

SHELF LIFE

Opening Doors and Turning Pages: LBI expertise, the changing market, and what this means to the publishing/printing world

It's a given that when attending an association conference, one expects to see a lot of familiar faces. But for those attending the LBI Fall Conference and Hardcover Binding Seminar in September, there were many new faces...and with good reason.

For the first time in several years, LBI opened the event to nonmembers of the organization.

"It's a good idea to open the conference up to nonmembers every so often," LBI president Gerrit Dykhouse says. "It gives them the opportunity to experience the benefits of becoming a member of our organization."

As a result, the Springfield, MA event's attendance was unprecedented, with more than one hundred and fifty individuals representing seventy-five

companies. Sixty-five percent of those attendees were from industries other than library binding, including book



JC Noyes, Bridgeport National Bindery, in discussion with tour participants.

manufacturers specializing in short-runs, long runs and print-on-demand as well as yearbook and photo book manufacturers.

Library Binding And Other Industries

In a rapidly changing world, industries are changing faster than ever. The bookbinding industry is no exception and hardcover binding expertise is in demand from markets not related to library binding.

Bill Upton, president of Malloy Inc. in Ann Arbor, MI, is one such example. Malloy produces print runs of books that range from a few hundred



Kent Larson, Bridgeport National Bindery, leads another group.

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Opening Doors and Turning Pages

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Scott Delany, Xeikon, addressing the crowd.

copies to many thousand and, according to Bill, his area of the industry has been moving more towards print-on-demand (POD) in recent years.

"The trickiest part of POD manufacturing of a hardcover book is the binding," he explains. "The LBI Fall Conference provided a unique opportunity to learn more about the process. When I registered for the conference, I was primarily interested in hearing the speakers discuss the most up-to-date equipment and systems, and I was looking forward to the tour of Bridgeport National Bindery. Not only were my expectations fulfilled regarding those portions of the conference, but I also found the presentations by the other speakers to be quite worthwhile, and the tour of the edition binders was icing on the cake."

LBI Board of Directors Reflect This New Need by Taking Things to the Next Level

With the increased interest in and need for hardcover binding expertise, plus many inquiries about membership from nonmember attendees, the LBI Board of Directors voted on September 27 to take the organization to the next level. This level includes renaming LBI to reflect an expanded vision and membership base.

"I think it's long overdue," said Utah Bookbinding's Mark Hancock, vice president of LBI. "There are great

"I think it's long overdue. There are great advantages to expanding and this is going to breathe life into our organization."

Mark Hancock, Utah Bookbinding
LBI Vice President



Tour participants in conversation following the bindery tour.

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UPDATE:

On February 28, 2008, the LBI Board of Directors voted to adopt the assumed name of Hardcover Binders International (HBI) for the Library Binding Institute. In doing so, the membership of the corporation will consist of two divisions - the Certified Library Binders Division and the Hardcover Binders Division.

Only members of the Certified Library Binders Division may refer to themselves as members of the Library Binding Institute (LBI). All membership classes, rights, and privileges remain unchanged.



The Many Different Kinds of Adhesive Bindings - Part 2

By Werner Rebsamen

When binders introduced adhesive bindings more than one hundred years ago, they did not have to cope with difficult to bind papers. Most papers were uncoated and easy to glue together. As a result, adhesive bindings using animal or vegetable glues lasted for many years. In 1913, the Sheridan company, which built the first successful commercial perfect binders, claimed they bound three million New York phone books, one and three quarter million *Ladies* journals, more than a million *Cosmopolitan* magazines and five million Sears catalogs. (*1) Each of these publications was designed to be in use for at least a year. So while the idea of a "perfect" binding is nothing new, bindings were anything but perfect until the development of appropriate adhesive formulations and the introduction of the first double-fanned bindings in the 1960s.

These days, adhesive binding is a science involving coated papers, various methods of printing, petroleum based inks, and fuser-oils in digital printing. As one problem is addressed, others surface. Bear in mind, no publisher or printer will ever ask a binder if a certain paper, loaded with solid ink or toner, is

suitable for adhesive binding. Just look at some of the papers they expect us to bind. Take a pen and try to write on it. The surface coating will reject any ink, water or adhesive. Now try to bond those sheets together – good luck. Overcoming the challenges of successfully binding these papers requires a great deal of research and the task is often taken for granted.

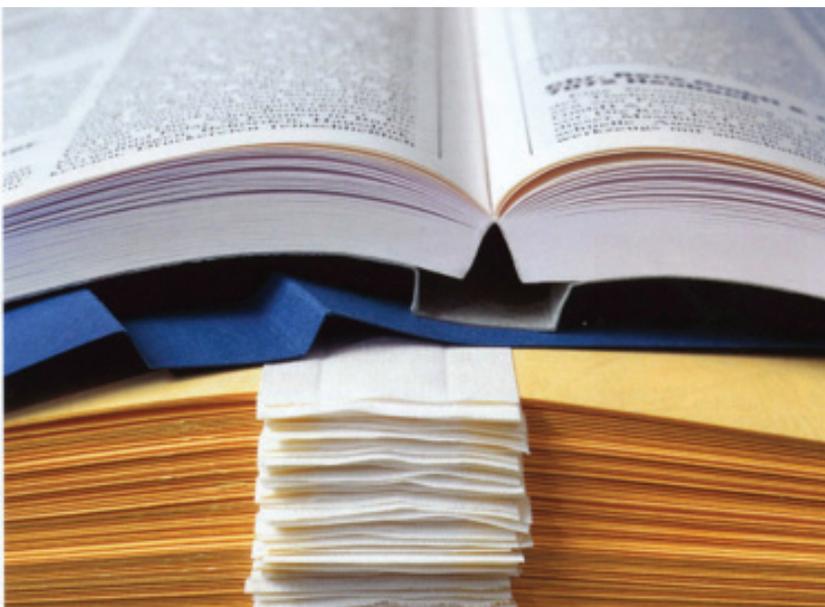
Spine Preparation Techniques

Imagine processing a 2-inch thick phone book at a speed of 12,000 per hour. Printed signatures, depending on the dimension and imposition layout, may contain four to ninety-six pages. The more pages, or the thicker the paper, the more the binder must mill-off the spine to create single sheets. This requires sophisticated, heavy duty tools.

The backbone preparation is a major factor in determining the strength and longevity of adhesive bound books. Modern engineering created a broad selection of tools for this task – the milling and shredding of heads and separate roughing stations with heads for notching, slitting, leveling, sanding and brushing. Paper dust created in these processes must be removed. To describe these operations in detail would require its own article, however, I have outlined some of the major techniques being used today.

Milling means virtually cutting off the folded spine and exposing all individual sheets to the adhesive. These individual sheets are then specially prepared in the roughing station(s), using various tools that depend on the binding method, type of adhesive and paper stocks. This includes sanding, notching, slitting and brushing. After the spine preparation, in order to ensure a quality adhesive binding, the book block must be perfectly level for the uniform caliper of the glue application.

Micro Grooving is a relatively new technique introduced in response to the paper industry's



In a RepKover binding, the softcover is lined with a strip of cloth. Book-block is able to flex, creating a lay-flat binding.

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Adhesive Bindings

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development of better paper surfaces for enhanced print quality. The paper has less cellulose content (fibers) and more filler and coating, making them more challenging to bind. The coatings are similar to porcelain clay. How can such heavily coated sheets bond together? Machinery suppliers went back to the drawing board and came up with a new device that will rake out the inner fibers of a coated sheet. Best of all, micro-grooving generates only minimal heat and thus prevents smearing of coatings and fillers and optimizes the flowing characteristics of the adhesive around the exposed fibers.

Burst Bindings are most popular for best seller books and bindings like *Harry Potter* and the *DaVinci Code*. In burst binding, the folded spine is not milled-off. On the web press, or on the folding machine, slots are cut all the way through the bind-fold. As these cuts are made from the inside out, excess paper is imbedded into the adhesive, giving such bindings exceptional strength. Successful adhesive application is most critical and requires top-of-the-line binding equipment with two shot (two glue pots) capabilities. The milling head will just slightly touch the exposed slots to make sure they are all open to receive the adhesive. The first primer adhesive application is a water-based PVA which must penetrate all the way into the center of the folded signature (section). If it does not, the inner four pages will fall out. After drying this first coating, the second application, a hotmelt adhesive, will give it the necessary "backbone."

Why are such bindings so popular among bestsellers? In short, it means paper savings. On an average perfect binding, we mill-off approx. 3/16 inch. That is 3/8 inch (1 cm) between each four-page segment which can turn into a lot of money saved, especially if the runs are in the millions. A burst binding can be easily recognized by adding a little pressure onto the spine since one will see the individual slots filled with an adhesive.

There are many other kinds of spine preparations techniques, such as perfo-punch, deep-notch and

other odd names created for marketing purposes. Used by binders and book manufacturers, these techniques fall into the categories discussed. For example, Rand McNally calls its burst binding "RandLock."

Application of the Adhesives

In part one of this article, a so-called one shot application was discussed. Although it sounds simple, the application of an adhesive used for these processes requires sophisticated and expensive systems. A basic glue pot used for the application of a hotmelt adhesive must be heated to approximately 360 degrees Fahrenheit. There are three application rollers in a standard glue pot. The adhesive circulated and picked up by the first roller has only a 0.125 to 0.5 mm gap. This relative narrow gap is necessary to push up and have the adhesive penetrate into the notches. The second roller gap is 1.5 mm. It floods the spine with the adhesive. Both of these application rollers turn clockwise. The final

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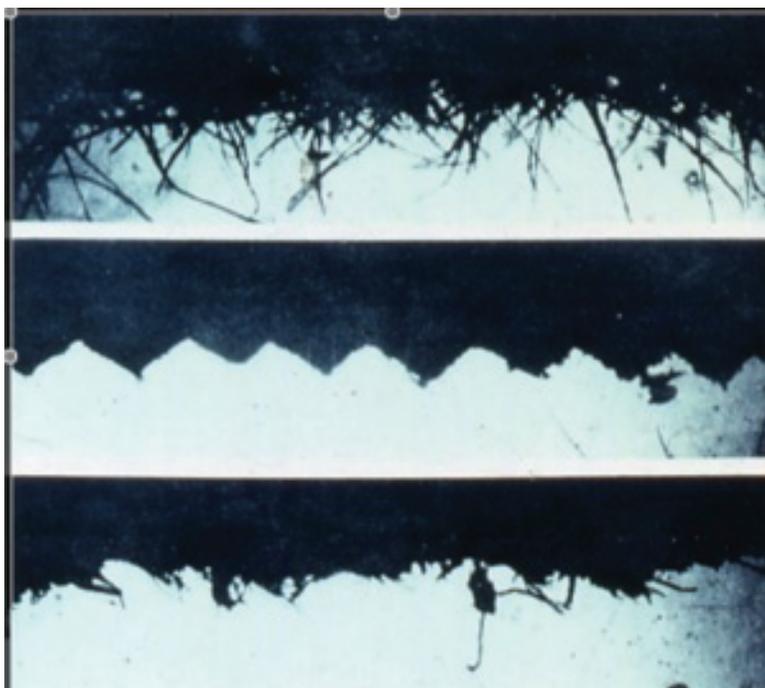
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Spine preparations for adhesive bindings are a science and more difficult to execute than ever due to fillers and coatings.

application roller is much smaller in diameter and is called a spinner. It turns counterclockwise, is heated approximately 50 degrees Fahrenheit higher than the adhesive, and most important, it is responsible for an even, calibrated glue film on the spine. Scrapers, which can be adjusted on and off, control the glue application from head to tail.

Glue applications for PVA's are similar, although with different settings. For PUR's, single application rollers or extrusion nozzles are used. For the double-fanning process, a long roller is used. Instead of a straight application over and in the direction of the glue roller, this task is accomplished in a fanning motion from side to side or front to back instead of from head to tail. It is the only process in the bookbinding trade which actually tips one sheet next to the other, giving it its superior strength and durability. This is the only adhesive binding process which meets the tough NASTA/LBI specifications for library bindings.

Two-shot systems utilize two different adhesives. Two glue pots are used, the first of which contains a primer adhesive. This can be a low viscosity hotmelt which will flow easier around the exposed fibers and into the notches. It could also be a PVA primer adhesive. Since water and hotmelt glue do not mix well, and if a PVA primer is being used, all the water must be taken out with in-line heaters. The pre-heated binding edge is a plus for a second hotmelt application. In rare applications, mainly for book manufacture, two shot PVA systems are being used. The final results are superior rounding capabilities.

Adhesive Bound Binding Styles

We all are familiar with soft cover or paperback books, as well as hardcover bound books. Although adhesive binding is a complex topic which could lend itself to long editorials, I will try to keep things simple for the purpose of this article.

Perfect Binding is used for paperback production. This can be a one shot or two shot application process with hotmelt. If PVA or PUR are used, experts will refer to them as adhesive bindings, simply an expression for better quality bindings. I have been in binding facilities where 400 million paperbacks are bound each year. Those are the least expensive ones, printed on newsprint. A tough task. You should see the dust created processing such cheap papers.

Softcover bindings now represent the majority of all binding styles. Quality covering materials are used and these are flap covers. A nice, new trend is flap covers, a task that is a challenge to all binders but now can be done in-line in one operation.

Side-gluing is being used on four-way scored softcovers. A European custom, it is now standard in North America as well. After glue application, the product to be bound receives a small strip of an adhesive applied onto the sides, front and back. This procedure hides the actual binding edge, the spine preparation, notches and the glue.

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Adhesive Bindings

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Hardcover adhesive bound may be done in a variety of styles. As mentioned earlier, library binders use a double fan process which includes heavy duty back-lining. Edition binders use various processes, like Burst or Notch bindings. The majority use two shot systems to obtain a better quality adhesive binding. Endpapers are either tipped onto the front and back signatures or are applied in-line on the gatherer/binder equipment.

Instead of a soft cover, a back-lining material is applied covering the adhesive on the spine. In most facilities, the production lines are setup so that the book-blocks travel right on toward a hardcover binding line. An adhesive binder is much faster than the 3600 hr. hardcover lines. There are many installations where one adhesive binder supplies books for two hardcover binding lines producing as many as 7200 hardcover bound books every hour.

Digital printed bindings, which allow the economical printing and binding of a single book is a little more difficult to process. All sheets coming off digital printing engines are either single sheets or four page signatures. The book-blocks require no gathering as they are coming off the digital print engines complete. Stacks of loose sheets are fed into binding equipment by hand. While there are in-line systems available, if a certain product requires color pages, those components must first be assembled. New adhesive binding systems are now coming onto the market to combat these challenges. Photo books, which contain heavy toners all the way into the binding edge, are most difficult to bind. PUR applications solve these problems.

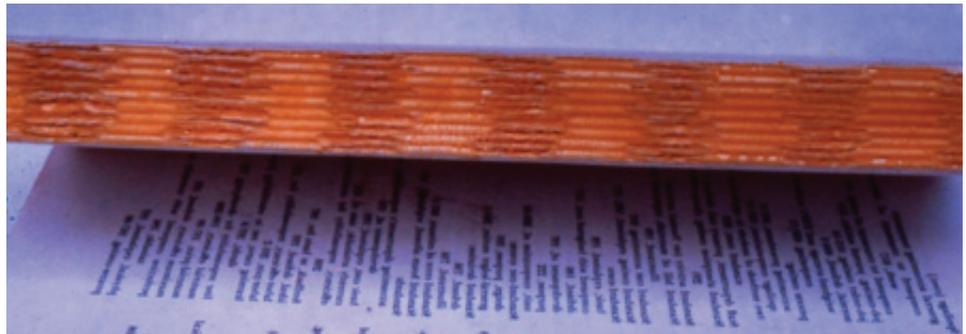
Lay-Flat Bindings

Nothing is worse than an adhesive binding with a built-in mouse trap, and cross-grain papers enhance that unfortunate feature. My favorite show and tell

manual was one on knitting. It snapped close at an instant. How can one use such a manual without breaking its binding? To tackle this issue, the industry developed various methods of lay-flat bindings which stay open with your hands off the binding.

Otabind was developed in Finland by Otava Publishing. Hotmelt bindings are subject to cold-crack—if exposed to cold weather, the binding will crack. Binding school books with PVA in a patented fashion was an instant success. The bound book-block move freely within the softcover in a similar fashion like a hardcover binding.

RepKover is a patented method developed by this writer. An Otabind installation required expensive retooling of the adhesive binding equipment. The



Burst bindings are popular for all best sellers. Note, folded signatures stay intact, adhesive does not penetrate through the slots.

RepKover method consists of a cloth strip mounted into a quality soft cover material. With the spine area loose, the book block flexes freely in a similar fashion like a hardcover binding. No extra gadgets are needed to bind RepKovers on adhesive binding equipment. Both patents, Otabind and RepKover, have expired and are now used all over the World.

Liberetto is similar to RepKover, however, the entire inside of a soft cover is lined. The space in the spine area is not glued down, allowing the book-block to flex like a hardcover binding.

Swissbind is a method introduced by a Swiss adhesive binding manufacturer. The book-block is adhesive bound in the normal fashion. The back is covered with a back-lining paper. Side-gluing in the back only will fasten it to the cover.

Double Fan Adhesive binding

This is a method that first came onto the scene in 1935. A German engineer and bookbinder, Emil Lumbeck, developed a device where the single sheets were actually tipped next to each other. Using a special PVA adhesive, he discovered that this method is far superior to any other method of adhesive binding. His development was almost forgotten during the War. In 1953, double fan

process was reintroduced through trade journals and advertisements by an engineer and son-in-law of Mr. Lumbeck, Herr Hans-Dieter Ehlermann. He came to our bindery in Zurich, Switzerland and introduced us to his double fan machine. We soon discovered all the advantages and bound large editions of photo and coffee-table books. The Ehlermann company also developed an in-line binder with slanted roll applicators. For decades, library binders used Ehlermann double fan binding equipment.

Jack Bendror, a talented engineer who had already mechanized most of all the library binding tasks, developed the Ultrabind double fan adhesive binding machine. This semi-automatic, self-adjusting machine for binding book blocks of different sizes, thickness, and types



The original double-fan concept and the mechanized version have revolutionized library binding.

of papers, with no make-ready or set-up has become the classic in virtually all library binding establishments. It revolutionized the library binding trade and its standards for quality bound books. Today, most library bindings are double fanned with specially developed cold emulsion PVA adhesives. Best of all, such high quality adhesive, yet flexible and durable bound book-blocks will outlast all other methods of adhesive bindings.

We have come a long way from putting pieces of

hair into a hot animal glue and calling it the "perfect" binding. 📖

*1 *Books for the Millions*, Frank E. Comparato, 1971 71-162441 Industrialization of the American Bindery Periodical Production and Adhesive Binding Page 236

(If you love history of book manufacture – this is the book!)

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shelfLife Profile · Werner Rebsaman

LBI Technical Director Shares Insights on LBI's Past and Future...

The decision to expand LBI is a sign of exciting times, not just for the organization and its members, but also for library binding in

general. The industry, borne from a time-honored craft, has changed much in recent years thanks to new technology, and LBI Technical Director Werner Rebsaman has had a front row view.

"It's an exciting time to be part of this industry," Werner says. "There's been a lot of changes and it's going to be interesting to see what the future brings."

Werner's Journey

Werner has personally witnessed much of the last half century's changes to the bookbinding industry, having first been exposed to the craft as a child in his native Switzerland. "My father was a plant superintendent in the country's largest bindery," Werner explains. "He made sure I learned and mastered the necessary tasks in bookbinding. Thanks to him and that training, I started my own career with a solid foundation."

With the idea of "getting a couple of years' experience," Werner immigrated to the U.S. in 1960 and began honing his craft, working his way up from journeyman to plant superintendent. At that time, he concentrated mostly on edition binding, and in 1973, he set up the world's first in-line book manufacturing facility in Fredericksburg, VA. "The system printed and hardcover-bound seventy books a minute," Werner says. "All in-line and all fully automated." By the end of the following year (1974), however, he decided to change direction – one that would eventually lead him to the library binding industry.

"My involvement in library binding started after my career change into the academic arena," he says, referring to his decision to join the faculty in 1974 of the Rochester (NY) Institute of Technology. At RIT, he taught all aspects of print finishing and book manufacture, created an extensive book-testing laboratory, and was the first RIT faculty member to receive the precious National Association of Lithographic Printers Technical Leadership Award. After retiring from teaching in 2001, Werner continued to share his expertise by consulting and lecturing in venues around the world as well as serving as a contributing editor to *American Printer*. His decision to join LBI as its Technical Director in 1976 was easy.

"After such industrial, high speed experiences, I was delighted to have found a group of dedicated library binders," he says. "They treasure every individual item like their "babies" and treat them with utmost care."

What He's Seen

With such an illustrious career, Werner has been able to literally see the industry change before his eyes.

"Library binding used to be 'traditional'," he explains. "It was a very separate group of highly specialized bookbinders and industry suppliers that was protected by a rigid standard. The process of oversewing was the foundation of this industry, and it had its roots around the 'Class A' bindings. Then came the changes to double-fan adhesive binding. There was the automation of the library binders' processes and then the intense use of computers." He chuckles. "Imagine, customers, such as librarians, are now actually writing the job ticket!"

Naturally, the most noteworthy change he's seen is how technology has not only affected the efficiency of the library binding process, but the quality and economics.

"These industrial progresses have helped library binders offer a superior, high quality binding at a lower price," he says. "That's very significant."

"It's an exciting time to be part of this industry. There's been a lot of changes and it's going to be interesting to see what the future brings."

Werner Rebsamen

What He Thinks Is On The Horizon

Having seen how different trends and technologies have impacted the industry in the past, Werner has some ideas for what the future holds for the library binding industry and bookbinding in general. While acknowledging that library binding budget cuts have forced industry losses ("Approximately thirty percent," he says), he definitely sees a silver lining.

"Many library binding establishments are growing," he says. "It's all thanks to the Internet, advanced computer and scanning capabilities and on-demand publishing endeavors. Library binders have now added digital print capabilities and are printing and binding extremely small quantities. They've also added facsimile reproduction of old documents and books. Newly added production space and investments are a very positive sign that this industry is not only changing but will be successful in its new endeavors."

It's this evolution that culminated in the recent decision to expand LBI, a decision that Werner sees as a very good one.

"While library binders are still organized under one umbrella (the ANSI/NISO/LBI Library Binding Standard, Z39.78-2000) the others who join will benefit from the broad knowledge that our members and suppliers share. LBI members can learn from digital printers, printers can learn about binding and best of all, everyone enhances their knowledge to compete successfully in this new, Internet based world." 

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Murray, UT 84123
Contact: Mark Hancock
VOICE: 801-685-6151
WATS: 888-700-3871
FAX: 801-685-0182
EMAIL: mark@utahbookbinding.com
URL: www.utahbookbinding.com

**WALLACEBURG BOOKBINDING &
MFG. CO., LTD.**

95 Arnold Street
Wallaceburg, Ontario N8A 3P3
CANADA
Contact: Gerrit Dykhouse
VOICE: 519-627-3552
WATS: 800-214-2463
FAX: 519-627-6922
EMAIL: gerrit@wbmbindery.com
URL: www.wbmbindery.com
USA Address
PO Box 533
Marine City, MI 48039-0733
EMAIL: helpdesk@wbmbindery.com

WERT BOOKBINDING, INC.

9975 Allentown Boulevard
Grantville, PA 17028-8709
Contact: Gary L. Wert
VOICE: 717-469-0626
WATS: 800-344-9378
FAX: 717-469-0629
EMAIL: gary@wertbookbinding.com
URL: www.wertbookbinding.com

Application for Institutional Membership

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We hereby apply for Institutional Membership in the Library Binding Institute.

Institution _____

Contact Person _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Telephone _____

Fax _____

Email _____

Today's Date _____

When the Library Binding Institute (LBI) was formed more than seventy years ago, adherence to the highest possible standard in library binding was one of the organization's founding principles. Upholding and advocating high standards continues to be an essential component of LBI's mission.

The importance of preserving the written word cannot be underestimated. Increasing awareness about the value of library binding is critical, as is educating library professionals on the long-term care, preservation, and maintenance of their book and serial collections. As the premier resource on library binding information and education, the Library Binding Institute exists to support librarians in this endeavor.

An institutional member shall be any non-commercial library binder, person, organization or institution whose interests, activities, or occupation are related to library binding. Institutional members are entitled to participate in all programs and services of the Library Binding Institute. Dues for this category of membership are \$100 a year. Please complete the application and return with payment to The Library Binding Institute.

Remit with payment to:

The Library Binding Institute

4300 South U.S. Highway One

#203-296

Jupiter, FL 33477

To join by credit card, please contact Debra Nolan at 561-745-6821.

LBI Member Benefits

- A subscription to *Endpaper*, LBI's monthly member e-newsletter;
- A subscription to *Shelflife*, LBI's quarterly publication with information on the latest in library and hardcover book binding;
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- The member rate for LBI publications and conferences; and
- Access to and networking with certified library binders, their suppliers, libraries, and other organizations which support library binding.