



2014
Conference
Preview

American Typecasting Fellowship

NEWSLETTER

MAY 2014

NUMBER 39

August Conference Program Promises Variety

From Joseph Moxon's (1683) specifications on the Hand Mold to an explanation of the first phototypesetting system (1947), or from the ancient ATF Pivotal Type Caster to a computer interface for the Composition Caster, the 2014 ATF Conference is building plenty of variety for attendees. It runs August 13-17. Lodging arrangements are established at the Holiday Inn, Salem, N.H. Sessions will be held nearby at The Museum of Printing, Andover, Mass., and at the Romano Library.

Lodging and meeting attendance are both limited, so if you intend to be at this event, it is imperative that you get your registrations made immediately. Full details and on-line registration forms are available at <http://museumofprinting.org/ATF-Fellowship-Conference-2014.html#hotelreg>. Those who are not Internet-savvy are encouraged to complete and mail in forms which are found with this *Newsletter*.

There are bonus events at Firefly Press, a commercial *letterpress* printing office run by John Kristensen. Preceding the Conference on Wednesday, August 13, and following the closing of the Conference on Sun-

day, August 17, there will be "open house" informal technical sessions, featuring operational linecasters and Monotype equipment. Firefly Press is located in the Allston neighborhood of Boston.

The Museum of Printing and its president, Frank Romano, are coordinating all activities of this Conference. If you haven't already met Frank, this Conference offers you the unique opportunity to meet and talk with one of the true legends in printing history and technology—both past and present.

Of critical importance right now are: (a) submitting your Conference registration, and (b) getting motel reservations made by calling the Holiday Inn at 1 Keewaydin Drive, Salem, N.H. 03079, phone (603) 893-5511. Most are booking arrival Wednesday, 8/13, and departure Sunday, 8/17. Special Conference rates of \$119/129 for two double beds, or \$129/139 for one king. Be sure to say you are with ATF (American Typecasting Fellowship).

If you are driving, the motel is 40 miles north of Boston on I-93. Exit 2. Turn left at exit, ¼ mile to first light, turn left onto Keewaydin Drive.

Glimpses of the 2014 Conference Program

Firefly Press has two Linotypes—a Model 8 and a Model 31 Two-in-One—an English Thompson Caster, a Super Caster, and a late-model English caster with all the bells and whistles. All the machines will be available for poking and prodding

The Very First Phototypesetter (the beginning of the "end" for hot-metal). Bill Wheatley, who has a long and extensive background in font design and preparation for both phototypesetting and digital work, has studied the Intertype Fotosetter in detail. The museum has on display one of the very few in existence. Its uniqueness is the use of matrices.

Building a Monotype Shop. "What I have learned about setting up a private Monotype shop after having built two separate shops for myself," by Jim Walczak. We will also hear what others have learned about moving and installing casting machinery.

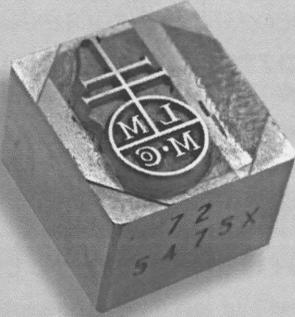
Making Historic Hand Molds. By Stan Nelson. Stan has built (by hand) over fifty hand molds for many

individuals and institutions over the past forty years and is retired from the Smithsonian Institution. His works are pieces of art in addition to being functional tools. Each is an historically correct rendering of various historic tools and his Bible continues to be Joseph Moxon's *Mechanick Exercises* of 1683.

Training Newcomers. This will be a round-robin session featuring Rich Hopkins (Monotype University), Sky Shipley (Thompson Tech), and others on training sessions they have conducted in the past. Monotype University now has about 30 graduates and Thompson Tech has a couple of dozen too. Comments from folks who have graduated from these sessions are expected.

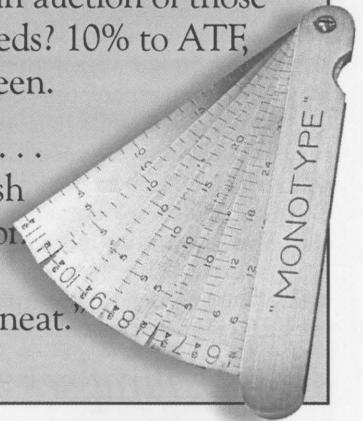
Computer Interface for the Monotype Composition Caster by Bill Welliver. Bill is now equipping both Mason Miller and Rob LoMascolo (Mono U 8 grads) with interfaces and has more than a dozen of these interfaces out there and functioning. Previous Conferences have focused

(Continued to page 2)



Things You Should Do To Get Ready For the Conference

- 1** Design, cast and print an appropriate keepsake and bring along at least 55 copies for distribution at the Conference. It's preferable that your piece be small enough to fit a 12x18 envelope for "carry-on" for those who are flying. It may be unique for the Conference or just a good sample of your work done for other reasons.
- 2** Pack up your goodies to be offered at the swap meet, and if there are sufficient items available, we'll also have an auction of those materials you bring and wish to sell off. Proceeds? 10% to ATE, rest to you, all to ATE, or somewhere in between.
- 3** Your mystery items . . . small enough to carry . . . unique items in your collection which you wish to show off, or find out what they are for. Or bring really curious things relating to typesetting and letterpress which intrigue you and are "really neat."
Two are shown to get you thinking.



Program Highlights (Continued from Page 1)

on the prospects of such an interface. This is real-time report on the system as it now stands. Capabilities now include hanging punctuation, padded outer margins (quads to keep last letters from falling off), hanging indents, more.

My Insanity in Casting Big Type on the Pivotal Caster, by Greg Walters. Greg acquired several of these machines (plus Barth casters too!) at the auction sale of American Type Founders in 1993. He has them all at his "building" in Piqua, Ohio. This is first-hand presentation on using one of them, burns, squirts and all!

History of Cherokee Type, now being returned to matrix form for casting and hand-setting, by Ed Rayer and Frank Brannon at the Swamp Press. Also discussion of matrix engraving on the Benton Pantograph as being utilized for this and other type-making projects.

Modern-Day Typesetting Apprentices, by Mark Sargianis and Chris Godek of M&H Type in San Francisco, which is likely the last-remaining U.S. commercial type

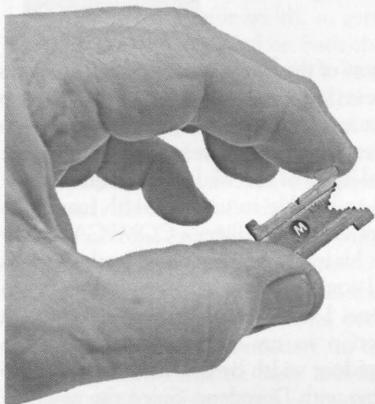
foundry. The firm has been around since about 1907. They will explain the apprenticeship program and how one might become a student, and also give a brief viewing of the facility.

Commercial Typesetting and Letterpress Printing in the 21st Century. This will be a roundtable featuring the boys from M&H Type, Michael Bixler, long-time provider of Monotype composition and letterpress printing from Skaneateles, N. Y., Sky Shipley of Skyline Type in Prescott, Ariz., and John Kristensen of Firefly Press, Boston. Others are invited to participate.

History of Cherokee Type, now being returned to matrix form for casting and hand-setting, by Ed Rayer and Frank Brannon at the Swamp Press. Also discussion of matrix engraving on the Benton Pantograph as being utilized for this and other type-making projects.

Today's Casting Equipment. How equipment came to be preserved and laments over the many machines which went to the scrappers, by Rich Hopkins, a collector and user for over forty years.

Photos of Items You're Likely To See at the Conference



A matrix like you've never seen before. It's a Fotosetter matrix, shaped and sized just like a standard linecaster matrix, but carrying a photographic negative within its frame—Bill Wheatley's presentation at the Conference.

Jim Walczak's new studio, recently completed at Williamstown, Massachusetts. That is his wife/helpmate Franziska at the press. Jim's custom "out-building" at Oxon Hill, Maryland, was featured in an early NEWSLETTER. He'll speak of the work involved in creating both facilities at the Conference. (Unfortunately, the casting equipment is out of camera view.)

This is one of two molds Stan Nelson completed recently. They are modeled after diagrams found in P. S. Fournier's manual on typefounding. Stan says his results in using the molds haven't been too successful yet, but lots of experimentation still is planned. Stan will speak about his mold making activities at the Conference.



Job Opening at Arion Press in San Francisco

The San Francisco art/literature publisher Arion Press is seeking an individual with bookkeeping/accounting experience to assume the full-time position of Office Manager for both the for-profit and the non-profit divisions. Bookkeeping experience is absolutely necessary. Those with executive assistant experience only should not apply.

The Office Manager is responsible for managing the daily affairs of the office as well as keeping all accounting records, through completion of monthly, quarterly, and annual financial statements. Familiarity with MS Word, Excel, Entourage, File Maker and integrated accounting software is required, as are excellent written and oral communication skills. Sales and management experience could be useful. Experience with a

cultural non-profit and knowledge of art and literature are desirable.

The position is full time. Health insurance is offered. Compensation based upon experience. Office Manager's responsibilities will be sent to applicants.

The company employs 12 highly creative people and is located in a beautiful setting in the Presidio. To be considered for the position, please submit a cover letter with resume by email or post, but do not phone. The cover letter should be specific to Arion Press, not a standard letter.

Reply to: Lyssa Black, Office Manager/Bookkeeper, The Arion Press, 1802 Hays Street, The Presidio, San Francisco, CA 94129. (415) 668-2542. Email <lblack@arionpress.com>

A Casterman's Corner

BY RICH HOPKINS



Pondering Monotype's 18-Unit EM

I have always praised the efforts of Tolbert Lanston and his associates for the forward-thinking design of the machine and the marvelous 18-unit EM which served as the basis for sizing all the composition sizes of fonts developed both in the U. S. and in England. Recently, however, I have begun to see the system has its shortcomings as you move above 12 point 12 set.

In the first days of Monotype, I suppose the mind set was that 12 point was the largest size that ever would be needed for machine setting. Twelve was big back then. Consider that when James W. Paige was developing his marvelous typesetting machine, he chose to build his prototype to handle nonpareil (six-point) type. It was the only size he considered necessary. Also consider that the de facto Monotype standard sizes were 6, 8, 10 and 12 point, with some popular faces going down to 4 point. In all these sizes, the 18-unit em was more than adequate. (It's true that Lanston stepped "sets" in quarter-point units, but let's not get sidetracked.)

A mathematical comparison is now presented. The single unit of 6 point (6 set) type ends up being .33 point. The ATF plan was to size all letters in quarter-point increments. Thus, the Lanston unit was a bit larger than the ATF standard. But let's face it. It's so tiny it's hard to visualize—it's less than the thickness of a copper thin space.

Moving to larger sizes, however, the single unit becomes something we can visualize. For example, in 10 point (10 set) the unit is just a trifle larger than half a point. And in 18 point (18 set) type, a single unit is a full point wide. When we get up to the max a Composition Caster could handle, 24 set, a single unit is a whopping 1.33 points wide.

Sacrifices are made when electing to cast composition larger than 12 or 14 set. The first is being restricted to just cap and lowercase. Auxiliary italic and small caps must be done separately, and manually dropped into the job. The standard matrix frame was designed to handle mats a fifth of an inch square, but when we move beyond 12 point, letters themselves became larger than a fifth of an inch. Monotype double-sizes the mats to handle larger sizes, and this significantly reduced the capacity of the Matrix Case.

I had not cast composition larger than 14-set before, so my most recent project in 16-point Deepdene composition (which utilizes a 15-set Wedge) was a learning experience. To make matters worse, I opted for a 35-pica line length. Maintaining proper line length is affected by changes in the temperature of the Mold and micro adjusts are needed to maintain proper line length as the Mold warms or cools as the machine runs. These micro changes are not too perceptible when working with smaller sizes. But with doing large comp, a micro change can easily affect line length by over half a pica.

The overall throw of the Space Transfer Wedges comes into play. These were designed to alter body size up to two units in 12 set. But in 15 set, the max they can change is one unit. That's because of the increased size of the unit eats up the physical limits of the Wedges more quickly.

I am delighted to be able to use set width manipulation to kern letters via Bill Welliver's COMPCAT computer interface. Yet his interface is restricted by the caster's Wedges and thus, I could kern characters only one unit in my 15-set Deepdene. I was endeavoring to get optimum typographic perfection in my casting. Experimentation revealed I had to reduce width by two units minimum to do adequate kerning with Deepdene. Since the machine could handle only one unit, I opted to substitute characters two units narrower wherever kerning was needed. Afterwards, I would cast the desired letters on bodies two units shy of standard width, and drop them in by hand. (I used substitute characters like ?) and Z which were easy to spot in the composed type.) This enabled me to retain Bill's automatic justification feature yet still implement kerning.

Reduced minimum word spacing? No problem. The Lanston system is set up with minimum word spacing two units shy of the standard 3-em space, or 6 units, which makes minimum word spacing four units. Lanston's Keyboard was designed for this being done with a six-unit space. Bill's program, however, is flexible enough to allow the "justifying space" anywhere in the Matrix Case. In sizes 12 set and below, if I were to move the justifying space to the 5-unit row, I could get down to 3-unit word spacing. Problem solved? No, because in sizes larger than 12 set, I could reduce size by only one unit. Fortunately, the Deepdene arrangement starts with 4-unit characters. Putting my "justifying space" in the 4-unit row allowed me to reduce minimum space width down to 3 units via Bill's wonderful program. That's a hair over two points for minimum word spacing—it's perfect.

But still I had no way to "automatically" kern 4-unit characters (period, comma, single quote) down 2 units (as I wanted to do), because the throw of the Justification Wedges would reduce by only one unit. My only option, then, was to manually mortise these characters using my

LUDLOW MACHINE with all acoutrements available in Michigan. Open to reasonable offers. Electric pot, Margach feeder, parts, shear pins, etc. 6, 9, 12 pt. molds, five cabinets of mats including Bankers, Copperplate, Garamond, Coronet, Caslon and italic to 48 point, various Tempo family, three self-center sticks, loads of borders, dingbats, side sorts. Many pigs of clean toned metal. Stanislaus Pekala at stanwarren@aol.com.

WANTED: Lino metal in/near Ohio. Tell me what you have. E-mail bellprint3@aol.com. Theo Bell, Leavittsburg, Ohio.

Rouse Type Mortiser—a rare gem which I treasure and utilize almost every time I work in my shop.

Now comes a revelation to me about the Type Mortiser. I just figured this out after using the thing for over 20 years! Any mortise involves two adjacent characters. You cut away the open top of one letter and the open bottom of the other and fit them together. Invariably the two letters are not the same width, so getting the “notch” of the mortiser perfectly sized on both characters always has been a challenge. It seems to me to be more difficult when working with smaller type sizes. The revelation? Put the two affected characters in the Mortiser’s clamp together. Establish the size of your notch on the character facing the cutter blade and trim it. Then transpose the two characters and notch the second. By doing this, you get the depth of the two notches exactly the same, with no guessing at all! Sometimes the vertical “step” between the two notches is not exactly halfway up or down on the body, so you may need to move up-down positions, but the width will remain constant. This “revelation” to me was so dramatic that I wanted to mortise more and more characters just because all of a sudden it was so much easier to control.

Additional comments on casting larger composition sizes: First, you have to slow the machine significantly. Secondly, you need to reduce the temperature on

your metal pot. Even then, it’s a constant battle. Large Comp molds generally require a different Nozzle too. My word spaces sometimes were two points wide but when quadding out lines, I was casting 18-unit characters which were nine times wider than the thin spaces. This would heat the Mold to the point where it was ejecting characters before they were solidified. What a mess that makes. On the other end of the spectrum, if the Mold gets a trifle too cold casting the very narrow stuff, it freezes up and you must stop the caster, open up, thaw the Nozzle and start over again. This routine gets irksome real quickly.

And finally, on my Mold it seems that when it gets just a trifle too hot the Upper Mold Blade stops working and I get no low spaces. Simultaneously, I start getting fins on the cast letters as metal tends to creep between the top of the Mold and the Matrices.

All told, my first experience with large composition was successful, but definitely a learning experience. I am certain I will get better at it, but right now my conclusion is that casting large comp is far more difficult than standard composition in sizes from 12 down to 7 or 8 point.

An Update from the C. C. Stern Type Foundry

BY JEFF SHAY

Board Chair, Stern Type Foundry

With the next ATF meeting nearly upon us, I thought I’d update the *Newsletter* readers on our progress. It’s been a busy year and a half! Since the ATF conference we’ve acquired a Model 31 Linotype, courtesy of Bill Spurling and the Yamhill Linotype Museum. Bill saved it from the estate of a Portland job shop and it came to us in wonderful working condition.

We’ve also gotten our hands on a Model L Ludlow and two cabinets of mats from the Puget Bindery in Kent, Washington. As soon as we can get the machine to quit spitting slugs out the bottom, we’ll be ready to go!

The last new toy in our box is a finished hand mold and matrix to go with it from (who else?) Stan Nelson. Stan did the work to complete the mould which had been started by Byron “Scotty” Scott, who was good friends with Chris Stern and lived on his and Jules Faye’s property later in life. This has turned into a real crowd pleaser during our open hours and in demonstrations outside the foundry.

Other machine restoration/repair continues apace. Our Material Maker is ready to be fired up and adjusted (after a month long soaking of some of the pulley bearings in Kroil). Our Thompson, which we’ve dated to 1914, has had the pot melted out, for the first time since we don’t know when. With the motor and electricals in place, we’re getting perilously close to firing it up as well. Finally, we’ve gotten our Gorton 3U Pantograph up and running—matrix making here we come!

I’d also like to thank the various members of the type-casting community who have given us support over the

last year and a half (and prior to that as well!) My foundry mates and I are looking forward to seeing you in August!

Editor’s note: The C. C. Stern Type Foundry was host to the 2012 ATF Conference at Portland, Oregon, and those attending got a good chance to see the new facility and set-up, which was established just in time for the Conference.

A Type Designer Mystery: What Came of Bentley Raak?

Fred Woodworth of Tucson, Arizona, pursues historic printing relics most of us never dreamed of preserving. He still does a regular magazine titled *The Mystery Adventure Series Review*, and the entire document is offset printed with the composition being done mostly on Varsity equipment—those strike-on devices which strangely resemble typewriters.

Oh, yes, he has IBM Selectric Composers, and Friden Justowriters too, and uses them all, doing pasteup, making negatives, and printing on a Multilith (I think). He’s been working with these machines since they were new and is determined to keep them running even though getting the one-time-use carbon ribbons is becoming quite difficult.

Bentley Raak was a long-time Varsity employee who carried the bulk of the load in designing fonts for the strike-on machine and he worked for Varsity several decades. He seems to have “disappeared” in the 1950s. Fred would like to learn more about the man who, at one time, was a very important type designer in our ever-changing industry.

News from Our Associates

Merle Langley of Marlboro Mats passed away Sunday January 26, 2014, from a long bout with dementia. For those of you that did not know him, Merle was the owner for many years of Marlboro Mats until he sold out some years ago and semi retired. He was Don Black's chief competitor when it came to linecaster matrices, and friend for a lot of years. This info came via Phil Driscoll and Ron Hylton.

Cutting matrices: An email from William Bentley of Oregon House, California, in February indicates progress in his learning to engrave matrices. "The microscope I mentioned turned out to be critical for cutting mats. The one Mike Anderson had on his Deckel was interesting, but didn't have a way to install a reticle to measure precisely. So I broke down and got a more modern one, and so many things became clear about the errors I was making. It was so obvious under 40-80x what was going on. The little pocket microscopes are great for checking cutter tips, but not for examining the mats or the type. I started this email a few hours ago, then began looking through back *Newsletter* issues for Mike Anderson's articles. One sentence buried in his article about cutting mats jumped out at me as a possible solution to a persistent problem I've been having. I may have been grinding the hardened cutters too quickly, which may have overheated them, making them softer! I still have to test this out, but it may explain some strange issues I was having. I am most grateful to you for sending me Mike(Anderson)'s experimental and test mats, to see a bit how he worked. After examining my own mats under a microscope, it's surprising how much you can see when you look closely at the results."

Richard Small of Indianapolis passed away Nov. 20, 2013, at the age of 89. Marian, his wife, sent a note. Dick never took up typesetting, but he definitely was interested and attended a couple of our Conferences.

Mixing English/American Equipment: This comment came from **Bradley Hutchinson** of Austin, Texas. Thanks for all your great work, on the *Newsletter* and in organizing the Mike Anderson matrix auction. The article on mixing English & American equipment is of interest to me as well, since I have a somewhat hybrid mix myself. I discovered (the hard way) that with my American & English Thompsons there are some small, but crucial, differences in the position of the nozzle and the nozzle plate—but having sorted that out they are both casting again.

New Letterpress Museum: An historic railroad depot in Denver, Colorado, is quickly taking shape as the Englewood Letterpress Depot, thanks to the efforts of **Tom Parson** and many others in the area. If you wish to know more, their website is now up and running: <www.letterpressdepot.com>

Massaging Editor's Ego: Wayne Schrunk of Salem, Oregon, massages the editor's ego by responding "I have hand caster No. 40 from Stan Nelson. I am willing to pay more to keep your *Newsletter* coming." Even greater flattery comes from **Neil Thornton** of Tawas City, Michigan. He says "I have enjoyed your *Newsletter* for years and hope you will continue them and I certainly hope to see No. 40. I'm now 86!"

Bought Out Shop: Michael Kopicki of Webster, New York, says "much of my holdings came from Rochester Typographic after their demise in 1987. I think you are doing tremendous work in keeping these machines that make alphabets useful living artifacts. Keep up the good work."

Please Discontinue: While discontinuing her *Newsletter* subscription, **Carol Blinn** of Easthampton, Massachusetts, says "I'm getting old too. Also trying to make the effort to unload things. Too much stuff here. I've enjoyed your efforts re: the *Newsletter*. I wish you well."

Signing Off: Nils R. Bull Young of Medway, Ohio, reports "Even though I'd love to hang around with the whole gang of crazies in ATF . . . I'm gonna have to sign off as a full-time or even a half-ass member. For one I ain't got the gear & for the other, I think the resources of the group are better spent on getting youngsters into the craft over supporting nostalgic duffers like meself." He contributed \$50.00 to the ATF *Newsletter* fund as his kind way of saying goodbye. He continued with this note: "I should complain: I see more youngsters getting into letterpress as time goes on. Most of 'em ain't got the sense to read the Polk brothers' books before smashing type into soft paper, but at least they're interested enough to get ink on their fingers. Of course some get their rehabbed C&P jobbers chrome plated or powder finished in beautiful PostModernist colors. Sense of pride in their work. Or realization that they just spent thousands of dollars on a press no diff from the one I pulled out of a field three decades ago. Such is life."

Building New Quarters: Martyn Ould of the Old School Press in England writes indicating he has departed his Bath address for temporary quarters while construction proceeds on a new home elsewhere. He has sold his Monotype installation, seeking in the future to concentrate on being a printer rather than a Monotype coxer.

Ego Builder: Talking about getting puffed up. You just can't ignore notes like this. "The ATF *Newsletter* is the best publication I receive, hands down! Thank you so much for all the hard work you put into it." It came from **Jeff Quadland** of St. George, Ontario, Canada. Thank you, Jeff Quadland. Notes like yours keep me going.

Enthusiasm Abounds for Intertype: My car license has a Montreal Canadian frame I have been a

fan for over 70 years. They have won more Stanley Cups than any other pro team and I am very proud to be a fan. I have been a supporter of INTERTYPE as the BEST linecaster ever made ever since I was an apprentice more than 50 years ago and have compiled a list of more than 50 things that INTERTYPE has that are better than linotype. Many lino lovers have said over the past few years that they are going to compile a list of things that linotype has that are superior to INTERTYPE. To this day none have come through with their promised lists. The challenge is still open so if you know anyone who thinks they can compile a list to compete I would love to hear from them. I would gladly publish their list on my website beside mine. I do not intend to change my name but I am VERY PROUD to promote INTERTYPE as the BEST LINECASTER ever made. Like you with your dedication to Lanston Monotype I have the highest dedication for INTERTYPE and am very proud to sign my correspondence **Don INTERTYPE Black**, Scarborough, Ontario, Canada.

Closing the Loop: Bob Mullen of St. Louis, Missouri, sent the following note: "I noted with particular interest the photo of the Con P. Curran Company of St. Louis on page 169 of your book *Tolbert Lanston and the Monotype*. I knew two former employees of the company. One was put in charge of ridding the company of all the letterpress-related equipment and materials (I assume that included Monotype). He saved some 200 cuts of railroad logos and some old railroad and steamboat cuts and eventually gave them to us. Con Curran was known as a railroad printer and printed forms for lines all over the country. The other fellow was a sales estimator for Curran. He said the descendants of Con Curran ran the company into the ground, just getting what they could extract from it. Sad. Also have some cuts of the Con Curran building and some C. Curran engraving plates."

More Praise: John Setek of Bilinga, Queensland, Australia, writes "The ATF Newsletter is an essential part of my life. It keeps my projects alive." A similar reassuring comment comes from Frederica Postman at Palo Alto, California: "I hope you will want to continue for many years more. The Newsletter alone is a wonderful achievement to put beside your many others."

Interested in Everything: David MacMillan of Mineral Point, Wisconsin, writes that he checked "every single one of the items in the 'hot metal interests' column on the reply postcard sent with the last Newsletter. I would also add punch/patrix/matrix making and the history and the technical history of pantographic engraving machines." Well, OK. Now we need someone to write the history. Any volunteers?

Linotype Schooling? "In about 1957 I went to Manhattan School of Printing, and while there also saw the Empire Linotype School with about 100 machines—not one working. Then in 1959 I enrolled in Mergenthaler Linotype School for eight weeks. There I did nothing (after the dummy keyboard exercises) except fish out mats from magazines. After complaining I didn't want another eight weeks of that, the boss let me cast on a "working machine."

Too late for my resolve. Mere bitterness now." This is from **Fred Peterson** of Meadow Vista, California.

Informative: Chris Paul writes from Marvin, North Carolina: "The Newsletter is always informative and valuable. You've always done a tremendous job with it ... entertaining, informative, attractively designed ... I keep past issues handy and refer to them often. I much appreciated the write up re: Mike Anderson in the last issue."

Source for Pressboard: In the last Newsletter I suggested that it was next to impossible to acquire pressboard anymore, and that was why I used cereal boxes cut up to the needed size. Fritz Klinke of NA Graphics proved me wrong. He sent along a nice supply of pressboard and suggested that anyone needing the stuff certainly could acquire it from NA Graphics. Call Fritz at (970) 387-0212.

Pondering Pantographic Engraving: "Thinking lately about pantographic engraving of type and ornaments of original design though I don't have a pantograph yet. Mike Anderson's work was impressive and an inspiration to the Fellowship." This is from **Tim Holter** of Oakdale, Minnesota.

On the Lanston Book: Nice note received May 14, 2014, regarding the Tolbert Lanston book from George Hamilton of Vienna, Austria. "Ah, but the book itself! Magnificent! I spent the better part of a day reading cover to cover in detail and enjoying every word. A fabulous piece of work, and every/anybody who has anything whatsoever to do with Monotype anywhere owes you more than just a packet of thanks for having got the story into permanent form. Illustrations are well selected and helpful to the text. I much appreciate the idea that footnotes could be marginal on the relevant page, otherwise the reader (at least this one) would be back-and-forth checking the explanatory information. I learned a lot in the course of the reading—including just which model really is the Orphan Annie, and why! Thanks a million for having suffered the agonies of conscience over the years and ultimately bent to popular demand and got the job done. And of course to the outside (as opposed to the inside/operator) observer, the whole, particularly the comp caster, remains one of the world's technical wonders. The winding-down chapters of the book are a sad tale of genius being disregarded, and the amalgamation with ATF must be one of the saddest chapters of printing and typographic history."

Scary Accident: Michael Bixler from Skaneateles, New York, a long-time typesetting "professional," reports a recent very close encounter with his Composition Caster. He was working a special "delay" process in casting quads on alternate revolutions of the machine (to be explained in a future Newsletter article) and had a freeze-up. Upon opening the machine, he got a blast of metal right in his face. He reports his glasses saved his eyes, and the fact that it was late in the day and he was all dirty and sweaty went a long way in protecting his skin. He admits now to the fact that he was fatigued and really shouldn't have been fighting the machine under those conditions. But all is well and he's back to running his machines "as usual."

A Curious Mix of Old & New Technologies

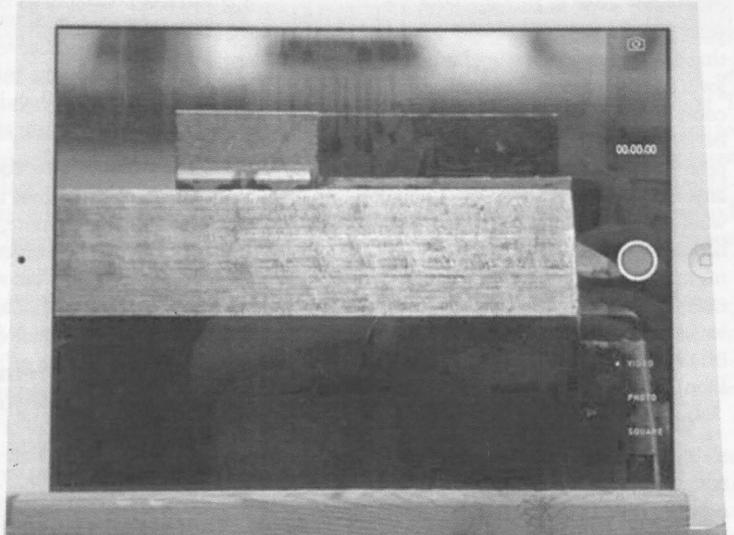
What you are seeing at right is not a muddy picture. Reflections in the background are of Bradley Hutchinson's shop in Austin Texas. What you are looking at is an iPad screen and a live image of a Monotype Alignment Gauge with the appropriate line standard and an obviously misaligned cap H.

He says it's "simple, cheap, kinda kludgy, but beats squinting through the eyepiece of the Alignment Gauge." Cheap, that is, if you already have an iPad handy. He has rigged a very inexpensive device for holding the Gauge and the iPad.

Needed:

- ▶ One 2 x 4 chunk of wood, approximately 12 inches long
- ▶ A piece of 1-inch exterior diameter pvc pipe
- ▶ An official Monotype Alignment Gauge, including the post to which you attach the eyepiece.
- ▶ One iPad

Essentially, you cut a groove into the block of wood which will hold the iPad. You mount the pipe vertically on the block of wood to hold the gauge and you position it so it puts the viewing surface just in front of the camera lens of the iPad. Once that is done, you click the iPad on



to view as if you were taking a picture and there you have your gauge, type and all, in full view on the iPad screen.

For me it would eliminate the constant battle of getting grease (from my dirty hands) on the lenses of my eyeglasses. And also, it just might be a better view than through a tiny loupe. set up the pipe to hold the gauge.

You can view the whole procedure on Brad's website: <<http://www.letterpress.com/align>>

Mixing & Sorting Various Type Metals

Recap of a discussion from Rich Hopkins to Jason Deswinetz of Vernon, BC, Canada

I think if you melt foundry & Mono together you will end up with a metal that's a trifle too hard. My rule of thumb is Mono by itself, or foundry mixed about half-and-half with Linotype or strip material, since the Elrod strip material generally was cast in Lino metal too.

Physically looking at the type, if there is no distinctive groove between the feet, it's Monotype, cast either on the comp machine, the Supercaster or the display caster. Thompson material does have a plowed groove but if the groove is very close to the edge of the body, it was cast on a side-jet Thompson. Center-jet Thompson is more difficult to distinguish. Most Thompson casting had a rather small nick pin, so if the nick is very deep or if there are multiple nicks, it's likely to be foundry type. One could plow additional nicks in Thompson work too. Generally if the second and (if present) third nicks are not the same depth, then again it's Thompson work. Generally speaking, people used Mono metal in the Thompson, but it was not un-heard of for some to use foundry formula or Linotype formula in the machine.

I would not become obsessive about separating the

metals, especially if they are mixed pretty well. But I would tend to go a bit light on the foundry metal—maybe one-fourth foundry and three-fourths Mono. Throwing in some strip material would help keep your mixture from getting too hard too.

Running hard foundry metal in a Monotype Composition Caster, a Supercaster, or the Display Caster is hard on the molds and it must be run at a higher temperature too. Those are the principal reasons for staying away from foundry metal.

Some old foundry metal can be extremely hard with odd stuff like arsenic, nickel, copper, or other strange things thrown in. If the type seems very brittle when you cut it on your saw, then I would advise not throwing it in the pot at all.

Once I was asked to mill down some border material obviously (because of its excessive height-to-paper) cast by a European foundry. The first pass through my Ludlow Supersurfacers told me this stuff was far too tough for milling, smelting, or anything else. Instead of clear cutting on the Supersurfacers, it tended to chip away on the edges, and it dulled the blade very quickly. I finished the job but never again would I attempt to do the same.

The Woes of Losing a Remelt Furnace

BY MIKE COUGHLIN
Cornucopia, Wisconsin

The past year has been filled with unwelcome challenges that have threatened the survival of my printing business. Perhaps as isolated incidents they don't mean that much, but taken together I began to get the feeling that a plague had descended on my shop.

The first incident, which I will describe here, reminded me of the old story about a nail in a horseshoe being lost causing the horse to throw the shoe. For want of a horseshoe, the rider couldn't deliver his warning and for lack of a warning, the war was lost.

Things began rather innocently when I plugged in my mat caster to remelt a pile of discarded Linotype and Ludlow slugs and cast the metal back into pigs. Normally, the heating process takes about an hour, but this time an hour and a half passed and there was no sign the type metal was even getting warm let alone reaching the melting point. That caster, which I had used for probably 15 years, had always just been there and the last time I had used it, it gave no indication it was going to *unplug itself from life*.

But there it stood, coldly defiant to all my pleadings. I called my electrician buddy to check whether power was getting to the unit. Sure was. The last time I used the re-melt I had drained from the pot as much of the melted metal as I could, figuring it would heat up faster the next time around. By pouring out so much of the metal I theorized I may have exposed the heating elements, causing them to overheat and burn out. But before I could determine the condition of the heating elements, I had to clean all remaining metal out of the mat caster's melting box.

A friend happened to stop by and I explained my predicament. Not to worry, he had a torch with a two-inch flame thrower on it. It took a while, but I was able to empty the pot of the remaining metal. Sure enough, the heating element had worn through and broken in two places.

Whether the burn-through happened as a result of the element being exposed to air is something I can't tell. But what I did learn was that there were actually two heating elements in the melting box. My hunch is that somewhere along the line, one element burned out, leaving the second to do all the work and that lone soldier had finally given up the ghost.

The mat caster, previously under-appreciated, had become the nail in my future—or my lack of a future. Without it, I could not convert used Linotype and Ludlow slugs into pigs to keep providing my machines with a constant source of metal. In short, either I get the mat caster operational or I would be forced to close my typesetting operation and much of my letterpress work.

I didn't panic immediately. I started placing calls to the letterpress brotherhood. First was Dave Seat followed by Fritz Klinke, Roy Dunham, Jim Daggs and Marlan Beilke. My search began extending further and further but I kept running into dead ends trying to find heating elements that would fit in the caster. Perhaps, I concluded, I should simply try to locate a replacement mat caster, so I followed that notion to several possible dealers. I came up with a caster that was several times the size of my machine and came with a price tag to match. So, back to hunting for heating elements.

Then I came across Omega Engineering, which had tubular heaters, a solid state relay and an electronic controller which I was assured would do what I needed. The heaters were the TRID/TRIW series and the temperature controller was the CN4000 series. I learned I would also need an external solid-state relay to protect the temperature controller from burning out.

The tubular heater that would fit in the mat caster was 54.25 inches long and came with connection prongs on each end which would be hooked to the electric switch. The tube needed to be bent several times to allow it to fit inside the pot and the bends needed to be gradual enough so the heating element inside would not get kinked.

I called my engineer son for help and he was able to get the heater to fit in the pot and hooked it up to the unit. I felt pretty smug until I turned the unit on and learned a lesson in chemistry—lead is very heavy. The heater, once it had melted the slugs I had placed over it, rose to the surface, leaving it impossible for me to skim the dross and debris that also floated to the top.

So I borrowed another torch and repeated the melting operation. With the pot again cleaned out, I installed clamps to hold the heater along the bottom of the pot. Then back to experimenting. The clamps worked—at least pretty well. The heater still tends to float up a small amount, but I can work around it to skim the dross. My son also made a platform on which to rest the relay and temperature controller, but it was made of metal and the relay was getting extremely hot. So, another call to Omega and this time I was advised to buy a base to set the relay on to protect it from overheating. In all, the entire set up cost about \$300.

For the moment I have been able to salvage my printing business. With the re-melt back in operation, I weathered another storm and am grateful that the people who made the machines I run made them to last for decades, unlike so many of today's electronic gadgets with almost instantaneous obsolescence built into them. But every now and again when something quits, I again get that pit in my stomach, wondering whether this time will be the nail of doom for my printing shop.

A Casterman's Corner

SECOND TAKE—BY RICH HOPKINS



Sabotaged by a Careless Operator Long Ago

The Lord knows you have a million considerations to look out for when you start up a casting project, especially when you're working with matrices, molds, and sizes you have never before addressed. Such was my case with the casting of 16 pt. Deepdene Large Composition Matrices for a keepsake project I am doing for the 2014 Conference. Little did I know that some careless operator from many years past had sabotaged my endeavor.

I needed matching italics for the project and I already had cast a nice case full previously, so dutifully, I pulled samples from that case and proceeded to do my setup, aligning the cap H from the new casting with key characters in the italic font. I was on top of this issue from the get-go. Needless to say, I was most distressed when I pulled my first proofs of the work with italics integrated where needed. The italic was noticeably misaligned—nearly a full point, which is like a mile to a trained typographic eye. What could I have done wrong?

My mind was going in two directions. First was working out a solution to my problem. I would have to fiddle with leading between the lines, moving a point from beneath the italic by cutting leads to match the position of italics in the line. Then another problem presented itself as I continued to proofread. The roman cap H was misaligned consistently in the new work. I thought surely there was some crud stuck in the cone hole of the erring Matrix, but a check revealed no such problem.

When I started the work, I just picked up the Matrix Case as it had come to me and proceeded to work. I had no reason to do otherwise. Being a Goudy design, I was accustomed to crazy things like cockeyed or asymmetrical letters. But the more I fretted over the proof, the more I came to suspect another problem. On Large Composition Matrices sized 1x2 (one space wide, and two tall in the Matrix Case) the letter is positioned up-and-down just about in the center of the Matrix. Sidebearing, which always is fixed on the right side, in this instance appeared just about equal to the left. "Could the mat be in the case rotated 180 degrees?" I asked myself. I checked my proofs and the crossbar was low on my cast letter. The Lanston Monotype specimens of the face showed the H with a crossbar above center. So I took the case apart and *indeed, the H was upside down* in the Matrix Case.

The problems are to be found in the middle line of the proof below. Can you spot them?

modern perspective, such a restriction would mandate doom from the outset. However, at that time the whole industry's focus was to *automate* hand typesetting. Other typographic concerns were strictly secondary. One could vary

This discovery answered all sorts of questions I was having at this point. Though I had centered my H on the body, other letters were off to the side of their bodies. This was tolerable, but certainly not desirable.

The one Matrix I had used to set up the casting turned out to be incorrect, meaning all other characters were to a different/improper alignment. This was why the new work did not match my earlier italics casting.

When you're fighting the machine, trying to get it to cast consistently, give a good "face," justify properly, and all the other concerns a casterman must confront, having a letter Matrix upside down in the Case is so highly unlikely you'd never think about it. Only after discovering the problem did I come to the realization of how nearly symmetrical the H Matrix was and how easily such an error could have been made. My quandry now is whether the previous owners of the Matrix font had used it without discovering the problem I just uncovered. Perhaps so, but we'll never know. It would be fun to find a job printed in 16 pt. Deepdene by Kingsport Press just to see if the H was misaligned back when they were using the font. Now there's a research project for someone with a whole lot of time to waste!

My final solution: I had cast far too much type to consider doing it all over, yet when I fiddled with changing leading (one-point increments) it still was visibly off. I figured *within a line* the misalignment would be detectable, but if the whole line were off a trifle, no one would see it. So I re-cast to proper alignment only the full lines which contained italics and integrated them in. You're better than I if you can see this variation in the printed job.

Postscript

When I was about two-thirds finished with this casting, Kevin Martin of New Dundee, Ontario, Canada, visited to pick up the matrices he won in the Mike Anderson auction. I was having great difficulty and had just concluded my Mold was fouled up, so I rebuilt it almost from the ground up. Kevin spotted and we fixed other mis-adjustments on my Comp Caster and when I returned to casting, everything worked so much better. It goes to prove that two brains are better than one. Unfortunately, geography keeps we who love the craft way too far apart.

Bob Mullen Digs Out Obscure History of Making of Brass Type in the U. S. A.

It's a strange fact that even though many of us are obsessed with making type, the making of *brass type* has never crossed our minds. Bob Mullen got curious about the subject while he was researching his book on St. Louis Type Foundries (reviewed in *ATF Newsletter*, November, 2000, Issue 26, page 18), and this curiosity put him on a very difficult trail of finding the who, what, where and when of making brass type.

The end result is a 16-page booklet, handset and letterpress printed, and a few copies still are available at \$15.00 each, postage paid in the U. S. Contact him at 2620 31st Court South, La Crosse, Wisconsin 54601. Email <justmytype398@charter.net>

In the booklet, he reports that brass type manufacture in the U. S. began in 1889 and by the end of the nineteenth century, several companies had entered the business. Most was cast in the hand mold, but some by machine. By the 1930s, the market began to shrink significantly. Making brass type continues today, but most is made by robotic routers for various manufacturing purposes.

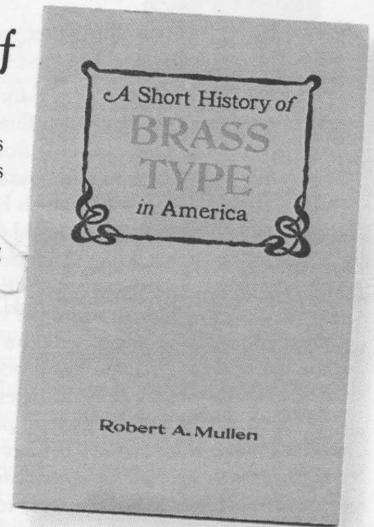
In his research, he found fifteen different U. S. manufacturers of brass type and his booklet lists the information he managed to find on these companies.

"As far as I know, there is no other published piece—book, monograph, or article—that has been written on this subject," he reports. "This research could hardly have been done ten years ago because much of the information was taken from advertisements and small news mentions in about a dozen different journals, most of them obscure, over several years of publication, and scattered in different libraries. Thanks to the Hathitrust Internet Library for putting these journals on-line, searchable by word or phrase. This allowed a person in a small city in western

Wisconsin access to a tremendous amount of information, he explains.

Worldcat.org listings of the holdings of libraries all over the country (and the world) also helped him find additional obscure brass type catalogs in several libraries across the country. "Carole and I own five such catalogs ourselves."

"While I don't have much brass type, nor do I use what little I do have, I am glad I have been able to piece it together. I'm sure there is more information out there, but at least this booklet gives the subject an historical base."



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On Moving from One Obscure Place to Another —with Type, Press, Grand Piano, and All!

A lot of things have happened recently with us. We decided to leave South East Alaska and moved to Orcas Island, one of the enchanting islands of the San Juan Islands here in Washington. We moved last August. A 40-foot steel container from Alaska Marine Lines carried all our stuff in two layers. I used the full 8-foot height of the container by building a mezzanine above 4 feet and got all our stuff (about 32,000 pounds) into the container.

Unfortunately the heavy-duty truck that came to deliver it could not make it all the way up our Buck Mountain Road on Orcas Island. He had to drop the container about 1.2 miles down the winding and steep road. With some high school kids' help, a friend and I brought everything up piece by piece either with a large telescoping forklift or my Ford truck. The Heidelberg

and the grand piano and everything else made it that way up the mountain. To accommodate our print studio we are in the process of enclosing the carport. Until it's finished, we are storing type cabinets, paper, etc., in our living room. Of course Joyce is looking forward to getting all of this stuff out of the living area and into where it really belongs.

On leaving Alaska we thought we had escaped ice, snow and cold weather. Not so. Since moving we have experienced temperatures for several days in the low teens, two feet of snow and winds up to 45 to 50 miles an hour. But now the crocuses are blooming and spring seems to be around our corner.

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