

*A monthly online publication devoted  
to letterpress printing (published  
the first day of each month).*

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No. 4 / **APRIL 2007**

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## **What does the future hold for used letterpress equipment?**

### **A visit with Don Black and Dave Churchman**

**W**HAT PRESSES are in greatest demand these days? Not that many years ago an 8x10 C&P would have been the answer. Today, for anyone who has paid any attention to the “wanted ads,” the presses being sought now are the tabletop C&P Pilot and the Vandercook. Don Black and Dave Churchman, two well-known dealers in used letterpress equipment, agree that the Pilot and Vandercook are most in demand. A follow-up question would be: what are the chances of finding one of these presses? You just might catch a slight grin on the faces of Black and Churchman and a rolling

of the eyes before answering that one. They are scarce.

Churchman and Black both said these presses are around if you want to pay the price. Black said that some prices of presses are four times what they were 15-20 years ago. Churchman said Vandercooks went from \$500 to \$5000 in less than 10 years. He said some Pilots have risen to \$2000

for a cleaned-up press with new rollers. Of course there is plenty of wiggle room in between these ranges, but it gives one an idea of what the demand is and where prices are heading. 🖨️



"These kids learn at schools using these proof presses and then think that's what they have to have," said Churchman. He added that there are a lot of 8x10 and 10x15 C&P's around collecting dust. He also said you could often pick up one of these presses for a very reasonable price; often people will give them away if you haul it out.

The two equipment dealers added that some letterpress items are just getting harder to find. Churchman attributes eBay to some of the resurgence of interest in letterpress and the pricing game. "The eBay crowd have created an awareness of value and desirability," he said.

In the early years of both Black's and Churchman's used equipment business, there were commercial print shops that had converted to offset and wanted to sell off their letterpress equipment.

## DON BLACK

A 1997 article in *The Printer*, written by Michael Torosian, referred to **Don Black** as the Linchpin of Letterpress, the King of Casters, the Mogul of Matrices, the Lord of the Linotype and the Grand Visor of Vandercooks.

Black started his career in 1953 as a Linotype mechanic at the *Globe and Mail* in Toronto. Plant modernization in 1964 brought about a confrontation with management and union and the union went on strike, which was never settled. He moved on to do some freelance work and also got his first taste of buying and selling equipment. His other jobs included working at a typesetting house and then another typesetting shop that he established with a partner but all the while he bought and sold letterpress equipment. In 1974 he sold his share of the business and started selling letterpress equipment full time. The business operates out of a 6,000 square foot building in Toronto.

Early on he had built a well-respected reputation and because of this in 1980 Canadian Linotype offered him their entire inventory of mats and machine parts. A similar deal was struck with Ludlow establishing Black firmly in the used equipment business.

When Black speaks of the business, **Don Black Linecasting**, he always refers to "we" when mentioning the operation of the business. This is in recognition of the important role his wife Ruth, their son Craig and his wife Lynn plays in the success of the operation.



During those times, letterpress equipment was plentiful and unfortunately much of it saw the junk dealer. Black said that there is still a lot of equipment that comes available and just when you think things are going to dry up, two or three shops pop up ready to sell their used letterpress equipment. Churchman agreed, but said the market is being reduced because of the renewed interest in letterpress.

Finding the equipment for these dealers to buy doesn't always mean a sale for them. "One of the problems is owners who want you to waste your time and give them written quotations and then use your quote as a guide and then contact others telling them 'Don Black said he will give you a specified amount of money,'" stated Black. He further related, "Then they say that if you give us

## DAVE CHURCHMAN

Friends know **Dave Churchman's** warehouse in Indianapolis, affectionally as Boutique de Junque. He has been buying and selling letterpress equipment since 1972 (and has been at the 470 N. Warman Avenue warehouse since 1983).

Churchman was a neophyte hobby printer until 1972 and he said two events took place to change his life. One was the purchase of letterpress equipment at a local school (including some 35 type cabinets) and the other was buying a defunct electrotpe business. He credits his friend Dave Peat (whom he met in 1965) to putting him on to the electrotpe business 11 years earlier. This started his equipment selling odyssey.

His letterpress experience started with printing classes in grade school. He received a small tabletop press in 1946. Between college and the Army, the press saw little action, but in 1963, with the equipment at his house, it was brought into production. He acknowledges the assistance of Peat with helping him in the printing end and telling him about the Al Frank's letterpress warehouse in Chicago. Churchman credits the visits to Al Frank's place as opening a lot of doors to him that led to various contacts for equipment.

He claims his 7000 square foot warehouse is rickety and has leaks but it has not prevented him from filling the building to the rafters with letterpress equipment. All who have visited will attest to the "grand experience" of searching out letterpress goodies in overalls and a flashlight.





A partial view of some of the equipment in Don Black's 6,000 sq. ft. warehouse.

just a little more, it is yours." Black says this isn't too big of a problem as he offers his best price at the beginning—or if the owner has a price in mind, it is simply a yes or no. Black also related that they have found a good way to handle someone who wants a written quote and that is to charge them for the quote and then give a refund if he ends up purchasing.

Churchman told how some have no idea of value and are grateful for any reasonable offer. "Others point out the latest prices on eBay and insinuate that you may be related (closely related) to Al Capone because they feel your offer is too low," Churchman said. He stated that he makes an offer and seldom deviates. He said he runs into those who are selling type cases and mention that at antique malls they go for \$40. "I suggest that they set up a booth and get rich," Churchman chortled. He also said he has no compunction about walking away from a deal if he feels he is in a bidding war or is otherwise being used in an attempt to pick his brain and then spurn his offer. "Not all sellers are saints," he quipped.

Both agreed that there has been a renewed interest in letterpress equipment. Much of this is attributed to the book art programs at colleges and universities. Churchman said a surprising number of buyers are women and that no doubt links back to the book arts. Both agreed that there are still

some commercial shops buying letterpress equipment, because of its revival, so that has to be added to the mix. There are many commercial letterpress shops out there who do perforating, numbering, etc.

What advice do these two experienced gentlemen have for someone who wants to get into letterpress? Black advises them to get help from a knowledgeable person to make sure the equipment is complete and in good working order. He said that he has had many people call looking for missing or broken parts on a press that they had purchased. The press was sold as complete and in good working order. Black said you have to know something of the equipment you are purchasing or have someone with you who is knowledgeable.

Churchman recommends that those wanting to get into letterpress take a class and read everything they can on the subject. He said he gets very stressed when young ladies show up knowing nothing, buy a press and then get upset because they can't churn out the invitations they envisioned after reading about letterpress in *Time* magazine!

A prime source now for both men in buying equipment is the hobbyist and book art person who has been involved in letterpress and then passes away without making any plans as to what happens to their equipment. All too often, dealers like Black and Churchman don't receive a call. Unfortunately, their heirs don't know about these dealers or such places as Briar Press or Letpress



Boutique de Junque at 470 N. Warman in Indianapolis.



and similar sources for advertising and the equipment is junked.

Black stressed the absolute need to make arrangements now for your equipment when you are no longer here. He said that once it hits the junkyard, no one will be using it ever again.

Churchman recommends having a written inventory of your letterpress equipment and have a knowledgeable person price it. He also stressed that a direct sale to an end user is always best with no cherry picking the best items and leaving the survivor with a bunch of junk.

Both concurred that lack of planning is the biggest reason why so much of our valuable letterpress equipment finds the junkman at the end instead of a person who will use it for many more years.

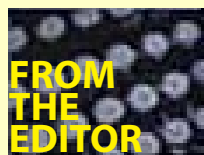
On a positive note, both men are bullish on the used equipment business. Black said that the resurgence of letterpress means that businesses like his should continue. "We certainly hope so," he said and then stated, "We have made a serious commitment to the industry to supply this equipment for a long time." Churchman agrees about the future but he said businesses like his should expect to pay more for equipment in the future and of course that means higher prices for the consumer. "There's no secrets in the world of Google or eBay and the world is much more aware of what's going on, price-wise," Churchman stated.

Your thoughts?

Comment on this article. [Write the editor.](#)

## Additions to Galley Gab

With the first issue of *Galley Gab* back in January, I figured this little online publication would be a four or



five page effort every month. I'm not sure what happened, but it sure ain't no four or five page monthly effort! Where I went wrong, I do not know. It didn't take me long to realize that if it were completely left up to me, all I would be able to produce would be a very limited journal. A lot of folks joined in and were most kind with their time and efforts—and thus things grew!

After the first issue, I decided I needed some knowledgeable folks I could seek advice from on an ongoing basis. Along those lines, *Galley Gab* now has five contributing editors. These are five folks that I highly respect and they have that same respect in the letterpress community.

Joining GG are: Mike Anderson, Gerald Lange, Stan Nelson, Steve Saxé and Jessica Spring. Welcome and thanks for participating in this little venture.

The contributing editors will occasionally write an article but their prime role is an advisory one—and those who know me, know I need plenty of good advice!

This is still a journal that is very much open to the entire readership. If you have an idea for an article you'd like to write (or one you would like to see written), please contact me. And if you would like to express an opinion on an article, I certainly welcome the "letter-to-

the-editor" type of comment. I am most open to your views of GG and any suggestions you might have.

## Growth

Readers may be interested in the readership numbers for *Galley Gab*. On our web site, where the issue is downloaded, we had 291 hits for January; 487 for February and 871 for March. At least we aren't going backwards!



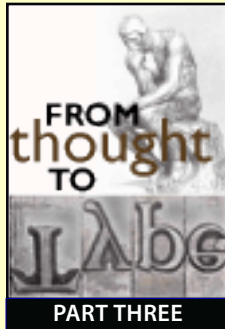
...is published on the first day of the month. It is free and can be downloaded from [www.galleygab.net](http://www.galleygab.net)

**Mike O'Connor, Editor-Publisher**

### CONTRIBUTING EDITORS:

Mike Anderson :: Gerald Lange :: Stan Nelson  
Steve Saxé :: Jessica Spring

*Galley Gab* is published free for the letterpress community. All letterpress printers are invited to comment and participate in each issue. All unsigned articles are those of the editor. Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of *Galley Gab*. [E-mail the editor](#) for information on submitting material for publication or expressing an opinion.



*This is part three of a three-part series giving a brief overview of the steps and procedures for designing, engraving and casting a typeface. This article covers casting type and is the last part in the series.*

## Casting the type

By MIKE ANDERSON

The moment of truth comes once the pot is hot.

Casting type is the fun part of the whole deal. Watching those silver soldiers marching out from under the type shoe gives me a very satisfied feeling. The design, pattern making and engraving are brought to the fore once the pump pushes the hot metal into the mould.

The Thompson caster was built in the second decade of the 20th century. John Thompson, a Linotype operator, who had a better idea for casting display type, designed the caster. The machine is fairly simple in design compared to the Linotype and Monotype Composition casters. The metal, rather than being pushed up from the bottom into the mould, is pumped vertically, straight from the bottom of the pot into the mould, and the type is delivered horizontally.

Theo Rehak in his excellent book, *Practical Type-casting*, makes the statement that the caster "... is a dangerous machine when taxed to the limits of

its casting range and pressures .... One can always identify the career Thompson castor; he has a permanent area of scar tissue on his forearms caused by fending off its frequent sprays of hot metal." I guess I have yet to meet a "career Thompson caster," or any Thompson type caster with those kinds of injuries. But Theo is correct, the machine, like all machines, is unforgiving if taxed to its limits.

Rights to the Thompson Type Caster, designed to cast 5 to 48 pt. type, were bought by Lanston Monotype Corporation in the early decades of the Twentieth Century. However, the company allowed the Thompson Type Caster to languish in obscurity while the company pushed their Giant Casters and Sorts Casters (aka Orphan Annie's (OA)). The Thompson is slower than either of the other casters, but it

produces better type, similar to the foundry type of the Barth Casters used by ATF. The English Monotype Corporation designed and marketed their own versatile answer to the Thompson, the Super Caster. Both American and English Monotype Corporations built and marketed the Thompson for many years, but did very little to improve the design; so all Monotype Thompson Casters are basically of the same original design. I have one of each and have to remember that they operate in opposite directions; one turns clockwise



**To read part one and two, go to the [archives](#). Part one is in the February issue and part two is in March.**

(American) and the other counter clockwise.

Although capable of casting the smaller faces (5 to 12 pt.), the cost effectiveness of running anything smaller than 14 pt. is questionable and usually smaller point size founts are cast on composition casters or OAs. Type from 14 to 18 pt. can be cast rather rapidly; however, as the type grows wider in set, the speed of casting is slowed down. A stop action (blank pass) is used when casting 18 pt. and above. The stop action reduces the casting sequence to every other rotation of the system. Also, the speed of the motor is reduced accordingly. For example, where you can cast one 18 pt. capital W every two seconds, a 48 pt. capital W is cast only every 10 to 15 seconds. This stop action and reduction in casting speed allows the metal to solidify and the mould to cool before the mould is opened and the type ejected.

In addition to the varied sizes of type, the Thompson can cast type from Lanston Display, Ludlow, Linotype, English Monotype, Foundry and Lanston Monotype Cellular mats. However,

each different mat requires a different mat holder.

The casting sequence begins once the metal is brought up to heat, approximately 650 to 750 degrees, depending upon the size of type (the smaller the type, the hotter the metal). A mat is inserted into the mat holder and placed into the machine. The mat holder is held in a moving arm which will position the face of the mat up against the mold and hold it tightly there during the initial part of the casting.

The mould consists of an adjustable top piece and a fixed bottom piece, a jet blade and a point blade are inserted between the top and bottom pieces. The third side of the mould is a vertical blade that rises and lowers during casting to seal the mould walls and allow the new cast piece of type to be ejected. A nozzle plate at the rear of the mould body attaches the pot to the mould and allows the metal to enter the mould cavity.

Initially, a single piece of type is cast, by operating the casting sequence by hand. The piece of type is checked for set width and face alignment on the type body. Face alignment means placing the bottom of the character, i.e., m, on a pre-determined baseline. The set width of the type body is adjusted by a micro-dial attached to the point blade and the type alignment is made with micro-dials built into the mat holder. Once the face is setting properly on the type body the casting sequence begins.

The motor is engaged and the mat holder moves into position. The pump— a simple spring operated piston, will then force a stream of metal into the cavity through the nozzle plate. The speed of the motor and the stop action allows a dwell time, allowing the type to cool. The mould body has water jackets cast within it, through which cold water flows, cooling the mould during casting. The water volume is adjusted according to the size of type, metal temperature and the casting speed.

At the end of the dwell time the vertical blade lowers, the Matrix Holder moves away from the mould and the point blade moves to the left, eject-

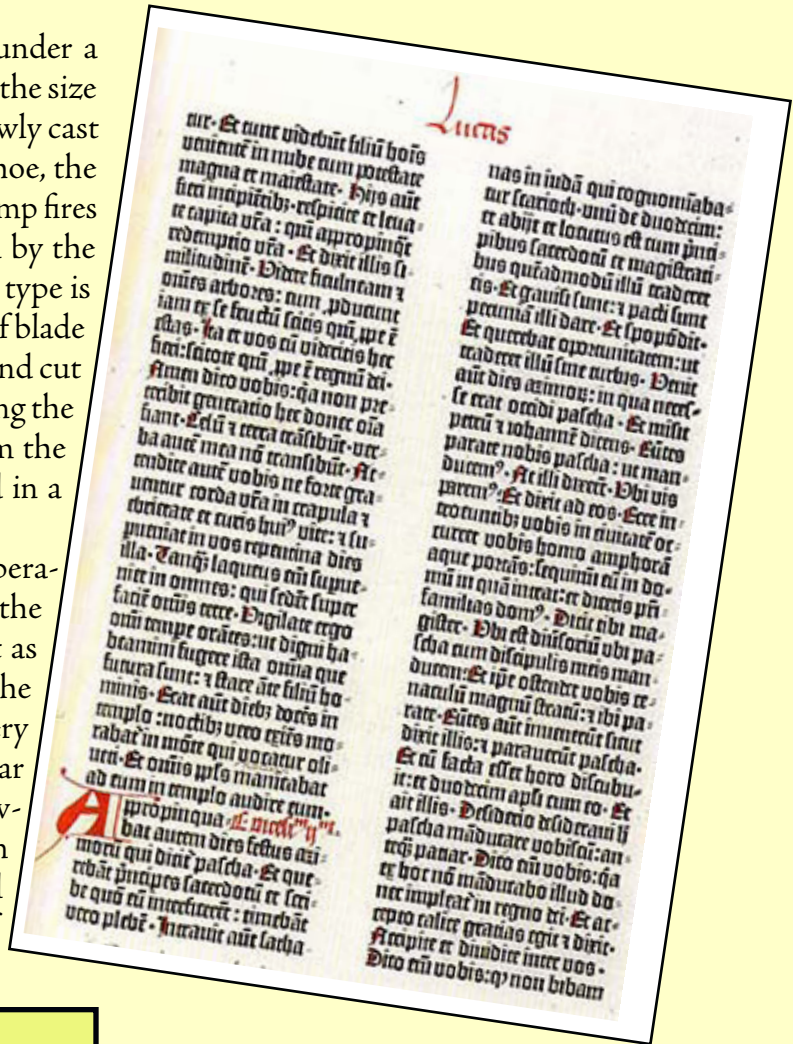


Mike Anderson at the Thompson caster.



ing the type over the vertical blade and under a Type Shoe. The Type Shoe is adjusted for the size of the type and fits very tightly over the newly cast piece. As other type is moved under the shoe, the type in front is pushed to the left. As the pump fires new metal into the mould, an arm driven by the pump operation snaps off the jet. As the type is pushed further under the shoe, three sets of blade will trim the top and bottom of the body and cut a groove where the jet was attached, forming the feet of the type. As the type emerges from the shoe, it is manually picked up and placed in a galley to be fonted later.

Control of the metal and mould temperature and the pump pressure controls of the quality of the type. The type metal is not as hard as original foundry metal because of the construction of the pump mechanism; very hard metal will cause excessive pump wear and result in the pump jamming. However, the hardest monotype metal cast in a Thompson will produce type that will be good for 50,000 or more impressions if handled properly.



Your thoughts?

Comment on this article. [Write the editor.](#)



SEND IN YOUR ITEM TO THE EDITOR

This is a good [site](#) to visit for tips and tricks as relating to studio-letterpress and/or digital type and the photopolymer plate process.

Thought you knew the history of the book? Better think again and see this [movie](#) and it'll put you straight.

"Makeready...the details and the techniques" was published by Cromwell Paper Company back in 1951. Cromwell was well known for its tympan paper. This is a very interesting booklet with a lot of truly useful information for the letterpress printer. A PDF file of the booklet can be downloaded at the [Galley Gab Archives](#).

The [Amalgamated Printers' Association](#) is holding their annual Wayzgoose in Oklahoma City on May 31, June 1, 2. The event is open to non-members. Talk to fellow letterpress fanatics! Big Swap Meet and then Saturday an auction. See the [Wayzgoose site](#) for more details.

The Buyers Market, held August 4-6, 2007 in Baltimore, MD has added a new Letterpress Pavilion. The semi-annual event attracts nearly 1,500 artist exhibitors and about 9,000 attendees. Those interested in more information should contact Laura Bamburak, Exhibits Manager at 410-889-2933 x227.

See this [site](#) for a nice display on what is being produced in the commercial world of letterpress.

# The circuitous genesis of the **TypeTable**



By HRANT PAPAZIAN

I used to be—and really still am—a student of Gerald Lange. In early 2003 I was enrolled in his letterpress course, uncharacteristically receptive to learning something old. When I discovered that Gerald owned a couple of sizes of Pascal (designed by José Mendoza y Almeida and manufactured by Lettergieterij Amsterdam in 1960), a rare face that I admired, and one that didn't have a decent digital version, I decided that I must print with it, and print in a way that would facilitate its digitization. Having tapped into Gerald's generosity, I composed a simple alphanumeric layout with the 60 pt size, placing rules between all the characters in order to extract the sidebearing (lateral spacing) information. And then I promptly pried the galley.

An inexpert maneuver coupled with the unexpectedly great weight of the setting caused the following sequence of thoughts and emotions, which I remember like it was an hour ago. First, even before any visual cognizance, came the noise,





and it was deafening—a crystalline cluster bomb at my feet. Recovering from that, I had a thought typical of somebody raised on computers: “Are we sure the Undo button won’t work? Damn it!” All those hours of work wasted; having to start all over. But then it hit me; the lost hours were nothing compared to the cultural carnage: all those carefully-crafted soft pieces of lead, irreplaceable pieces of lead, surely damaged, massively, for good. I’d heard about this sort of thing, but was too “young” to have seen it actually happen, certainly not to myself! Frantically falling to the floor, I started foraging through the leaden rubble, desperately needing to find out exactly how much damage was done. But then I realized I was in no shape for that; I packed up and left, sure that I would come back to clean up, but not that day. Having grown

up in the Lebanese Civil War, I tend to be rather cavalier about senseless destruction. But the Great Pie caused me to physically feel nauseous. It was like shooting a beautiful woman you’ve just started getting to know. Accidentally. Even after an hour, calling Gerald to give him the bad news, I was shaky. A longer-term practical consequence however can be encapsulated in the venerable maxim: You break it, you buy it.

So now I owned a nice type case populated with a fabulous—if somewhat damaged—font. But with nowhere to house it. Cue Gerald again: he had the undeniably brilliant idea of turning it into a table-top (and in the process giving new relevance to the term “typographic furniture”). But it had to be done right. So it took three years. As a result of a small lettering commission I had become acquainted with a semi-retired local woodworker willing to make what I designed at reasonable rates. After many emails and a few visits, many changes of design but a mutual commitment to produce something Good, we ended up with the TypeTable. Seeing its potential appeal to others, I started a modest marketing effort centered around photos posted to Flickr and a thread on Typophile. On the Ides of March, my first customer took delivery. Of course, it looks even better than mine. May he never pie it.



**Hrant Papazian** is an Armenian native of Lebanon, currently living in Los Angeles. His perspective on written communication was formed at the crossroads of three competing visual cultures. A multimedia designer by trade, his true love remains the black-and-white, but colorful world of non-Latin typeface design, with commissions from Agfa, Unitype, IKEA, the Narod Cultural Institute, Disney, UCLA, the Israel Postal Authority, Liverpool University and TeX Users Group.

Your thoughts?

Comment on this article. [Write the editor.](#)

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COMMENTS FROM OUR READERS

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## Letterpress education a novelty?

MY TAKE | **Rich Hopkins**, Terra Alta, WV :

So where does letterpress stand today in the educational world?

There are some exceptions, but I fear that the great majority of the academic programs embracing the idea of teaching letterpress consider it a novelty . . . something that is “neat” to play with, but not something which would merit extensive study, special skills or knowledge on the part of anyone assigned to be the teacher.

In a way, nothing’s changed. Teacher qualifications never have had much relevance to the subject being taught. I recall that I ended up teaching an undergraduate typography course I was enrolled in when the guy who was hired to teach the course discovered I knew more about the subject than he. Amazingly, he resigned and told the dean to make me teach the class! (Guess what? I got an A!)

It’s inevitable. There no longer is a field of experienced letterpress practitioners out there. So we end up with people teaching letterpress printing who barely know what a composing stick is, let alone how to hold it properly. Matters of proper makeup, proper impression, even inking, design, typographic harmony . . . well, those concepts are irrelevant. We’re having fun playing with this quaint old printing process and enjoying getting our hands dirty!

Now you run up against people teaching letterpress who never have made up a full page of type so it will lift, never imposed a book, never searched a form for wrong fonts, and never thought outside the box with regard to type selection, etc. (Whatever is in the “drawers” in the lab is all that *ever existed*, right?)

There are very few people out there interested in trolley cars, in buggy whips, in women’s corsets or men’s spats. There are very few druggists who’ve ever mixed chemicals, and few carpenters who ever

built a wagon wheel, and few hardware stores that sell nails out of a bin by the pound. It’s progress. We can complain about the pathetic caliber of letterpress teaching today, but it’s all we’ve got and it’s not likely that any “standard minimal curriculum” ever will be developed.

I got into printing as a youth at the very tail end of letterpress. I know the excitement and the smell of a busy composing room. I spent hours copyfitting jobs to assure they’d fit the space available so the type didn’t need to be set twice. I searched catalogs for hours seeking the perfect type for the project. I watched men spend hours doing makeready on a complicated four-color press job. Very few others know or are concerned about the halcyon days of letterpress. So I shall simply gripe and complain though I know nothing ever will come of it. I’m now the “antique” I once said I’d never be!

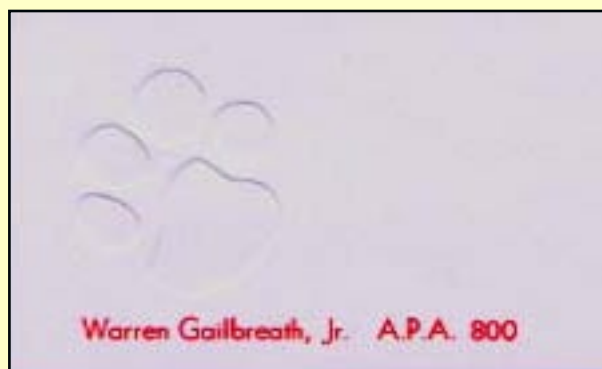
## What about mentors?

MY TAKE | **Ian Robertson**, Faithhope, AL :

One thing you didn’t mention in your prologue to “Teaching Letterpress” [last issue]—and related most closely to “. . . learned on their own”—are the lucky ones (I was one) who had a mentor or two. I had indeed bought a press and some type (for \$50 in 1950) and learned on my own but soon had help. Not formally as teachers—just advisors. But what advisors! Arthur Rushmore was the chief of these and I had the good fortune of his approval or disapproval for several years before his death in the mid-50’s. And there was Will Bradley who visited his sister on occasion and, it so happened, lived around the corner from my parents. And for my “nuts & bolts” instruction I had a commercial printer named Dave Howie who patiently answered my rather foolish questions. Without this input I doubt I’d have made it or at least in the fashion I did for it led to books and other such work. But that’s another tale and not applicable here. Suffice it to say some of us had mentors and they’ve made all the difference.

## HOW

When we find something letterpress printed that is interesting and/or unusual, HOW? seeks out the information as to how it was done. The debossed card shown below was in the March bundle of the [Amalgamated Printers' Association](#), printed by Warren Gailbreath, Jr. Here are his comments on production.



## ALL ABOUT Debossing

By WARREN GAILBREATH, JR.

The debossing process is basically the same as embossing with the difference being in the type of plate used to lower the intended image into the paper.

In traditional embossing, the ¼ plate is etched in recess, called a female die, and the counter is a raised (male) fiberglass plate. In debossing this relationship is reversed making the ¼ plate male and the counter female. This presses the sheet down into the counter from the face of the sheet.

I order my plates in either in copper or magnesium, ¼" thick and have a fiberglass counter manufactured by the engraver at the same time they make the plate.

When the plate and counter are complete, the two are joined and then drilled with reg-

istration holes. Plastic pins are then inserted with a tight fit to insure alignment of the two when the counter is mounted in register on the press.

The ¼ plate is mounted to the heat/mounting plate with mounting hardware provided by the manufacturer of my equipment.

Duplofol double face tape, which is durable and resistant to heat, is applied to the backside of the

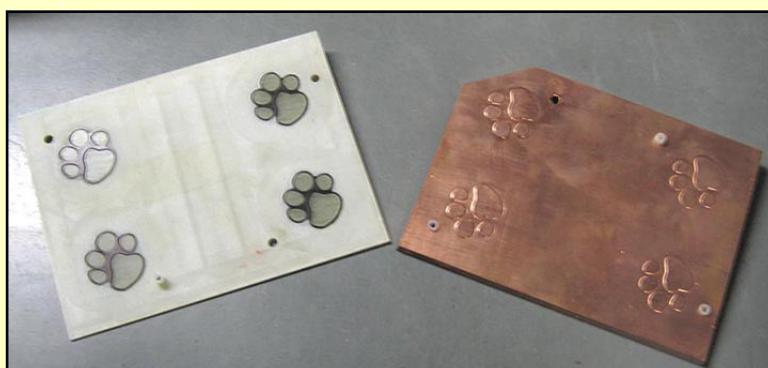


Plate and counter plate.



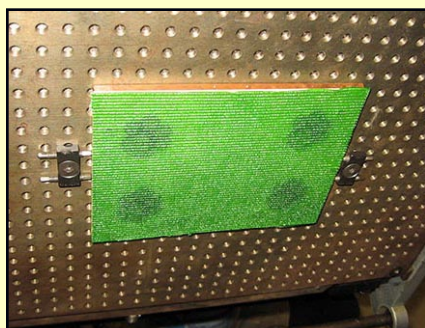
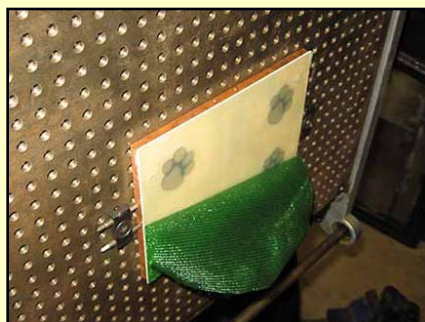
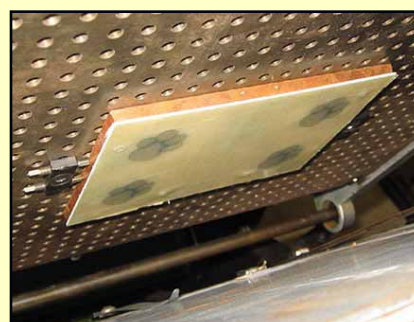


Plate and counter plate mounted



Removing Duplofol.



Press closing

fiberglass counter and the backing removed to expose the adhesive.

The press is cycled by hand, bringing the fiberglass counter with Duplofol in contact with mounting board on the platen. At this time, the fiberglass counter releases from the  $\frac{1}{4}$  plate, and stays attached to the platen, when the press opens, in complete register with the  $\frac{1}{4}$  plate for debossing.

At this point the plate and counter are mounted and ready for an initial pull of the first sheet to check for proper impression. In pulling the first sheet, the ideal situation is to have the plate and counter sandwich the sheet between each bringing full contact of the sheet on each side. Too much squeeze and your sheet will cut and punch through on edges and cause problems; not enough squeeze and your image will not show sharply.

Impression is changed the same as when letterpress printing, which is to add packing material underneath the board mounted on your press to bring more pressure when debossing.

Debossing can be done as a cold process, or heat can be used to help iron out textured papers and bring out more details.

The use of this process can truly enhance the attractiveness of your printed piece when used properly. Surprisingly enough, it is just another process of letterpress, and most of the principles

utilized in preparing your press for printing are the same for debossing.

Many factors come into play when doing a debossing job, more than can be covered here. One thing for sure, is once you have tackled your first job, you will have gathered even more knowledge of letterpress and how to use it to create that thing of beauty you constantly strive for.



[Warren Gailbreath](#) started in letterpress in 1986 doing straight forward numbering, perforating, scoring and die cutting for printers. He added foil and embossing a number of years later.

Your thoughts?

Comment on this article. [Write the editor.](#)

# Spreading the word to the next generation

History in Motion is an educational outreach program of [International Printing Museum's](#) curator, Mark Barbour. The "educational trailer" travels to



On a recent visit to a school in Fountain Hills, Arizona, Mark Barbour gives a spirited talk to students on printing. His mobile printing trailer is behind him. To the right is Phil Soinski (Ben Franklin) talking to students in the classroom.

schools in California and Arizona. Once at a school, there are two programs going on at the same time. Barbour uses the Colonial Printshop in the trailer for his presentations (showing the students how printing was done with metal type, hand press, etc.). Phil Soinski, who plays Ben Franklin, does his historically accurate performance in the school to another group. Phil has been "Ben Franklin" for over five years and receives wonderful reviews from the children and teachers.



For tours at the Museum in Carson, California, the students are also divided; one group taking a tour with Barbour and the other in the theater where Dr. Franklin does a program using slides and props, again all historically accurate.

The History in Motion visits about 180 schools during a year giving the program to about 30,000 students (24,000 on the road and 6,000 at the Museum).

## LETTERPRESS *Tips* WRITE THE EDITOR

The only tip/trick that I use normally is that after the type has been set and the form made up, I proof it. The difference is I use carbon paper. I lay the carbon paper on the form (carbon side up) and the proof paper on top of it. I use a small sign press and pull the roller across the form.

If doing it on the platen press, I put the proof paper against the tympan, the carbon paper facing the proof paper and turn the press over on impression.

Either method gives you a proof good enough to read. This way I do not have to wash up the ink and brayer, just to make one proof. – Paul Aken

An old pressman told me to always stand erect when feeding a platen press. This helps keep the jaws of the press just out of arms' reach and makes it very difficult, if not impossible, for a press operator to nip or smash his or her fingers.

It is well to form the habit of pushing the chase against the left side of the platen press bed, so that if it should be removed before the job is done, it may be replaced in its exact position. –Dave Clinger