



Occasional Miscellany

A Newsletter for Members and Friends of

The Library Company

OF PHILADELPHIA

FOUNDED BY BENJAMIN FRANKLIN IN 1731 "FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE AND LITERATURE"

Fall 2012

Peter Collinson's *History of London* Acquired

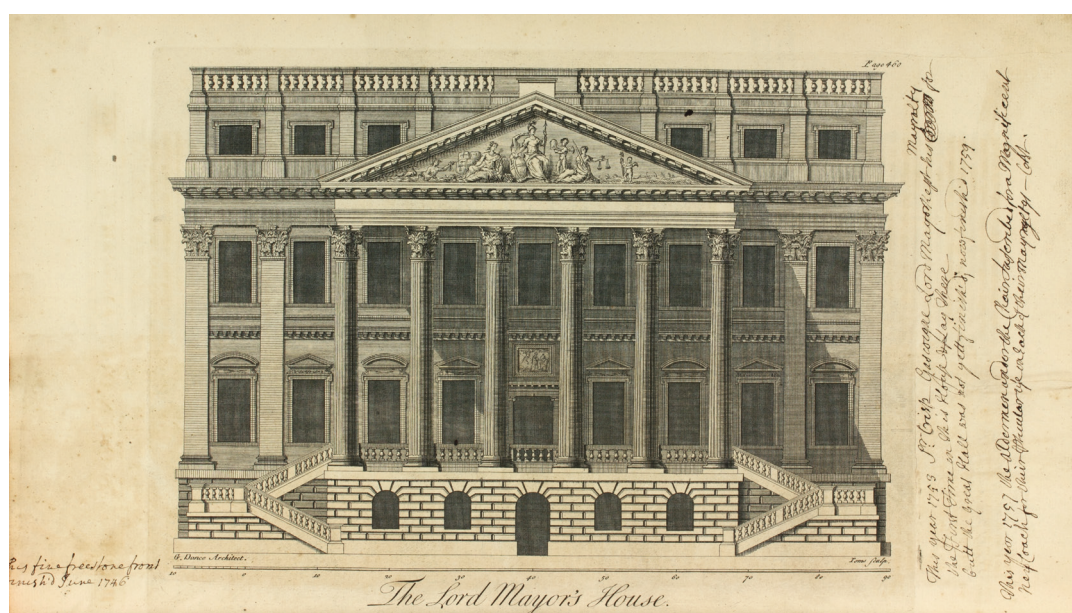
Historians of horticulture are familiar with Peter Collinson (1694–1768) as the great patron of John Bartram; together they introduced many North American plants to the English landscape. Less well known is the fact that Collinson played an enormous role in the life and career of Benjamin Franklin—and enjoys a prominent place in the history of the Library Company. Not only did Collinson “discover” Franklin, send him scientific equipment for experiments in electricity, and introduce him to members of the Royal Society for the first time, he also served as the Library Company’s first book purchasing agent.

John O’Mara of the London bookseller Maggs Bros., Ltd., knew about the connection and saw at the New York Antiquarian Book Fair this spring a first edition of William Maitland’s gorgeous folio *History of London* (1739) that had belonged to Collinson and was heavily annotated by him throughout. He was sure that the Library Company would jump at the chance to own this document of Collinson’s encyclopedic knowledge and interests. Fortunately, Library Company Trustees David Deutsch and Clarence Wolf were on hand and were able to arrange the purchase of the volume within minutes of seeing it.

The *History* includes a frontispiece folding plate of London in 1560 and twenty-four original engraved plates, three of them oversize folding plates. Over his years of ownership, Collinson tipped in numerous additional plates, plans, notes, documents, and clippings, with the last note dated just two years before his death. The hundreds of annotations and notes in Collinson’s hand deal with both the changing physical fabric of the city and events of daily life,

ranging from a harrowing account of bear-baiting; the fashion for farthingales and flat bonnets; and observations on May 29, 1765, of the anniversary of the Restoration of King Charles II. A very rich portrait of the greatest city in the world at that time emerges with remarkable vividness in these firsthand accounts. Throughout, Collinson’s additions reflect the inquiring and engaging mind of an 18th-century gentleman of the Enlightenment who corresponded with notable scientists in London and abroad.

While Collinson was in the habit of thoroughly annotating the books he read, he seems to have intended this book for posterity. In one such note—dated October 7, 1757, and signed “Peter Collinson, FRS” or Fellow of the Royal Society—Collinson expressed the hope that “evidences of my Love & Long Experience on planting and Gardening &c. &c. will remain for Ages by the Great Quantity of Seeds I for many years Imported from Pennsylvania & Virginia without any profit or advantage, but only to Oblige my Numerous Friends, amongst the Nobility



“The Lord Mayor’s House.” Annotated plate opposite p. 460, in Peter Collinson’s copy of William Maitland, *History of London* (London, 1739).

continued on page 2

continued from page 1

& Gentry & to improve my Country.”

Collinson was introduced to the Library Company through the scrivener-naturalist Joseph Breintnall, who served as the Library Company’s first Secretary. As a result, Collinson donated copies of Isaac Newton’s *Principia* and Philip Miller’s *Gardeners Dictionary* to the Library Company in 1732. In his capacity as its agent in London, Collinson sent information about “curious facts relative to electricity” along with glass tubes for experiments. This gift sparked Franklin’s interest in electricity and led to the series of letters that were later published under Collinson’s supervision as *Experiments and Observations on Electricity*. Bernard Cohen, in his book *Benjamin Franklin’s Experiments*, remarked that “Collinson [was] the most important single person in Franklin’s career.”

Joseph Breintnall also encouraged Collinson to pursue a correspondence with Bartram, who would famously found Bartram’s Garden, America’s oldest living botanical preserve. Collinson encouraged the Directors of the Library Company to make Bartram a member free of charge as it would “reflect a great honour on the Society for taking Notice of a Deserving man who has not that Effluence of Fortune to be a subscriber But who has a great Genius which may be greatly improved by having a free Access to the Library.” In packages of books sent to the Library Company, Collinson enclosed packets of European seeds and botanical books intended for Bartram.

Library Company Trustee Elizabeth McLean, who recently coauthored *Peter Collinson and the Eighteenth-Century Natural History Exchange*, sees the potential research uses for the volume as virtually limitless. In addition to insights into business, politics, fashion, and architecture in 18th-century London, annotations in the volume shed light on heretofore unknown details about Collinson’s family history and his sense of his own contributions to history. We warmly invite scholars to dig in, and we look forward to sharing the results in future communications.

Frank Furness at the Library Company

The fall of 2012 finds Philadelphia’s cultural community—the Library Company included—celebrating the legacy of architect Frank Furness (1839–1912). The work Furness produced for three of the nation’s most important railroad companies, the Philadelphia & Reading, the Baltimore & Ohio, and the Pennsylvania, is explored in the Library Company’s current exhibition *Frank Furness: Working on the Railroads*. Guest curated by George E. Thomas and on view until April 19, 2013, the exhibition draws together material from the Library Company’s collection and items from other institutional and private collections. Architectural drawings, original art work, photographs, railroad artifacts, and an amazingly detailed N-scale model of

Broad Street Station bring the story to life in our gallery.

The son of an influential Unitarian minister, Frank Furness returned from Civil War service (for which he earned the Congressional Medal of Honor) to launch an architectural career that spanned more than four decades. From his first commission in 1866 designing the Germantown Unitarian Church to the addition and alterations he created for the Ardmore Grammar School in 1912, Furness designed nearly one thousand civic and domestic structures. Close to home, the firm of Furness & Evans served as architect for the Library Company’s Cassatt House at 1320 Locust Street, owned by a brother of Mary Cassatt, and today serving as our residential research center.

Furness shaped students who would join him in transforming American architecture, such as Louis Sullivan, William Price, and George Howe, whose works would define the skylines of Chicago, Philadelphia, and Atlantic City for the next century. Although his architectural style fell out of favor in the 20th century, today he is gaining recognition as an innovator and the embodiment of Phila-



“Bishops-Gate.” Annotated illustration on p. 15, in Peter Collinson’s copy of William Maitland, *History of London* (London, 1739).

continued on page 3

Meet Research Fellow Angel-Luke O'Donnell



Charles Denlinger. Model of Broad Street Station, late 1980s. Weld-On Resin bond, auto body filler, basswood.

continued from page 2

delphia's era of industrial prowess. "In making designs that expressed purpose instead of looting historical forms," writes Thomas, "Furness began the process that led to modern architecture." The methods Furness used influenced the most innovative Philadelphia architects, from Louis Kahn in the 20th century to Robert Venturi at the dawn of the 21st.

Our exhibition is one of many events throughout the city that make up *Furness 2012: Inventing Modern*. Institutions including the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the Architectural Archives at the University of Pennsylvania are among those honoring Furness with exhibitions this fall. In addition, the Athenaeum of Philadelphia will host a two-day symposium, *Frank Furness: His City, His World*. The website www.frankfurness.org provides information about these events, as well as a biographical sketch, a chronology of projects, and an interactive map with the location of Furness buildings around the city. The Library Company is pleased to be a partner in giving Furness the serious attention he so richly deserves.



Water Street Station, Wilmington, Delaware, cyanotype, 1891.

A PhD student from the University of Liverpool, I came to the Library Company this fall to work on a thesis entitled "Tangible Imaginations: Community, Print Culture, and American Identity in Philadelphia, 1764 to 1776." My research looks at the use of the term "American" in Philadelphia print culture during that period. My thesis argues that one of the most important developments preceding the Revolution was the realization on the part of the colonists that they belonged to a community of Americans. The name American became a rallying point for opposition against Parliamentary taxation as colonists debated who belonged within

their community and what behavior was expected of patriots.

Furthermore, the debate over the definition of a "True American" did not end with the Declaration of Independence, but continued long into the new Republic, and an exact definition is still disputed regularly today. My project began by looking at the emergence of the "demonym"—or the name for the people who make up the nation—during the 1765 Stamp Act crisis. As Pennsylvanians protested the new tax on all printed documents, they used the term "American" as a call for solidarity to unite the disparate colonies and assert the rights and privileges they had practiced for generations. As colonists began to try on their new name, they were also grappling with the nature of representative government, the need for an industrious society, and the feasibility of American self-sufficiency. Overall, this project argues that when colonists called themselves Americans they were not just distancing themselves from their British counterparts, but were attempting to understand the values of their community and overcome provincial differences in the pursuit of American liberty.

The majority of my research concentrates on popular printed ephemera such as newspapers, pamphlets, and political broadsides, and I argue that most Philadelphians learned about their worsening position within the British Empire through these media outlets. The collections in the Library Company are fantastic resources for studying 18th-century political debates, and whilst a Fellow here I have gained invaluable insight through examination of the *Pennsylvania Journal* newspaper, the *American Magazine*, the *Royal American Magazine*, and the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, each of which demonstrated that there was a strong media narrative within colonial periodicals that promoted the idea, in the words of John Dickinson, of "frugal, ingenious, united and discontented" Americans. Additionally, the Library Company's Robert R. Logan Collection of John Dickinson's manuscripts adds personal context to his powerful 1766 statement "I am a *North-American*."

continued on page 4

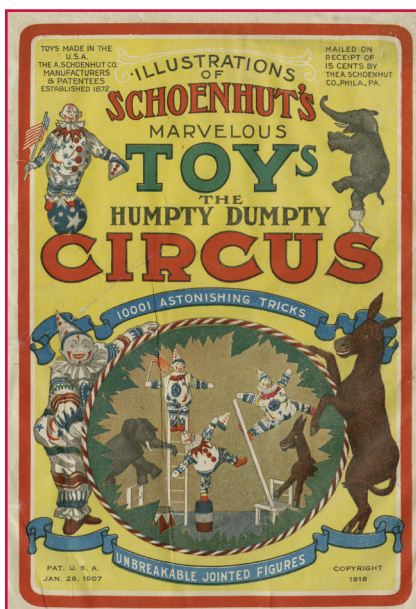
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Angel-Luke O'Donnell.

Letters in the collections of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania including papers of the Chew, Logan, Penn, Cox-Wharton-Parrish, Hollingsworth, and Bradford families further show that the process of becoming an American was fraught with emotional anxiety and great personal risk to people's livelihoods. Ultimately, all the new republicans of 1776 called themselves Americans, but that word "American" meant a great deal more than simply being on the American continent.

Endless Amusement



Illustrations of Schoenhut's Marvelous Toys. The Humpty Dumpty Circus. Philadelphia: The A. Schoenhut Co., 1918. Purchased with funds from the Walter J. Miller Trust.

The delightful new exhibition *Endless Amusement*, on view now in the small exhibition gallery and the Print Department, represents ten decades of toy design, marketing, and consumerism. Over the course of a summer as the Visual Culture Program's artist-in-residence intern, Moore College of Art & Design student Jesse Lentz completed ten sculptures inspired by our Collections. Originally struck by an A. Schoenhut & Company trade catalog on a class visit last spring, Ms.

continued on page 5

News from the Board

We would like to extend an enthusiastic welcome to our newest Trustee. **Nicholas D. Constan** is an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Legal Studies & Business Ethics at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. He has served on the Board of the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia and is currently on the Board of the Lantern Theater Company.

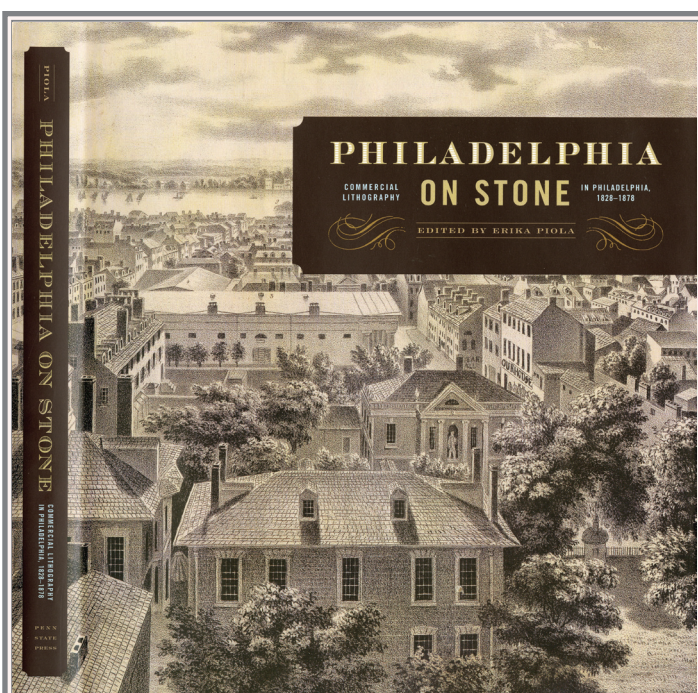
We are also pleased to announce that the following Trustees were elevated to emeritus status upon the end of their terms in May. **Gordon M. Marshall** was the Library Company's Assistant Librarian from 1971 to 1993. He has published articles on portrait prints and the history of papermaking. **Carol Eaton Soltis** is the Project Associate Curator for the Peale Collection Catalogue at the Center for American Art at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. **Beatrice W. B. Garvan** is the former Curator of American Decorative Arts at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and former President of the Library Company Board of Trustees.

News from the Staff

We are delighted to welcome **Krystal Appiah**, our Reference Librarian and new African Americana Specialist. Ms. Appiah comes to us from the Maryland State Archives, where she was an Institute of Museum and Library Services fellow. She holds a Master of Library Science degree from UCLA and Master of Public Humanities and Bachelor of Arts degrees from Brown University.

We also wish our departing staff the best as we bid them farewell. **Ruth I. Hughes**, formerly our Chief Cataloger, recently retired after seventeen years with the Library Company. She began her work in 1995 after receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree from Oberlin College and a Master of Library Science degree from Drexel University. **Linda Wisniewski**, formerly a Visual Materials Cataloger, left the Library Company to begin a program in Nursing at the University of Pennsylvania. **Edith Mulhern**, formerly Conservation and Digitization Technician, has become the Records Coordinator at the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts.

The Library Company had an especially accomplished group of interns over the summer months. **Christina Tavernelli**, a student at Haverford College, worked in the Reading Room and Print Department on the project to catalog American Sunday-School Union woodblocks. The multi-talented **Jill Hanley**, a senior at Kenyon College, worked with our Postcard Collection and Rights and Reproductions, and helped to accession sheet music. **Jessica Lentz**, a student at Moore College of Art & Design, created kinetic sculptures (see article) as the artist-in-residence intern for the Visual Culture Program. **Elizabeth Coltrin**, also a student at Moore College of Art & Design, worked as a curatorial assistant in the Print Department.



Recent Library Company Publications

Erika Piola, Associate Curator of Prints & Photographs and Co-Director of the Visual Culture Program, has edited *Philadelphia on Stone*, the first work in more than fifty years to examine the history of 19th-century commercial lithography in Philadelphia. This heavily illustrated volume, copublished by the Library Company and Penn State University Press, includes thematic essays that provide an analysis of the social, economic, and technological changes in the local trade from 1828 to 1878; document the careers of such prominent lithographers as P. S. Duval and James Queen; and add new insights into the lithographic process itself and the role lithography played in book illustration, advertising, sensational journalism, and landscape imagery.

Inspired by a 2010 conference at the Library Company and edited by Lara Langer Cohen and Jordan Alexander Stein, *Early African American Print Culture* explores African Americans' diverse contributions to print culture in early America. The material considered in this volume, copublished by the Library Company and the University of Pennsylvania Press, ranges from domestic novels to gallows narratives, Francophone poetry to engravings of Liberia, and transatlantic lyrics to San Francisco newspaper articles. The seventeen contributing scholars show how close attention to the archive can expand the study of African American literature well beyond matters of authorship to include issues of editing, illustration, circulation, and reading—and how this expansion can enrich and transform the study of print culture more generally.

continued from page 4

Lentz has reimagined graphics from that catalog and others to create a series of whimsical and nostalgic kinetic sculptures.

Ms. Lentz begins her menagerie in the 1850s with an interpretation of a rocking horse, influenced by paper soldier dolls. Other sculptures draw inspiration from books of nursery rhymes and volumes on travel and children's toy making. Two of the artist's favorite pieces are a dancing fox and a tin elephant. The fox, representing the 1860s, is based on a dancing doll shown in *The Girl's Own Toy-Maker*—one of the few active toys designed especially for girls in a period when the gendering of children's toys was becoming more prevalent.

An elephant pull toy represents the 1880s and was inspired by Philadelphia's Tin Toy Manufactory, whose toys, Lentz notes, were always decorated lithographically or painted with oils. The little elephant moves on wheels repurposed from a modern toy truck. Without the means to lithograph onto the tin, she instead used a thick layer of enamel to form a white coating. "And when I say enamel," clarifies the resourceful art student, "I mean two bottles of nail polish—an improvisation that I picked up in a jewelry class."

Every object in the collection is meant to provide "endless amusement" and to be touched and played with when not on display. Throughout, the exhibition testifies to Ms. Lentz's ingenuity in repurposing materials and to her insights about the provenance of her historical models. *Endless Amusement* will be on display through the fall with an online exhibition available for view on the VCP at LCP website in the coming weeks.



Dancing Fox Lady, copper sheet, aluminum sheet, string, and wood. Inspired by Ebenezer Landell, *The Girl's Own Toy-Maker*. Boston: Cyrus G. Cook, 1861; and Ebenezer Landell, *The Boy's Own Toy-Maker*. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1865.

Give a Gift to Future Generations



James Reid Lambdin, *Benjamin Franklin*, oil on canvas, ca. 1880, after the original by David Martin, 1766.

Benjamin Franklin gave the nation a lasting gift when he founded a public subscription library that provided access to books for ordinary people—and there are many ways you can create your own legacy at the Library Company. Did you know that planned giving enables you to meet some of your own financial goals at the same time that you provide for the future of the Library Company—from establishing a secure income stream, to reducing the taxes levied on your estate, to increasing your spendable income? Planned giving also offers a way for you to enjoy the satisfaction now of a future major gift—and allows you to be a part of shaping the future. Contact John Van Horne or Molly Roth at 215-546-3181 today to discuss the best way to create your legacy at the Library Company.

From the Director

This fall has been a busy time at the Library Company. In addition to the traditional round of activity that comes with the start of the academic year and the change of the season—conferences, colloquia, classes, openings, talks, and events—the Library Company has initiated a strategic planning process that will chart a direction for the next phase of the institution's life. Prompted by the need to guide our expansion into the recently acquired Carriage House strategically, we kicked off a four-month planning process in September with a two-day retreat for staff and Board members. Those sessions identified Research and Curation; Programming and New Audiences; Facilities and Collections; Technology; Human Capital; and Financial Sustainability as the critical issues to be addressed in moving forward. Working groups have been formed to concentrate on each of these areas and we look forward to sharing the results of their work with you as our planning process unfolds.

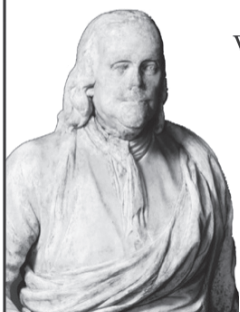
One issue the plan will have to address is how to increase awareness of the Library Company among the next generation of shareholders and supporters. Thanks to Trustee Davida Deutsch, we have gotten a bit of a head start on getting out the good word. At the beginning of September we launched an advertising campaign in *The New Yorker* magazine modeled on the old Burma Shave signs that dotted the edges of America's highways from the 1920s through the 1960s. The campaign is the brain-child—and generous gift—of Ms. Deutsch, who has long felt that the readership of that magazine was a natural constituency for the Library Company.

Beginning in September and running through the end of the year, a new ad each week will highlight some noteworthy aspect of our history and our collections. The tiny ads give out just enough information to entice readers to a website that provides a more in-depth discussion of the week's topic and—ideally—leads them deeper into the Library Company's main website to learn more about the institution. While the *New Yorker* ads are not read consecutively the way the Burma

Shave messages were, we hope that by adopting the same playfulness we will intrigue and delight a whole new audience. Please visit www.librarycompany.org/treasures to follow our progress.

John C. Van Horne
The Edwin Wolf 2nd Director

The Library Company OF PHILADELPHIA
founded in 1731



We're letting out America's best-kept secret. Watch this fall for some of the 500,000 treasures from Ben Franklin's Library.
~~ Burma Shave style!

www.librarycompany.org/treasures

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