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A NEWSLETTER FROM THE LIBRARY BINDING INSTITUTE

SHELF LIFE

Maintaining Tradition—Seeking New Direction

by Jay B. Fairfield



I recently completed my two-year term as LBI President plus ten years on the Board of Directors. It was an interesting and event filled time for our trade association and our industry.

There has been substantial change in recent years. Publishers are operating in a new dynamic which includes

shorter runs, less inventory and seemingly minimal published titles that are “out of print”. Printers have experienced not only substantial technological advancement in the digital arena but also new competition from international sources. The academic research model has gone from one “primary” channel (scholarly research published primarily in print journals) to a myriad of channels via the digital age and Internet access. Book manufacturing is migrating towards shorter runs per title and orders “on demand”. What was considered impossible just a few years ago – digital production that delivers a soft cover bound book in 24 - 48 hours, on demand, is now not only possible but rather routine!

And yes, even library binding has been impacted by these changes. Our industry has seen some dramatic shifts in the quantity of binding and rebinding as well as the type of binding being done. For many

years, journal binding was the predominant product and represented the majority of binding budgets at academic & special libraries. The decline in print journal titles plus a trend toward more electronic journals in research institutions and public libraries has changed the landscape. Collection maintenance, monograph binding and preservation services have grown while periodical binding has decreased.

In October 2006, I was asked to talk to a preservation group about the state of the library binding industry. Not a common request frankly, but given the industry changes – especially in the past ten years – the curiosity was understandable. In preparation for this talk, I did a bit of research. With this information and along with a few very “educated” assumptions, I was able to put some perspective on the industry decline. On one data point, the information was pretty clear. Our industry has lost over half its volume... half, from over 16 million items bound for libraries in 1975 to roughly 8 million in 2005. A 50% reduction in 30 years... and much more of this reduction came in the last ten as compared to the first ten! I was not surprised, just sobered that my “gut feel” was validated by the numbers. This fundamental decline in the “core service” is the main reason why LBI and the total number of library binders has contracted over a 30-year period... and it isn’t leveling out yet.

Because of these industry fundamentals, LBI again finds itself on the doorstep of change. This change is necessary because the organization does not have the financial strength (not enough companies and

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suppliers) to remain viable as an independent association with dedicated management. We must find a way to keep LBI prominent as well as the steward of the ANSI \ NISO Standard. Even with declining demand, this core service remains essential for libraries.

The Board of Directors has discussed a number of different options regarding future association structure.

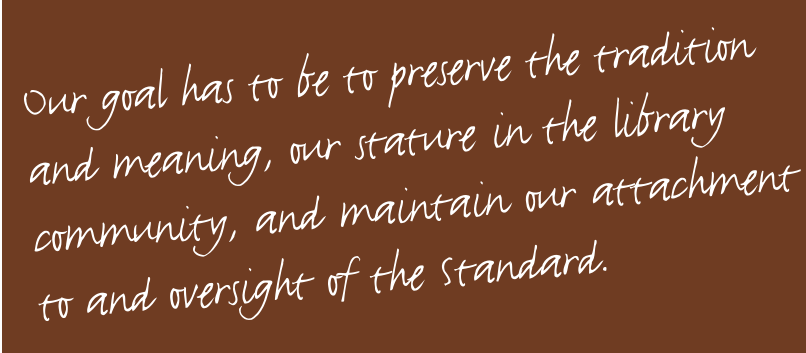
We could open LBI to new members in the growing “on demand” market. The number and availability of potential members is uncertain and the types of companies vary greatly. It may take many years to develop this option in order to meaningfully impact LBI’s fortunes.

Second, LBI could join an association “group”. There are professional trade offices that manage multiple associations under one roof with little or no connection to one another. In this mode, LBI could be managed... but not really “lead” within our markets (as we are now).

Joining with another trade association in the book industry has always been appealing and would be a third option. Our foray with BIA \ PII of Chicago, IL was considered unsuccessful but the problems were due to factors beyond LBI’s control. The concept was not wrong, the selection turned out to be wrong.

Fourth, we could find a way to manage the affairs of LBI with a part-time executive. This has been discussed but is not considered to be a likely (or an easy) solution. There may be other possibilities but these are the ideas discussed to date.

Our current and preferred option at this time is an alignment with BMI (Book Manufacturers Association – www.bmibook.com). In fact, talks began early this year between BMI and LBI in order to explore the possibilities of BMI absorbing LBI under a new “umbrella” concept within the book industry. Very recently, a task force was created with members from



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both LBI and BMI plus the Executive Directors of both organizations. While dialogue has occurred and both organizations are reasonably favorable about this idea, much work needs to be done and the task force will spend much of the remainder of 2007 working on this project.

Our goal has to be to preserve the tradition and meaning, our stature in the library community, and maintain our attachment to and oversight of the Standard. There are other critical issues from LBI’s perspective but none appear insurmountable through this potential “book industry” consolidation. The fact that BMI is willing and interested in evolving into an encompassing trade association for various segments of the book industry (including library binding and prebinding) could be a great opportunity for everyone. I hope the Board of Directors will continue down this road for the sake of all our members but mostly for the opportunity to keep LBI alive and well even if in a slightly different form.

I recently came across an old quote that aptly describes this very “traditional” industry known as Library Binding. The quote is “You can’t adjust to the future if you don’t learn from your past”! LBI’s past is about tradition and relevance in the library field. It has been a very meaningful organization to binders, libraries and suppliers. It has also been admired by outsiders who view LBI as a success story because of its longevity and rich history. Now we have to be sure we adapt and preserve LBI but also “adjust to the future”!

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Paper Fibers and Books

By Werner Rebsamen – “So many books and so little time” is a well-known slogan this writer has seen posted on t-shirts. For all who love books, it is a dearly treasured topic, and yes, many of us collect favorite books as well. When the origin of books is studied, at least in the Western world, it always seems to start with scrolls of papyrus or, later-on, actual book blocks made from parchment. This is a chapter for itself and one with which our readers are most likely very familiar. Let’s not talk about the many kinds of items we call books, like tablets, scrolls and even the latest, notebook computers. Let’s discuss the kinds of fibers used to make today’s papers for books, how they react and perform, and how they age.

Who invented papers like the ones used today?

This honor belongs to the Chinese. Around 105 A.D., Tsai Lun used rags and plant-fibers like hemp or china grass and bark. With these ingredients, Lun managed to produce the very first kind of papers. Crushing these items created long fibers and soaking them in lots of water resulted in pulp. A fine woven bamboo mat served as a screen. Pressing the pulp and drying it created the very first actual paper. (Today’s “Kozo”

A general rule when planning for printing and binding a book is to have all cellulose materials, including the text block, endpapers cover board, and covering materials parallel to the spine.

handmade Japanese papers, made from the inner bark of mulberry trees, are very similar to those earlier papers.) Other materials like bamboo fibers were used in the 12th century; rice straw was used in the 13th to 15th century. For approximately 500 to 600 years, the Chinese maintained the paper making process as their secret. Via caravan routes through northern Africa, the skills of papermaking then found its way to

Europe. On the web, look up the December 29, 2006, *New York Times* story “The Story of Islam’s Gift of Paper to the West.”

As many are aware, the very first paper-like materials, suitable for writing, were made by the Egyptians approximately 5,000 years ago. Many are familiar with papyrus, a plant which grows along the Nile River. Although paper may have gotten its name from papyrus, it is not paper as we know it. Why? The fibers of the papyrus plant were not separated as they are in modern papermaking.

When were the first industrial papers made?

Papermaking entered Europe via Northern Africa in the 13th century. The Arabs introduced linen fibers from the flax plant to supplement hemp fibers. While such papers were suitable for calligraphy and oriental writings, they were unsuitable for the strong impressions used in combination with Gutenberg’s moveable type. Europeans then started to make harder papers, using gelatin-sized cotton and linen fibers. In the 19th century, new techniques had to be developed to meet increased demands for papers. Under the slogan “save our rags”, they experimented with straw pulp, wood and esparto grass. Wood, as a fiber source, was already suggested by a French scientist as early as 1719. He observed wasps making “paper” from wood. But it took another 150 years until industrial production using wood pulp started. Credit for this technology belongs to Charles Fenerty, a Canadian youth, who began experiments with a “chafing” machine and, in 1844, succeeded in making a sheet of paper from wood. The same year, Gottlob Keller of Germany, patented the very first, practical wood-grinding machine, launching a new area in papermaking.

North America’s first commercial ground-wood mill was started in 1866 at the Butin mill, in Valleyfield, Quebec. A year later, this was followed by a mill in Massachusetts. In other parts of the world, it was discovered that bagasse fibers obtained from crushed sugar cane stalks could also be used for papermaking.

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The process of cooking wood chips in caustic soda, and the use of sulphite and acid had its consequences. Preservation librarians are all too familiar with this issue.

What kind of fibers are in today's papers?

Good question. It is a shocking fact, that according to paper experts, non-wood fibers account for about 7% of the world's papermaking fibers. In North America, non-wood fibers represent less than 2% of its fiber consumption. Yes, rags still make the best kinds of papers. A few years ago, during an LBI meeting in Montreal, we visited a unique papermaking plant. Old, worn-out jeans were used to make a high quality pulp. In North America, non-wood fibers are used for papers which must meet specific purposes for which wood fibers are unsuitable. Cotton-derived fibers, like the jeans, are used for high-grade, permanent and durable papers like currency, ledgers, and writing papers. Bible and other lightweight printing papers are manufactured with linen fibers. There are, of course, many other fibers used for specific papermaking purposes. Jute fibers, from burlap cuttings, make hard, durable Bristol, tag and cover papers. In a lecture at RIT, a well-known paper expert, Mr. Leonard Schlosser of Lindenmeyer Paper, once demonstrated to our students that the industry can make paper virtually out of anything that contains fibers.

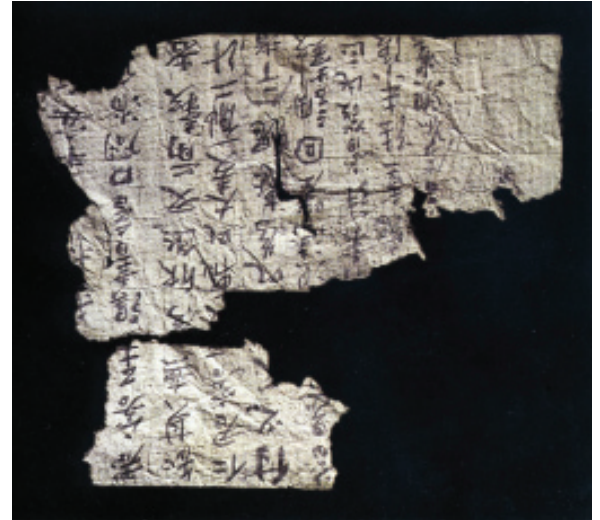
Selecting the right fibers for a particular kind of paper is a science. There are 35,000 kinds of wood and more than 1,000 of these grow in North America. But only about 100 have any commercial value and must be divided into "soft-wood" (40%) and the balance into hard-wood. Papermakers are only concerned with the cellulose and lignin parts. The cellulose portion is what becomes paper. These fibers are composed of individual fibers which are finer than human hairs and measure their length in millimeters. The lignin is a chemically complex substance which binds the cellulose fibers together or, in other words, it is the "glue" that binds the fibers together. Hardwood fibers are short; softwood fibers are generally longer.

How are fibers imbedded into paper?

The actual papermaking process is complex and space does not allow it to be described in detail. Basically, there are four main types of pulp:

- Chemical Wood Pulp which is made by pressure-cooking wood chips with chemicals separating the resins and lignin from the cellulose. Because there is little lignin left, yellowing does not take place.
- Mechanical Wood Pulp known as ground-wood. Low cost, high yield used in newspapers. Pulp contains high amounts of lignin. Now you know why your inexpensive paperbacks and newspapers turn yellow in no time.
- Old Paper Pulp (recycled) which is made from old newspapers, office waste, and magazines.
- Rag Pulp which, as stated earlier, is made from rags (cotton, for example). Pulp makes a high quality strong paper.

To manufacture papers, there are several steps required – cooking, chemical recovery, cleaning, bleaching, refining, and then the various processes on the papermaking machine itself. For those involved in preservation, it may be important to know that there are two different kinds of bleaching processes. One is without using chlorine called TCF. However this process is less than 3% of the world's paper production. The ECF process uses chlorine dioxide but no chlorine. Although they have similar names, they are different chemicals. Most white papers are now made using the ECF process.



Historic documents are hand-made papers; the fibers are long and distributed evenly in all directions.

The type of refining process used, then, results in the kind of fibers in a particular paper. A fiber is smooth like a garden hose. After refining the fibers, tiny "hair-like" strands are exposed on their sides. In the papermaking process, the fibers float along with the water, but those "hairs," perpendicular to the length of the fiber, start to bond them together.

There are different concepts of papermaking machines which determine the distribution and alignment of the fibers. On the Fourdrinier system, more fibers are on the bottom or the wire side. In the Twin or Top Former process, the fibers are more equally distributed, however, they all are more or less aligned in the direction of the web.

What kinds of papers are used for books?

There are many different finishes and paper grades. Generally, they are separated as uncoated or coated, dull or glossy. Typical materials used to enhance papers are starches (corn or potato, for example) or wash coatings which use clay or latex. A calendar can give a coated paper a smooth or glossy finish. The basic paper make-up consists of the following:

- Fiber which is the basic raw material for paper (cellulose)

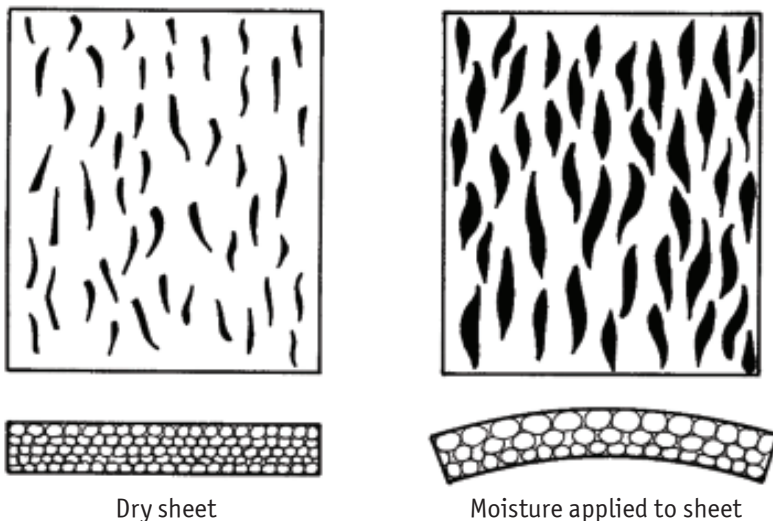
- Internal sizing is used to resist feathering from ink pens. Materials used are alkaline sizing (AKD) and rosin (Acid sizing) ASA.
- Fillers are the material added to or mixed with the fiber to give brightness and opacity. These materials are usually pigments such as calcium carbonate (alkaline papers) titanium dioxide, or clay (acid papers).
- Surface Starch is used to seal and protect the surface of the paper for printing. Surface starch is used to prevent fiber and other materials from releasing and contaminating the printing systems.
- Dyes are used to color the paper. Several dyes can be used to make various shades of white or deep colors.

One item of importance for bookbinders is the lack of fibers in today's coated papers. Fibers are the expensive parts. In earlier times, just a decade or two ago, coated paper had 20 percent of filling materials added. Now, the average is approximately 35 percent. One of my colleagues at FOGRA, Germany's leading paper and ink research institute, informed me that they evaluated some coated papers which contained 54 percent of filling materials! When adhesive binding, exposed fibers are relied upon to bond a binding together. Clay-coatings are anything but ideal to achieve a strong bond.

When discussing paper, the industry must consider other aspects like basic weight, brightness, bulk, caliper, density, dimensional stability, felt side, folding endurance, formation, ink absorption, ink holdout, ink mottle, opacity, porosity, and wire side. For bookbinders, the following paper properties are likely the most important:

- Free Sheet is paper which contains little or no mechanical wood pulp (ground wood).
- Acid Free Paper is paper manufactured to a neutral or higher pH reading. For example, 7.5 pH. Paper also known as alkaline paper.
- Acid Paper is paper manufactured under acidic conditions which is normally made with alum and Rosin, pH ranges 5.0 – 6.5.

On machine-made paper, the grain direction runs parallel to the web of the paper making machine. Moisture will expand the fibers 4 to 5 times more in their width than in their length. Add a little water to one side of the sheet and compare.



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Paper grain direction

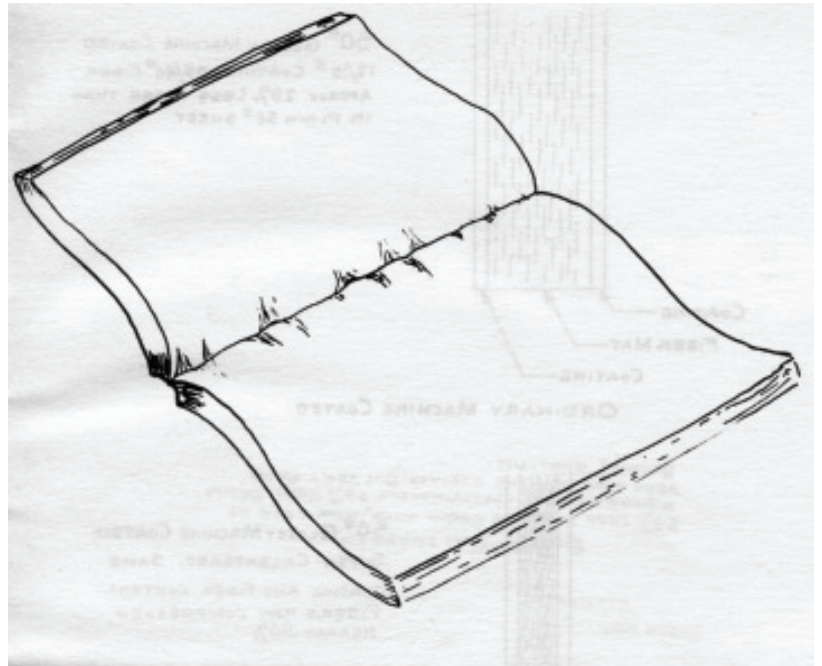
As stated, fibers travel and align themselves in the direction of the paper web. It is estimated that more than 3/4 of all the fibers align themselves in this direction. This is called MD, machine direction. CD is the cross direction. The grain itself is a most important factor for printing and binding. The grain direction affects paper in both folding and tearing. Paper will fold smoothly with the grain direction and roughens or cracks with folding against the grain. Paper will expand or contract more in the cross direction when exposed to moisture changes. Paper should always have the grain parallel with the binding edge. Then the sheets will turn easier and lie flat when turned.

Environmental conditions change virtually every day. On a rainy day, humidity increases. During cold winter days, the moisture in the air is much lower. All cellulose fibers need to adjust. What happens if environmental conditions change? The fibers will expand in their width four to five times more than in their length! Imagine a book printed with the grain direction perpendicular to the binding edge as most low-cost, newsprint like paperbacks are done. The sheets are locked into the spine with an adhesive. The paper fibers want to expand but cannot do so in the spine. The results are waves or very noticeable distortion. Can you imagine a book put together with different papers and grain directions? I have analyzed many such books and clients wondered why some pages were wavy or the adhesive binding split. Uneven stress exerted onto the relatively fragile binding was usually the cause. Therefore, a general rule when planning for printing and binding a book is, to have all cellulose materials, including the text block, endpapers cover board, and covering materials parallel to the spine. Problem is, many printing processes and resulting trim sizes or formats of books do not always cooperate and this is one of the major causes of physical problems with bound books.

Moisture Content of Paper

Finally, some may wonder why digitally printed text blocks - which most of the time have the grain

direction parallel to the binding edge - show distinct waviness in the text block? This is a good question and many new digital printers scratch their heads



Paper fibers aligned perpendicular to the binding edge are unable to adjust to ever changing environmental conditions. On rainy days and high humidity, distortion becomes evident.

and wonder what is going on. Not only do the text blocks feature distorted paper, often the covers warp as well.


Paper is composed of millions of hollow, straw-like, cellulose fibers which respond to every slight change in atmospheric conditions. They expand when absorbing moisture and contract when giving off moisture. Paper has a moisture content of approximately 5 percent and is most stable in a relative humidity of 40 to 50 percent. Wavy edges or distortions within a text block are caused by the fact that the moisture in the air is greater than the moisture content of the paper. Consider digital printing. In order to create conductivity with the toner, the very first prerequisite of this printing process is to take all the moisture out of the paper. Notice the (hot) paper coming out of the copy machine. It is bone dry, full of static. It will take at

Continued next page

least 72 hours until moisture will have a chance to be back in the paper. Waviness still present after such a time period is said to be permanent.

Conclusions

In this article, only a fraction about the manufacture of paper was covered. As stated earlier, paper and paperboard making is a science in and of itself and some universities offer Ph.D's in this discipline. This writer has had the pleasure of working together on many occasions with such scholars, solving industry problems with paper and various tasks of bookbinding. As the industry moves "forward" finding less expensive ways for the manufacture of paper and options for on-demand printing, these problems are on the increase. For example, fewer fibers in a coated sheet that is covered with four or more layers of toners represents problematic tasks for binding. The NISO standard for library binding specifies the "double-fan" process. This means that library binders apply the adhesive onto the sides of a sheet - a big difference if compared to conventional perfect binding.

Together with trade suppliers, such problems will continue to be addressed to the benefit of all who love books. Creating a well-bound, fine book that is aesthetically pleasing in every regard is always a most worthwhile goal. 

Sources: Collected RIT lecture notes from various magazine, trade articles and Industry seminar notes. A special thanks to Jim Kohler, Senior Scientist, Graphic Arts Technology International Paper.


Werner Rebsamen is Professor Emeritus at the Rochester Institute of Technology and the technical consultant to the Library Binding Institute. He can be reached at wtrebs@localnet.com.

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Maintaining Tradition—Seeking New Direction
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On a personal note, I've been very pleased to serve LBI the past ten years. Our transition from Sally Grauer's leadership to the PII \ BIA office in Chicago and finally to Debbie Nolan was at times painful but also enlightening and with Debbie's arrival & presence beginning in 2005, extremely satisfying. A shameless plug for sure, but our organization is very fortunate that Debbie came along as a candidate when we needed new leadership! Because of the changes LBI has endured, I happen to think we are more "flexible" than ever in terms of finding a new dynamic that will carry LBI forward for another lengthy period of time.

Best wishes to Gerrit Dykhouse, President, and to the Board of Directors as LBI tackles these important challenges, and thank you very much for your past feedback, opinions, and support... and for the opportunity to serve the past ten years. 

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FAX: 519-627-6922
EMAIL: gerrit@wbmbindery.com
URL: www.wbmbindery.com
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EMAIL: helpdesk@wbmbindery.com

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Contact: Gary L. Wert
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FAX: 717-469-0629
EMAIL: gary@wertbookbinding.com
URL: www.wertbookbinding.com

Application for Institutional Membership

Application for Institutional Membership

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

Institution _____

Contact Person _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Telephone _____

Fax _____

Email _____

Today's Date _____

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;
- A listing on LBI's website, www.lbibinders.org;
- 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.

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.

ShelfLife Member Spotlight

Library of Congress – Jeanne Drewes, Chief of Binding and Collections Care Division

ShelfLife: Thanks so much for your time. For those who aren't entirely sure, tell us about the Library of Congress (LOC). What happens there and why does it exist?

Jeanne Drewes: The Library of Congress is the nation's oldest federal cultural institution and serves as the research arm of Congress. It is also the largest library in the world, with millions of books, recordings, photographs, maps and manuscripts in its collections. There are over 32 million bound monographs alone.

The Library's mission is to make its resources available and useful to the Congress and the American people and to sustain and preserve a universal collection of knowledge and creativity for future generations.

The mission of the Preservation Directorate at the Library of Congress is to assure long-term, uninterrupted access to the intellectual content of the Library's collections, either in original or reformatted form. This mission is accomplished directly through the provision of conservation, binding and repair, reformatting, materials testing, and staff and user education; and indirectly through coordinating and overseeing all Library-wide activities relating to the preservation and physical protection of Library material.

ShelfLife: What are some of the big picture issues for LOC?

Jeanne Drewes: With limited funding from Congress the challenge with our vast collection is always determining how best to use the limited resources to provide the best care for the collections. Commercial binding remains one of the most cost effective means of doing this for new materials coming into the collection and for serials. Especially for serials, the binding provides a piece of security and inventory control for what otherwise would be many, many loose pieces.

ShelfLife: How long have you been at LOC? What is your role?

Jeanne Drewes: I have been at LOC exactly one year. I am the Chief of Binding and Collections Care Division which provides services to the vast general collections through commercial binding, housing and treatment. I am also responsible for the

reference questions that come to the Directorate through the "Ask a Librarian" emails that come through the LOC website and by phone.

ShelfLife: How large is your department and what kinds of things happen on a daily or regular basis?

Jeanne Drewes: My Division currently has 28 staff. Each week we prepare anywhere from 3,500 to 6,000 pieces for commercial binding, make hundreds of custom boxes for materials and treat hundreds of materials.

ShelfLife: What are some of the more interesting projects you have been faced with and/or will be addressing?


Jeanne Drewes: I am excited to be working the Research and Testing Division in the Preservation Directorate to test materials for binding, investigate new methods for treatment and for myself to learn more about the research and testing process for preservation.

ShelfLife: How is membership in LBI beneficial for you individually and LOC as an institution?

Jeanne Drewes: I am excited to be part of LBI because I see it as the key to providing quality binding for LOC materials. For myself, I am learning more and more about the industry and I look forward to developing ways of working together to provide the best preservation management through binding services both for LOC and for the library community as a whole.

ShelfLife: Any ideas on how LBI can more effectively educate or advocate on behalf of library binding?

Jeanne Drewes: Actually I think LBI is doing a great job of educating through the Library Binding workshops it helps sponsors and most recently through the funding of the ALA/ALCTS George Cunha and Susan Swartzburg Award that recognizes collaboration. I find it truly wonderful that competitors can work together as a group to strengthen the industry as a whole. I wish everyone in all departments in all libraries would do the same.

ShelfLife: Thank you, Jeanne. You have been a tremendous friend to and supporter of library binding. 

Seminar Presented by:

“What Every Book Manufacturer and Binder should know about Hardcover Binding Technology”



Library Binding Institute

- Date: **Saturday, September 29, 2007**
- Time: **8:00 am – 5:00 pm**
- Place: **Sheraton Springfield Monarch Place Hotel – Springfield, MA**
- RSVP: **LBI at 561.745.6821 or dnolan@hardcoverbinders.org**
- Cost: **\$149.00 ** (Early Bird Registration by August 1, 2007)**

- Who Should Attend:
 - Book Manufacturers, Binders and On-Demand Printers
 - Equipment Vendors
 - Administrators and Operators
 - Industry Leaders

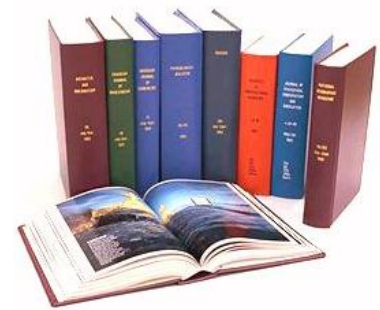
Facilitator:

Werner Rebsamen, Professor Emeritus – Rochester Institute of Technology

Presentation – Saturday ***

Hardcover Binding Seminar

This one-day event will include an introduction to hardcover binding, a discussion of binding options including text blocks, cover, adhesive bindings, and sewing, aspects of available printing and binding systems, an introduction to materials and techniques used in book binding, and problem solving. Material and other suppliers will exhibit their products and participate in the discussions. A continental breakfast and lunch is included.



Optional Pre-Seminar Tour – Friday ***

Bindery Tour

Tour of Bridgeport National Bindery (www.bnbindery.com), a state-of-the-art bindery specializing in library binding, hardcover binding, print-on-demand and short run binding.

*** This seminar and tour will be held in conjunction with the Library Binding Institute 2007 Fall Conference. If you are interested in attending the full conference, please contact LBI at 561.745.6821 for registration information.

Members of:



Please register me for ___ admission(s) at \$149.00 each. Please make check payable to “LBI” or credit card:

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Library Binding Institute

Library Binding Institute
4300 South U.S. Highway One
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