

2013 ANNUAL REPORT OF
 THE SOCIETY FOR THE
 HISTORY OF AUTHORSHIP,
 READING & PUBLISHING
 at the 21st SHARP conference
 “Geographies of the Book”
 University of Pennsylvania,
 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

2013 marks two decades since SHARP’s founding conference in New York City, in 1993. But it was only three years ago that we started producing an Annual Report, in which the Executive Committee of SHARP presents updates to the membership on the activities of our organization. More detailed reports on all these matters are available on request.

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LIST OF SHARP’s ELECTED OFFICERS:

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Carole Gerson; Patrick Leary; James Raven

BOARD OF DIRECTORS, with retirement dates and showing 2013 election results (Board members are elected for 8-year terms):

Kevin Absillis, 2019; Robert Cagna, 2015; David Carter, 2013; **Anne Coldiron, 2021**; Evelyn Ellerman 2017; **Mike Everton, 2021**; Ellen Gruber Garvey, 2015; Lisa Kuitert, 2017; **Martyn Lyons, 2021**; Alistair McCleery, 2015; Bob Owens, 2015; **Ruth Panofksy, 2021**; Shef Rogers, 2019; Sydney Shep, 2017; Gail Shivel, 2015; Alexis Weedon, 2017; George H. Williams, 2019; Paul Wright, 2015.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE /ELECTION RESULTS:

President, Leslie Howsam (term ends this year)
 Vice-President, Ian Gadd, (elected President;
 Sydney Shep has been elected Vice-President)
 Treasurer, James Wald (re-elected)
 Membership Secretary, Eleanor Shevlin (re-elected)
 Recording Secretary, Corinna Norrick (newly elected)
 External Affairs Director, Simon Frost (re-elected)
 Director Publications/Awards, Claire Squires (re-elected)
 Director Electronic Resources, Lee N. McLaird, (retiring;
 Jason Ensor has been elected DER)
 Member-at-large, Bertrum MacDonald (re-elected)

Annual General Meeting Agenda

The AGM will be held on Sunday 21st July from 12 to 2 pm (lunch is provided) in the Class of 1949 Auditorium, Houston Hall, 2nd floor.

Welcome and thanks (Leslie Howsam)

Announcement of election results (Carole Gerson for the Nominating Committee)

Announcement of SHARP Travel Grants for the Philadelphia Conference

Announcement of SHARP Prizes:

• *Book History* Essay Prize, Ezra Greenspan and Jonathan Rose)

• DeLong SHARP Book History Prize (Corinna Norrick on behalf of Claire Squires)

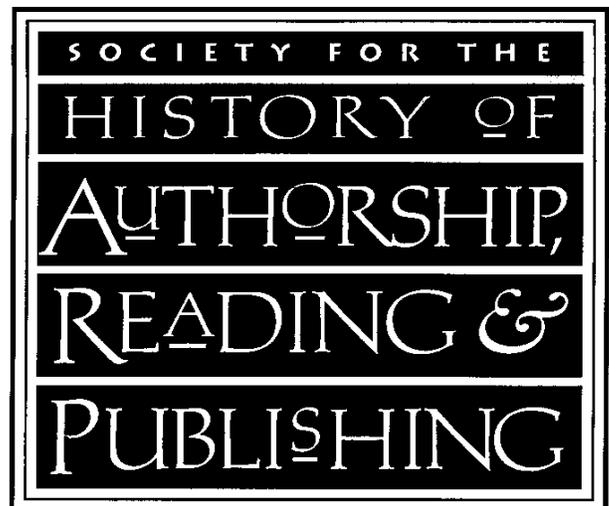
• Special prize for Twitter on #sharp13

Invitation to attend next year’s conference: in Antwerp, 17-21 September 2014 (Stijn van Rossem & Kevin Absillis)

Recognition of retiring officers Leslie Howsam and Lee McLaird (Ian Gadd)

Members’ announcements

OUR TWITTER HASHTAG : #sharp13



REPORT OF PRESIDENT & VICE-PRESIDENT

Leslie Howsam and Ian Gadd are happy to report that our organization remains strong, flexible and solvent - we thank our EC colleagues, as well as listowner and editors, review editors and reviewers, archivist, bibliographer and all the others who volunteer valuable hours of their academic lives to be part of SHARP's activities. During the past few years, SHARP has become more international in terms of membership and conference venues, though we still need to reach out further, in linguistic, geographical and disciplinary terms. We are also in a better position to offer financial support to the development of book history. **Here are a number of current and future initiatives:**

SHARP Futures. At our meeting in Dublin last year, the EC and Board decided to engage in strategic planning for SHARP's next decade. A meeting took place in Washington, DC, just prior to the conference and a draft report and recommendations will be circulated this fall.

Translation grants. We have agreed in principle to the idea of contributing to the cost of translating key works of scholarship in the history of the book (into English as well as into other world languages), and at this year's meetings we will begin to work out the details of this ambitious initiative chaired by Board member (and Regional Officer for France) Susan Pickford.

SHARP-RBS and DHSI Scholarships. Our partnership with Rare Book School at the University of Virginia continues, and has been expanded to include the California Rare Book School in Los Angeles. In 2013 for the first time we became a sponsor of the Digital Humanities Summer Institute at Victoria University in British Columbia.

Book History Online. This valuable online bibliography, formerly based at the Royal Library of the Netherlands has been dormant for some time but SHARP is collaborating with the European publisher Brill to revive BHO on a new platform. The editorial work is happening at St Andrew's University in Scotland.

Postage Fees outside North America: Dropping the postal surcharge has reduced the disproportionate cost to some members of belonging to SHARP.

Other investments. SHARP paid for design and production of a new **brochure**; we have contributed to the expenses of a number of initiatives taken by our **Regional Officers**; we allocated a sum of money to substantially increase the **travel grant** fund for this year.

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TREASURER'S REPORT

The full financial report is available from Treasurer Jim Wald at the AGM, or on request after the conference.

What follows is a snapshot of our financial situation. The figures for fiscal/calendar year 2012 show that SHARP is in a comfortable position. During that year, in terms of regular revenue and expenditure, we had income of about \$46,200 and spent about \$30,000. Income was a combination of membership dues (62%) and the royalties we receive for publishing *Book History* (37%; these are payments from J-Store and MUSE via Johns Hopkins University Press, for online usage of articles). The customary expenditures included production and editing of *SHARP News*, the book prize, maintenance of sharpweb.org, professional affiliations, etc. In addition there were costs associated with both the 2011 Washington and 2012 Dublin conferences which will not apply in 2013. We have over \$220,000 in the bank.

Apart from the prudent management of past and present officers, we find ourselves in this position for two main reasons; the revenue from royalties, and the fact that the organizers of some conferences have been in a position to let SHARP share in the benefits of from their stewardship of funds. Otherwise, membership income has remained steady, and the costs of publishing *BH* (\$20 per copy including postage) and processing memberships (\$8 per head) have not changed. Nor has the cost of printing and distributing *SHARP News*, which works out at about \$6.60 per member, per issue.

Funds flow in and out according to the cycle of the membership year and the timing of annual conferences. Membership fees are collected by JHUP, who deduct a fee for their services and also deduct their charges for the publication of *Book History*, and pass the balance on to the organization. Similarly the money for the Conference Travel Grants is collected by one year's conference organizers and forwarded, through SHARP's books, to the next year's group. Apart from the Conference Travel Grants, each conference is self-contained and managed by the sponsoring institution.

As Treasurer, Jim Wald is working with the rest of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors to keep SHARP sustainable while it grows. We are now in a position to invest in studies of book history and book culture, and decisions made last year are reported in the column to the left. This year's plans will be announced to the membership at the AGM and later via SHARP-L and *SHARP News*.

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MEMBERSHIP REPORT

A full range of membership statistics may be requested from Membership Secretary Eleanor Shevlin at the AGM, or by email after the conference. Here is a snapshot of our membership situation.

In 2012–2013, our last full year (since membership begins and ends at the first of July), we had 1028 members, down slightly from the previous year. Almost 80% of these are individual members, some of whom are paying higher fees as supporting or sustaining members; another 18% are students (whose fee does not include *Book History*). There are a handful of institutional members (mostly libraries).

Another way to break out membership is by geographic region. We have members in 39 countries: about 60% are in the United States; 10% each in Canada and the United Kingdom; the remaining 20% are scattered across the globe, with substantial numbers in Australia, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany and the Netherlands.

Members are surveyed from time to time about what SHARP does for them, and what they can do for SHARP. But in between these formal questionnaires, members are urged to keep in touch with the organization. Eleanor asks both new and longstanding members to renew as soon as the notice appears from JHUP. Timely renewals make it possible for us to print just enough copies of *SHARP-News* and *Book History*, and allow us to report more robust numbers to the institutions who collect subscription statistics.

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REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR FOR DIGITAL RESOURCES

As Director for Digital Resources, Lee McLaird is responsible for SHARP’s rich website, sharpweb.org, and for our brisk and lively listserv, SHARP-L. The daily supervision of SHARP-L continues to be handled by Patrick Leary, although we are actively seeking a successor to this challenging job. Our new Social Media Liaison Jason Ensor, has enhanced SHARP’s presence in the world of Facebook, Wikipedia and so forth. Jason will be succeeding Lee as DER, beginning from the Annual General Meeting.

The website is up to date, in more ways than one. Members may have been troubled by some hacking issues, which resulted in the insertion of malware into our website and the diversion of searches to other sites. Our technical team (Matthew Young and Todd Edwardson) have advised a transition to a new web interface, WordPress, and that is in progress during the summer of

2013. REPORT OF THE MEMBER-AT-LARGE (CONFERENCES)

Bertrum H. MacDonald works closely with the President and Vice-President in advising those who are considering a proposal for a SHARP conference, either focused on a regional or thematic subject, or the annual general-meeting conference.

In addition to the Philadelphia conference in 2013, there was a SHARP-Focused conference held in May, at Université du Maine, Le Mans, France on the theme “Texts, Forms and Readings in Europe, 18th-21st centuries”.

The next SHARP-Focused conference will “The Lettered City: Readings and Identities in Latin America at the Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF), from 5th to 8th November 2013. Some of the Brazil organizers are present at Philadelphia and will be happy to answer questions about their plans.

Next year in 2014, SHARP will be in Antwerp, Belgium for a conference sponsored by the Flanders Book Historical Society, 17-21 September. The date is later than usual, in order to take advantage of the re-opening of the Museum Plantain-Moreus, one of the world’s great printing museums. The theme will be “Religions of the Book” (broadly interpreted). Further details will be announced at the AGM.

For 2015, the EC has approved an application for a conference in Montreal, sponsored by l’Université de Sherbrooke, McGill University and the Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Quebec. Dates will be 6-11 July.

Also in 2015, SHARP will hold sessions in Jinan, China, as an Affiliated International Organization of the International Committee of Historical Sciences. Dates will be 23-29 August.

At our Philadelphia meeting, SHARP’s EC is considering a proposal for the annual conference for 2016 in Europe. We expect to announce approval of this event at the AGM.

Meanwhile, Bertrum and the rest of the EC welcome any advice from the membership about conferences. Should we perhaps be thinking of conferences limited to graduate students? Are there certain locations, or particular themes, which are ripe for a visit from the world’s book historians?

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR FOR PUBLICATIONS AND AWARDS

Claire Squires reports that our annual journal, *Book History*, continues to attract and publish quality scholarship. *SHARP-News* also flourishes, with a rich quarterly array of reviews, co-ordinated by a team of review editors. Those most concerned with *SHARP-News* are looking into the possibilities of eventually moving its content to an online platform.

Last year’s SHARP-DeLong Prize for Book History was won by Barbara Hochman for *“Uncle Tom’s Cabin” and the Reading Revolution*, published by University of Massachusetts Press in 2011.

The members of this year’s book are Francis Galloway, Dan Traister and Marie-Francoise Cachin. They received almost 60 volumes, and selected a winner. For the first time this year, two other books have been named “Highly Commended” by the judges. All the authors and their books will be announced and celebrated at the AGM.

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LIAISON AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS REPORT

SHARP has a strong team of liaison officers, some working with scholarly societies, mostly in North America and others (now called regional officers) connecting SHARP with book history in their country or region.

SHARP LIAISONS WITH SCHOLARLY SOCIETIES:

Eleanor Shevlin, as part of her task as Membership Secretary, manages about two dozen liaisons with affiliated societies in various disciplines and interdisciplinary groupings, many of which host SHARP-sponsored panels which provide opportunities for outreach. In addition to long-term liaisons like the MLA, AHA and ASECS (18th-century studies), we have five new affiliates this year: the Bibliographical Society (London); the College Book Art Association; INKE (Implementing New Knowledge Environments); the Rare Books and Manuscripts Section of ACRL; and the Reception Study Society.

The work of liaison officers is vitally important to increasing SHARP’s reach beyond our own annual and focused conferences. Often they can propose a SHARP-sponsored panel to be held in the context of a larger conference – something we are not able to do in return because our conferences are differently organized. They also circulate brochures and sometimes host receptions to bring SHARP’s name and activities to the attention of scholars who may wish to join.

SHARP’S EXTERNAL AFFAIRS REPORT: THE REGIONAL OFFICERS

Simon Frost’s portfolio relates to the regional officers who do everything from simply supplying brochures and other promotional material for local events, to mounting full-fledged focused conferences with the SHARP stamp of approval. They now number eighteen individuals, from 20 countries; we have two officers for Japan, while one person handles both Spain and Portugal.

Conference-goers can see and hear the impressive Regional Officers in action at the “Dream of Ferdinand: SHARP’s Impossible Global Ambitions” plenary on Saturday.

It was the Regional Officers who identified the need to put together a committee to oversee the translation of key texts from and to English. This group has now been formed and is chaired by Susan Pickford (Université de Paris 13).

Thanks to Archie Dick and colleagues in South Africa, SHARP was represented at two events: ‘Print, Publishing and Cultural Production in South Africa’ in Pretoria on 13 May and a ‘Colloquium on Textual Commodities in Empire’ at Witwatersrand on 10-11 June 2013.

Last year the EC decided to provide some seed funding to events organized on behalf of SHARP by the regional officers (see page 2, “Other investments”). These small contributions have helped facilitate some very exciting colloquia. Some of the highlights:

* Corinna Norrick-Rühl worked with colleagues at Freiburg to organize a Network Conference for German Scholars of Book History and Print Culture, which was held in Freiburg 9-10 May. Delegates came from the USA, Israel, Germany, Switzerland and Scotland.

* Benito Rial Costas organized a colloquium on Book History and Bibliography in Spain at the Biblioteca Histórica Marqués de Valdecilla in Madrid; it was held 3 July.

* Geraldine Rogers has organized an Inaugural Symposium on Periodicals in Argentina, which will take place 5-6 December 2013 at La Plata Buenos Aires.

* Kirsti Salmi-Niklander and colleagues in Helsinki have organized Reading and Writing from Below: Exploring the Margins of Modernity, to be held 20-22 August 2014

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