Cockerel Press. The Golden Cockerel Press was a private press established to produce fine books at more affordable prices so they could be acquired by a larger audience. It played a significant role in the revival of British wood-engraving. *The Poems of William Shakespeare* (1941) was designed by Bruce Rogers and signed by him. Rogers (1870-1957) was one of Americana’s most distinguished printers and typographers. *The Newcombs* by William Makespearce Thackeray (1811-1863), issued in 1954, was illustrated by Edward Adrizzone (1900-1979). Ardizzone, a noted English artist, wrote and illustrated children’s books. The NIU RBSC holds a collection devoted to him and his works. The LEC edition of *The Fortunes and Misfortunes of the Famous Moll Flanders* by Daniel DeFoe (1661?-1731), also published in 1954, contains illustrations drawn by Reginald Marsh that were colored through stencils in the studio of Martha Berrien. Given NIU’s location here in DeKalb, the LEC edition of James Fenimore Cooper’s *The Prairie* should be highlighted. The imprint reads: “Printed on the edge of the prairie at Menasha, Wisconsin for the members of the Limited Editions Club, 1940.”
Only a few days after George’s death in 1956 his wife Helen decided to run the Limited Editions Club business. She was fully capable of the task because she knew most of the people George had worked with. The two of them had held frequent social gatherings and Helen had accompanied George on many visits and trips. The Wall by John Hersey was published in 1957 during this period. It features twelve aquatints by Austrian artist William Sharp (1900-1961), who began his career by designing stained glass windows and painting murals. In 1968 George and Helen’s son Jonathan took over management of the business, but in 1971 Jonathan sold the LEC to the Communications Research Machines (CRM) Division of Boise Cascade. In October 1972 the LEC was sold to the Cardavon Press and during this period in the 1970s the quality of the LEC publications declined.

On May 3, 1978, the Limited Editions Club was purchased by Francis Decker and Paul M. Poster, both long-time members. They wanted to revive the Club and return its productions to the previous level of fine bookmaking. Their plan required money, though, and they were able to engage Sid Shiff (1924-2010) as a director and investor in the Club. Under the extraordinary direction of Shiff, a successful businessman and defender of the underdog, the Limited Editions Club was reborn. Letters from members who had unsubscribed were reviewed. Many members said they would renew their subscriptions if the LEC publications returned to their previous level of excellence. They wanted the Club to be resuscitated and to succeed in its mission to produce fine books. Gradually the Club’s focus was narrowed so the artistic quality of the books could be enhanced. The number of books produced for each series was reduced and the edition size was made smaller. More original prints were used for illustrations and the focus of the Club turned to producing livres d’artistes. From this period, the NIU Rare Books & Special Collections holds the 1980 edition of Rachel Carson’s The Sea Around Us with photographs by Alfred Eisenstaedt and the 1994 publication of Maya Angelou’s Our Grandmothers with lithographs by John Biggers. The last book published by the Limited Editions Club, but not held by NIU, was the Declaration of Independence (2010), designed by Michael and Winifred Bixler, two of America’s finest contemporary designers. What makes this title unique is that it was issued in an edition of 500 copies; instead of 1500 copies.


Mary Burns, Cataloging Librarian

The first Gulliver’s Travels illustrated for adults
Founders Memorial Library Exhibitions

Main Exhibit (Library foyer)

“Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow: The Life and Afterlife of Shakespeare’s Macbeth.” The exhibit focuses on the play and its adaptations. Fun fact: April is the month of Shakespeare’s birth (and death).

Second Floor

The Center for Women, Gender and Sexuality (CWGS) designed a two-part display: a case dedicated to the history of the Center on campus and a case honoring Women’s History Month (March). The exhibit will continue through April.

Fourth floor

Rare Books and Special Collections

“Speculative Fiction, or, Literal Narratology” showcases sci-fi titles and authors that Brian McHale will discuss in his talk on April 30th from 3-5PM in the staff lounge (lower level) of Founders Memorial Library. This exhibit is in the first hall case outside of RBSC.

“Environmental Disasters found in Rare Books and Special Collections” is in honor of Earth Day (April 22) and will feature items that are related to environmental issues and disasters that we face today. This exhibit begins in the second hall case outside of RBSC and continues in the cases located in the RBSC reading room.

Southeast Asian Collection

“Architecture in Southeast Asia” celebrates the architecture of the Southeast Asia by showcasing the main architectural styles in the region. Also featured, are photographs and plans from various famous Southeast Asian temples and places that are known for their exquisite architecture. (See page 13 of this issue for more details)

Regional History Center and University Archives

“Homecoming: 111 Years Strong” focuses on the history of homecoming at Northern and highlights items from the University Archives, including school pennants, buttons, yearbooks, photographs, football programs, sports memorabilia, and more. This exhibit is located in the reading room of the RHCUA and will be on display through mid-September.

Member Benefits:

Friends tote bags! Contact Angie Schroeder at aschroeder@niu.edu or 815-753-8091 for details.
NIU University Libraries’ Faculty in the News


Professor Ladislava Khailova, ALA Carnegie-Whitney Grant-recipient, has recently published *The Stories We Share: A Guide to PreK–12 Books on the Experience of Immigrant Children and Teens in the United States*. The book highlights titles published between 1990 and 2015 which focus on the experiences of first- and second-generation immigrant children or teens through their roles as narrator or main character.

Save These Dates for Special Events!

May 4, 2018 - Ice Cream Social in Rare Books and Special Collections (4th floor of Founders Memorial Library) from 3-5pm.

October 2018 - A series of events to celebrate the 200th Anniversary of Frankenstein; details TBD.

2018-2019 Friends of NIU Libraries Board Members and Officers

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Genoa Newspaper Digitization Project

In May of 2017 the Genoa Public Library District gave a generous donation of $10,000 to the Regional History Center for the purpose of digitizing several local newspapers. The Genoa Issue, Genoa Journal, Genoa Republican, and the Ogle County Reporter will be converted into digital formats. Upon completion of the project, the newspapers will be transferred to the Illinois Digital Newspaper Collections (IDNC) and made available on their website. The website is freely accessible to the public at [http://idnc.library.illinois.edu/](http://idnc.library.illinois.edu/).

To date the Ogle County Reporter and the Genoa Journal have been completely scanned and the Genoa Republican has several years digitized. In total, 2,288 pages have been scanned and 332 GB have been archived. The project is funded for only two years so two students have been hired in order to meet the deadline for the grant. The students have been working diligently to complete the project and were tasked with scanning, quality control, ascribing metadata, image cleanup, and generating multiple formats for distribution (i.e., preservation and access copies). There is a fair amount of work that has to be done to the papers in order for them to be digitized. The newspapers have been bound, which requires them to be remove from the binding in addition to any conservation efforts such as mending to repair tears or ironing to release heavy creases.

The dates of the newspapers range from 1854 to 2008 with the majority being from the early 1900s. The newspapers hold a wealth of historical information including local news, obituaries, and ads offering entry forms for chance to win a sewing machine or various herbal remedies and cure-alls. Also well represented are store sales ads that document the latest fashion trends. The papers will be an excellent addition to the IDNC and a valuable primary resource for researchers.

Annie Oelschlager, Archives Specialist
Architecture of Southeast Asia

Hindu architecture can be found in both mainland and insular Southeast Asia. This style is seen in many of the ancient temples of Southeast Asia such as the Prambanan temple complex and Angkor Wat. Southeast Asian architects created their own styles of Hindu temple architecture based on architectural philosophy from India. Hindu temples are to be places of meditation and self-realization.

Buddhist architecture can also be found in both main regions of Southeast Asia. Temples that are more famous in Southeast Asia for their Buddhist roots are Borobudur and the Shwedagon Pagoda. Buddhist architectural philosophy is based on the concept of the mandala. Ancient Buddhist temples come to one center-point stupa which symbolizes the universe. This style also is meant to reflect meditation and self-realization.

Southeast Asian architects live in a rapidly growing world. There are many emerging architects that focus on sustainable architecture in Southeast Asia. Some of these architects retain traditional philosophies of building, while some decide to build traditional looking buildings with contemporary twists. This can be seen in homes and public buildings that merge together nature and living spaces. Architects from all around the world are influenced by this form of contemporary architecture, as it is a way to have elegant and sustainable architecture while minimizing costs.

It is understandable why Southeast Asians are proud of their cultural heritage. This can be seen in the architecture that has been preserved for many thousands of years and the contemporary styles that are emerging from the region.

The exhibit features books, photos, and pamphlets. The exhibit was designed and curated by Southeast Asia Collection student worker Christine Dose.

Our next SEA exhibit will be up on the second week of May. The topic for the exhibit is yet to be determined.

Christine Dose, SEA Student Worker
Horatio Alger was a 19th-century American writer best known for his boys’ series novels. All of his juvenile novels have the same theme (i.e., the “Horatio Alger myth”) which is the idea that anyone can climb the social ladder, become successful, and accumulate wealth in America—an interesting sociological and political debate in its own right. Alger’s novels contain the familiar rags-to-riches story where a teenage boy works hard to try and escape poverty, though it is often not hard work that rescues the boy from his plight. As the story progresses, the boy performs some extraordinary act of bravery or honesty, such as returning a large sum of lost money or rescuing someone from a perilous situation, which brings the boy to the attention of a wealthy individual.

One series release of fifty Alger titles is lovingly referred to by collectors as Standing Boys due to the illustrations on the spine and the cover of the books. The Standing Boy series were published between 1906 and 1908 by the John C. Winston Company of Philadelphia. The Standing Boys titles were released over four printing runs in two endpaper variations: green (Variation A) and plain (Variation B). All titles were published with plain endpapers, whereas only thirty of the fifty titles were published with green endpapers.1

Thanks to the generous donation to the Horatio Alger Collection by Robert Kersch, a member of the Horatio Alger Society, NIU can lay claim to having the first known complete set of the plain endpaper Standing Boys. Kersch’s donation also includes four titles complete with issued dusk jackets,2 which are rare for boys’ series books since such books were often devoured by you boys who paid little attention to the care of a dusk jacket.

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2 Rare book terminology that signifies the separate paper, sometime cloth, covering for a book. Modern book dusk jackets, or dustwrappers, often contain the book summary and author bio on the inside flaps. Jackets are often highly-desired and -collectible in their own right, and a book that no longer has its jacket can be considered incomplete, especially from a collector’s perspective.
Another remarkable addition that came as part of this donation is the unique issue of the title [The] Young Outlaw. It is very rare for “the” omitted from the title cover and thanks for Kersch we now have this uncommon variation in the collection.


The Horatio Alger Collection was created from materials already held in other NIU Libraries collections shortly after the Horatio Alger Society selected the NIU Libraries as their official repository in 1994. Since then, our holdings have grown through purchases and through donations from members of the Horatio Alger Society.

Sarah Cain, Curator, Rare Books and Special Collections

Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

Beginning with Fall 2018 issue, members will receive the green option (electronic issue sent via email) unless they opt-in to receive the print by calling (815) 753-8091.

Please help us save trees and support campus sustainability initiatives by receiving Founders’ Type via email.

Members can update their email address by sending a message to libraryfriend@niu.edu with the subject line ‘Founders Type green option.’
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