

Journal of the Writing Equipment Society
No 92 Winter 2011

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Cover photograph detail of a pen nib dress designed by John Nussey and Steven Tai. See page 41.

EDITORIAL

Where do the years go? It seems only yesterday that we were planning the first LWEShow. And now we have just held number five, this time organized superbly by Graham Hogg, Gerald Harrison and their team of volunteers. Jeremy Collingridge had a sabbatical this year, but the format he created is tried and tested and worked well with the new team. In spite of the untimely closure of the High Street Kensington tube station, the show was again a great success with an increased participation. I can only endorse Graham's sentiments and thank everyone involved for all their efforts.

When our new Chairman was elected a year ago the Society was really electing 'Team Hogg'. The real 'power behind the throne or chair', as we all know, is of course Christine. Elsewhere in the Journal, Graham has alluded to the fact that they are joined at the hip. What a good analogy. Following my recent surgery I can recommend having a partner who does all the work and allows me to take the credit!

May I take this early opportunity to wish you a happy Christmas and I hope you find some ideas and inspiration for seasonal presents in the current Journal.



David Shepherd
Editor



www.wesonline.org.uk

PRESIDENT

Dr Maureen Greenland
Cartledge Cottage
76 Cartledge Lane
Holmesfield, Dronfield
Derbyshire S18 7SB
☎ 01142890669
president@wesonline.org.uk

VICE PRESIDENTS

John Daniels
Norris Gilbert
Arnold Greenwood
Alan Hobbs
Stephen Hull
Geoff Roe
Harry Scharf
Michael Woods

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Chairman
Dr Graham Hogg JP
185 Preston New Road,
Southport, Merseyside PR9 8NS
☎ 01704 225050
chairman@wesonline.org.uk

Secretary
Gerald Harrison
57 Furlong Lane, Alrewas
Burton upon Trent DE13 7EE
☎ 01283 792365
secretary@wesonline.org.uk

Membership Secretary and Marketing Officer
Ian Williamson
79 Trent Valley Road
Lichfield WS13 6EZ
☎ 01543 415603
membership@wesonline.org.uk
marketing@wesonline.org.uk

Treasurer
Amos Peek
7 De-Havilland Road
Upper Rissington
Cheltenham GL54 2NZ
☎ 01451 810178
treasurer@wesonline.org.uk

Trade Liaison Officer

Charles Whitehead
Pastures Edge, Tregenna Road
Blisland, Cornwall PL30 4JS
☎ 01208 851990
trade@wesonline.org.uk

Advertising Manager

Dr Mike West
9 Bell Lane, Monks Kirby,
Rugby, Warwickshire CV23 0QY
☎ 01788 832623
advertise@wesonline.org.uk

Librarian/Archivist

Jeremy Collingridge
1 Coventry Road, Narborough
Leicester LE19 2GD
☎ 01162 753310
librarian@wesonline.org.uk

Meetings Secretary

Bill Linskey
32 Stockwell Green
London SW9 9HZ
☎ 0207 274 3835
meetings2@wesonline.org.uk

Journal Editor

David Shepherd
60 Surrenden Crescent, Brighton
East Sussex BN1 6WF
☎ 01273 554378
editor@wesonline.org.uk

Webmaster

David Wells
40 Mill Lane, Herne Bay
Kent CT6 7EB
☎ 01227 372987
webmaster@wesonline.org.uk

REPRESENTATIVES OVERSEAS

USA

Len Provisor
☎ 00 1 847 566 3400
provisorpro@earthlink.net

Sri Lanka

Dr Sam Hettiarachchi
☎ 00 941 717501
sslh@civil.mrt.ac.lk

South America

Hugo and Helena Castello
Based in Argentina
info@castellocollection.com.ar

DESIGNED BY

Teresa Shepherd
☎ 01273 554378
design@wesonline.org.uk

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Important reminder
Would members please advise membership secretary **Ian Williamson** of any change to email address

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Telephone 01539 723026 • Mobile 07887 594314
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IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR **WES** DIARY

31ST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday 26 November 2011
The Function Room,
The Cumberland Lawn Tennis Club
25 Alvaney Gardens, London NW6 1JD

Programme

- 10am Registration** Tea/Coffee will be served.
- 11am Annual General Meeting**
- 1pm Lunch** Hot buffet (vegetarians catered for) with choice of main courses and desserts. Price: £18 without wine (house wine will be available to buy on the day: £8 white & £10 red per bottle). If you wish to make your own arrangements for lunch there are plenty of eating places in Finchley Road.
- 2.30pm Exchange and mart** of writing antiques and collectables.
- 3.30pm Afternoon tea** will be served until 4pm
- 5pm Meeting closes**

The Cumberland Lawn Tennis Club is in Alvaney Gardens off Lymington Road, which is itself off Finchley Road opposite the Camden Arts Centre.

CAR: There is very limited on-street parking. The nearest large car park is at the O2 Centre; its entrance is 50m north of the Finchley Road underground station down a service road between the O2 Centre and the railway bridge.

UNDERGROUND: The nearest station is Finchley Road, on the Metropolitan and Jubilee lines, from which it is about a ten-minute walk. Alternatively, Hampstead station on the Northern Line is not much further to walk. **Please note:** in recent years the underground has suffered from disruption due to planned engineering works at the weekend. We generally only find out about any disruption on the Thursday before the weekend. We will try to email members who use email, but everyone is advised to check before travelling. For London travel information ☎0843 222 1234 (24 hours a day).

OVERGROUND: Finchley Road & Frognal station is on the North London Line and only a few minutes' walk away.

NB This meeting is for members only and for security reasons members will be asked to sign in.

If you wish to have a buffet lunch please return the enclosed booking slip with your cheque (payable to The Writing Equipment Society) to: Bill Linskey, 32 Stockwell Green, London SW9 9HZ before 19 November 2011. Sorry but no bookings can be accepted after this date.



SPRING MEETING THE BLUECOAT ROOM THE GUILDHALL GLOUCESTER SATURDAY 31 MARCH 2012

It has been the tradition of our spring meeting to base it around a theme, giving people the opportunity to bring items from their collection to talk

about which fit the theme, no matter what they collect. This year we had items made from animal products. We have not yet decided the theme for next year's meeting and I am open to suggestions. **The Olympics and Sport** occurred to me but I'm not sure that there are enough commemorative items out there to make it a good topic. In any case, we've not yet

even started the Olympics year and already it seems to me somewhat hackneyed – let me have your suggestions.

Put the date in your diaries. I'll have a reminder and further details circulated by email in the New Year. If you are not on email but may wish to come, let me know by letter or phone and I will ensure you receive the information.

Bill Linskey, Meetings Secretary
32 Stockwell Green, London, SW9 9HZ
☎ 020 7274 3835
meetings@wesonline.org.uk

Apart from the AGM, our next meeting will be held on Saturday, 31 March 2012 in Gloucester.

We will be in the Bluecoat Room of Gloucester Guildhall, where we had our meeting last year. This proved to be a very good venue; in the heart of the City but easily accessible both by public transport and by car.

Frank Hull 1918–2011

Frank Rowland Hull, Lt Col (Retd), died peacefully at his home in the south of France on 3 October, aged 93.

Frank was one of the original members of the Writing Equipment Society and along with several others, such as Arnold Greenwood, Bernard Pearl, Andy Lambrou, Geoff Roe, Dominic Nudd and Jonathan Steinberg, specialised in the collecting of fountain pens.

His son, Steve, WES Hon VP, will provide a longer tribute to Frank in the next Journal.

MEMBERS WHO WISH TO PURCHASE ANYTHING FROM THE LIBRARIAN FOR DELIVERY AT THE AGM ON NOVEMBER 26, PLEASE CONTACT JEREMY COLLINGRIDGE
① 01162 753310
librarian@wesonline.org.uk



EPHEMERA SOCIETY BAZAAR

Sunday 4 December 2012

11am–4pm

Admission £3

Holiday Inn

Coram Street, Bloomsbury
London WC1N 1HT



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20–22 January 2012

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Sheraton Philadelphia

Center City Hotel

www.philadelphiapenshow.com

16–19 February 2012

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Boris Rice

www.lapenshow.com

3–6 May 2012

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Don Lavin

dlpens@aol.com



PEN SHOWS IN UK

Sunday 12 February 2012

South West Pen Show

Hilton Hotel

Bristol

Sunday 25 March 2012

Eastern Pen Show

Doubletree by Hilton Hotel

Cambridge

Sunday 22 April 2012

Northern Pen Show

Clifton Arms Hotel

West Beach

Lytham

www.ukpenshows.co.uk

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WES MEMBERSHIP 2011

Contact Ian Williamson
membership@wesonline.org.uk

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Following the resignation of Martin Roberts the new Membership Secretary is Ian Williamson, who is combining this role with his present position as Marketing Officer. In Spring 2012 he will be producing a current Member's list. The Society apologises to the membership for the delay in producing this valuable resource.



Would members dealing on ebay please consider mentioning the WES at the completion of a transaction





CHAT FROM THE CHAIR

I am writing this still on a high from the terrific buzz I got from the LWES show on Sunday, 2 October. This was the 5th show that has been run on behalf of the Society and another great success given the initial comments appearing on the Fountain Pen Network. Running such a show has many hidden benefits for the Society: it raises our profile in the writing equipment world and as such is a fantastic marketing tool; we gain new members who may not otherwise have heard about us – 10 on this occasion (my thanks also go to UK Pen Shows Ltd who, throughout the year, allow the Society to have a table f.o.c. at their events enabling us to recruit new members); we enjoy the fellowship of other members, rather like an informal meeting; the opportunity to purchase from dealers; and, on this occasion, the opportunity to sell via the WES Bourse table – and extremely busy it was too, with gross takings of around £3,400, an amount any trader would be extremely pleased with. The WES table was also very productive. But please remember that none of this would have run without the members of the

Society who volunteered and applied themselves in a slick and professional way – thank you.

In fact, the meeting on the Saturday provided an appetiser for the show: it was a great venue, with great speakers and great fellowship – epitomising what meetings of the Society are all about. However, one of my low points as Chairman this year was when Bill Linskey phoned me to say that he would have to cancel the meeting and visit to Diamine Inks on Saturday 24 September due to lack of interest. This was a blow to me, to the few members who had signed up and were looking forward to the event, to Bill who had taken the trouble to organise the event, and to Diamine Inks who had agreed to talk to members and had arranged a factory visit. It would be most unsatisfactory if this is repeated at future meetings; if you would like to have meetings arranged in a different format or perhaps as a Society weekend then I would very much like to hear your views.

As we approach the AGM and I reflect back, I am immensely proud of what the Society has provided for its members this year. I would like to thank Delma Harrison who has allowed Gerald to spend more time with me than her, and has provided me with food and drink when I visited their home on WES and LWES business. Like me, this is Gerald's first year on Council and to arrange LWES 2011 as well as fulfil his duties as Secretary shows massive commitment to the Society – and for that I am particularly grateful. Catherine Peek has allowed me to raise her husband's blood pressure by 20 points as we grapple with the accounts and make them simpler for all concerned, especially as the Society's turnover is rather similar to that of a small business. Andrea Collingridge has allowed Jeremy to drive her soft top Saab around the country on his way to run repair classes – an extremely popular weekend past-time for WES members; as well as use her holiday home to store librarian paraphernalia. Anne Whitehead's husband has gone missing for days at a time as he treks to WES Council meetings, and her computer has groaned and crashed on several occasions as Charles introduces yet another trade liaison contact. Liz West

has allowed her husband to interrupt her summer holiday in Majorca on numerous occasions as he sits on the apartment stairs trying to pick up stray wi-fi signals in an effort to amass advertising sponsorship so designer, Terry Shepherd, can maximise the quality of our journal. And that is exactly what is happening – David Shepherd has had to buy a new estate car so he can cart his photographic material around the country and take photographs of writing equipment for the journal – he told his wife he needed it for his golf clubs – as if – especially with the number plate DS51PEN! (If anyone knows of the whereabouts of the recently issued number plate BA11PEN – the chairman would like to buy it!) The journal is going from strength to strength and, because of contributions on a more jovial note from members who pick up anecdotes, share newspaper cuttings, and other fun items David and I have made considerable effort to move it away from reading like the *British Dental Journal* (we were both dentists in an earlier life.)

Diana Linskey decided that Bill should not only spend a considerable amount of time arranging fantastic meetings, but should also run the LWES Bourse table under her tutelage – and what a great job they did, not only for the benefit of members trying to sell that item they don't want and which was hidden at the back of a drawer for years, but as a financial benefit for the Society. Such financial benefits have helped to keep membership fees frozen for yet another year.

Martin Roberts, the Membership Secretary has stood down and has currently been replaced by Ian Williamson. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Martin for five years diligent service on Council and for assisting in a seamless transfer to Ian, who was kind enough to agree to amalgamate the positions of Marketing and Membership (he reckons he covers both posts but behind every good man is a great woman – thank you Ann.) Please note that your annual membership will be due for renewal on 31 December 2011 – I hope you have enjoyed the benefits of being a member of WES this year and will consider renewing your membership next year. Sally Wells now has to share her life with

an iPad as well as David and it seems that it might be the iPad that is getting all of the attention at the moment as he looks at updating the present Society website, but just to keep him busy we throw in the odd newsletter to send out – please make sure the Society has your up-to-date email address otherwise you will be missing out – watch this website!

Many thanks to our erstwhile chairman, Mike Woods, who has helped in starting and developing an inkwell study group – we ballpoint collectors don't know what an inkwell is – but, hey, I am glad someone takes an interest in them (words often uttered in my ear when I talk about my collecting habits; my wife thinks it is one of my dirty habits . . . yes, ballpoints also leak ink.) Ah yes, my wife, I would like to thank my wife who allows me to indulge my passion of writing instruments – many of you know we are joined at the hip – she knows more about WES business than I do, so if you ring our house about WES, ask for her not me, as I am usually busy thanking all the people who have helped at LWES, on the WES table, proof-reading the journal (it seems rather like wrapping your own Christmas presents to me), scanning pieces for the archive, writing articles for the journal, and so the list goes on . . . but the editor has asked me to STOP as I am using too much journal space! So if I don't get round to chatting to you it is because I am answering the 1,350 emails I have received to date; funnily enough I have had less than 10 handwritten letters!

I hope you have a pleasant Christmas and will renew your membership for 2012 – perhaps a rather nice Christmas present?

In the words of Tim Cook, the new CEO for Apple, when launching the new iPhone, and my words when introducing you to Council “Don't be deceived, inside it's all new”. And in the words of WES, and I have no doubt our President, Maureen Greenland will concur as she has been in it from the start, “It's Great to Belong.”



DAVE RUDERMAN RECEIVES HIS HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP AWARD FROM DAVID SHEPHERD, WES JOURNAL EDITOR.



Dave Ruderman has recently retired from his position as the Royal Warrant Holder and Director of Heritage Products at the Parker Pen Company. He also had an additional remit as the custodian of the Company Archives. The collection contains thousands of documents and in excess of 15,000 pens dating from 1888 to the present day. He started work at the Parker plant in Newhaven in 1976 as a laboratory technician in the Research and Development department. Two years later he moved into Quality Engineering and Quality Management. Under his guidance the Newhaven site was accredited to BS5750 Quality Management Systems in 1988.

He has always been an enthusiastic and loyal friend of the Writing Equipment Society and it was his efforts to arrange the Parker sponsorship of the first LWEShow in 2007 that guaranteed the success of the event. As an acknowledgement of the contributions he has made to the London Writing Equipment Shows, Dave has been made an Honorary Life Member of The Writing Equipment Society.



Calligrapher, Davina Chapman preparing the award certificate at the LWEShow in London on Sunday 2 October

All the photographs courtesy
of Richard Maguire.

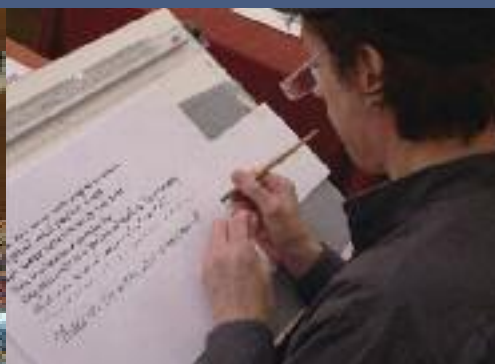


WES LONDON WRITING EQUIPMENT SHOW LWES 2011





THE FIFTH LWESHOW WAS HELD ON 2 OCTOBER 2011 AT THE KENSINGTON TOWN HALL ON PROBABLY THE WARMEST DAY OF THE YEAR. JEREMY COLLINGRIDGE HAD A SABBATICAL REST THIS YEAR AND THE SHOW WAS ORGANIZED BY GRAHAM HOGG, GERALD HARRISON AND THEIR TEAM OF VOLUNTEERS. DESPITE THE UNTIMELY CLOSURE OF KENSINGTON HIGH STREET TUBE STATION, MANY COLLECTORS STILL MANAGED TO FIND THEIR WAY TO SPEND MONEY. WITHOUT DOUBT THE STAR ENTREPRENEUR WAS BILL LINSKEY WHO HAD GROSS TAKINGS OF £3,400 ON THE WES BOURSE TABLE.



WHAT'S IN A NAME?

IT ALL BEGAN WITH A CASUAL GLANCE AT AN ADVERTISEMENT IN THE LOCAL PAPER FOR A GENERAL AUCTION SALE AT ALDRIDGES OF BATH. AN EDWARDIAN MUDIE'S PATENT 'SQUEEZER' CARD TABLE WAS LISTED AMONGST THE SELECTED ITEMS. **BRENDA FRY** DID A 'DOUBLE-TAKE'. IN HER COLLECTION OF PEN NIBS IS A BOX OF MUDIE'S SQUEEZER NIBS – COULD THERE BE ANY CONNECTION? HERE SHE TELLS THE STORY.

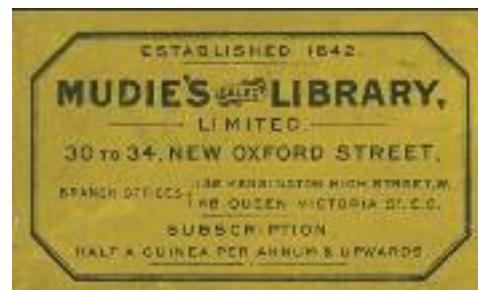


Two Mudie's Squeezer Pen boxes showing two different addresses in London – 15 Coventry St. London W and 115 New Bond St. London W1.

I rang WES member, Michael Woods, to find that he has two nib-boxes, identical except for business addresses – one at 15 Coventry Street, London and the other at 115 New Bond Street, London. The design on the boxes seemed to confirm that there must be a link between the table and the pen nibs. He was intrigued by my story and we both wanted to know more.

Research, courtesy of my daughter, revealed that Charles Edward Mudie was a publisher and the founder of Mudie's Lending Library. His business began by lending books to London University students who paid a guinea a year to borrow a volume at a time. The success of this venture developed into lending libraries for the general public in London and eventually in York, Manchester and Birmingham. The cost of novels in the 19th century was high and thus people of modest financial means could not afford to buy them. Lending libraries strongly influenced what people read through their choice of authors and Mudie refused to stock what he considered to be "immoral" novels. As the success of these ventures grew then reference books were included on the shelves and it is interesting to note that Charles Mudie purchased 500 copies of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of the Species* in 1859.

Alongside his publishing and library businesses Charles Mudie (by now Mudie and Sons) was also an importer of playing cards from the New York Consolidated Card Company (NYCCC). Another internet search, this time by Michael Woods, threw up the valuable help of Peter Way, a leading collector of playing





cards who runs a website: www.collectorsplayingcards.co.uk. He responded generously to Michael's request for information about the origin of the word 'Squeezer' and led us to understand something of the evolution of the design of playing cards. We are indebted to Peter for providing most of the information and illustration that comprises this article.

Around 1850–60, in Europe and America, playing cards were printed without numbers and court cards were depicted with full-length figures. Thus they could not be held in a 'fanned' configuration. Court cards picked-up upside down had to be righted giving valuable clues to other players and number cards had to be moved about to check the symbols. To overcome these problems, the first step in the 1850s was to double-end the court cards. Later, around 1870, indices were introduced and added to the diagonally opposite corners. Two styles emerged – the familiar arrangement found on today's cards and another showing miniature cards in the corners, known as 'Triplicate' design (so called because there were three images of the card on each face). Both could now be compactly 'fanned', or 'squeezed', to enable players to study the contents of their hands easily.



'Squeezers' was a term introduced by Samuel Hart and Lawrence Cohen who went on with two other colleagues to form the New York Consolidated Card Co. in 1871, after which their whole range of card products were known as 'Squeezers'. 'Triplicate' cards were manufactured by a rival company (The Andrew Dougherty Card Co) and this rivalry is demonstrated well by an illustration taken from the back of a pack of cards. The two dogs, one with a collar marked Trip and the other with a collar marked Squeezer, are fighting over the 'bone' of commercial prosperity which would result from the domination of the market by the products of one or other of the companies. By the 1930s, however, commercial pressures led to the arch-rivals merging to become the Consolidated-Dougherty Card Co. Inc.



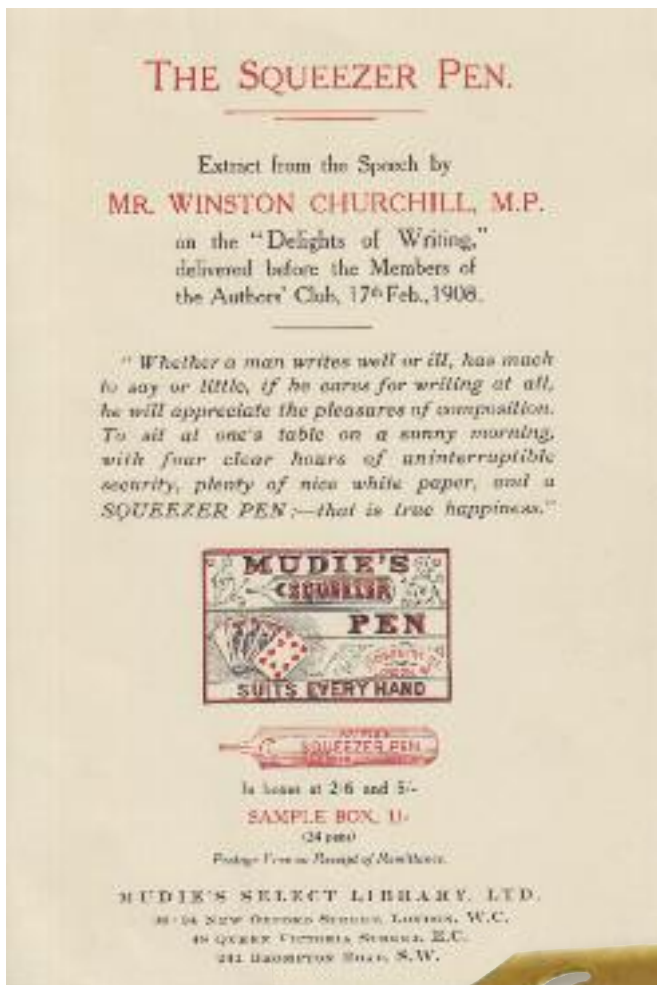
WHAT'S IN A NAME?



Back to Mudie and Sons, the UK importers of the NYCCCo's 'Squeezer' playing cards. It seems from advertisements in a *Whist Manual* by R F Foster of New York published in London by Frederick Warne & Co that playing cards and associated publications and equipment might have been a profitable part of their business for some years. It is in this manual that we find a drawing of the very 'Squeezer' card table sold recently by Aldridges of Bath and, on the opposite page is an advertisement for 'The Squeezer Pen'.

At first the connection between packs of playing cards and boxes of pen nibs may seem tenuous. But just think about the clever play on words on the box label – 'Suits all hands' and consider how many boxes of nibs would be in circulation at a time when written communication was burgeoning. Mudies and Sons with their publishing business and string of lending libraries would have been well placed to promote an effective advertising campaign for all aspects of their business through their boxes of nibs. It was very common for writing materials to be sold through printers, publishers and booksellers across the land.

What an interesting journey we have taken from the chance observation of the word 'Squeezer' in an advertisement for a sale of 'Victorian and general household furniture and effects' in a local newspaper!





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PEN REPAIRS AND SERVICING AT NEWHAVEN

MANY OF YOU, AND NOT JUST PEN COLLECTORS, WILL BE AWARE THAT THE PARKER PEN COMPANY NO LONGER OPERATES IN NEWHAVEN, EAST SUSSEX. THE COMPANY CLOSED THEIR NEWHAVEN PLANT ON FRIDAY, 27 AUGUST 2010, AND THE GATES WERE FINALLY LOCKED ONE MONTH LATER. GRAHAM HOGG IN PRAISE OF MARY ELIZABETH McCLUSKIE.



When the Parker Pen Company expanded its operation in the USA in the mid-1920s it also moved to offices in Britain, but it was not until the 1940s that it took over the premises of the Valentine Pen Company in Newhaven and became fully established in Britain. Parker began to manufacture and distribute from this location, and subsequently offered a parts and repair service. Many a WES member who collects Parker writing instruments will be familiar with the Parker Service and Repair manual.

Before the advent of mass-production of items that could not be disassembled, pens could often be broken down and their component parts replaced or returned – very apparent to those who have completed the excellent WES repair courses. Parker offered various guarantees on their products, usually for a fixed period, but occasionally for a lifetime. From 1977, whether pens were returned to the factory by the purchaser or a stationer they would arrive on Mary McCluskie's desk.

Mary Elizabeth McCluskie was born in London and still retains her accent, so those of you who have spoken to her on the phone can be forgiven for thinking Parker's repair department was not in Newhaven. Mary had moved to Brighton to set up a business, she had skills in hotel management, so when she took a job at the Parker Pen Company in Newhaven she envisaged this being a temporary post for about three months, not for almost the 33 years that she ended up working there!

Mary started work in March 1977 when the company was producing pens like the 61, 65, 75, 45, and 25, and the limited edition Queen's Silver Jubilee models. At that time Mary had no interest in writing instruments and working in the Despatch Department hardly ignited any passions. But six weeks later she joined the Service Department. At that time this was a large department as Parker not only trained their own staff, but trained retailers to carry out repairs in their own shops. Parker obviously saw Mary's talent because they trained her in the department, but Mary followed the management route and by 1984 she had become under-manager or leading hand and was to be considered for the post of manager, which was achieved in 1986 when there were 24 staff in the department. During her time in the





department Mary has encountered repairs on many models including the popular 51 and Duofold, as well as older family heirlooms. Repairs that are most memorable include a request from the author Colin Dexter who claimed he had lost the spring in his favourite Parker ballpoint and felt he couldn't continue with his next story of *Inspector Morse* until it was operational again.

And a request from Highgrove House and St James's Palace for her to repair pens owned by Prince Charles – not a job for the faint hearted! But on a Monday morning Mary always had a smile on her face when she read the letters that arrived on her desk claiming compensation for Parker Quink ink stains on undergarments varying from expensive bras to string vests. Mary always asked for proof so the company became expert in delicate fabric cleaning.

Mary became a European manager for Parker in 2005. This enabled her to visit all European countries and she was instrumental in the amalgamation of Benelux after-sales with Newhaven. She also had opportunities to visit Russia, Poland, Austria and India, but this didn't stop her from travelling all around the UK visiting retailers and ensuring that her department offered excellent service with a rapid turn round time, customer service being key when strengthening the brand. Mary, because of her skills and knowledge, also worked closely with other departments including Research & Development, and Quality to improve products, and with Marketing promoting after-sales services.

Parker provided considerable employment in the town of Newhaven and, in fact, Mary's husband worked in the Moulding Department and her daughter worked in Distribution during the school holidays. But employees have seen many changes at Parker since a management buyout in 1987 moved the Parker headquarters to Newhaven. In 1993 Parker was acquired by Gillette,

who sold the writing instruments division in 2000 to Newell Rubbermaid.

Around 2005 Parker introduced an extended 2-year guarantee on its products, but these repairs are now carried out in France at the Nantes factory.

Mary's final position within the company was in the Company Archive where she continued to log products – again, her skills and knowledge of product recognition helped. It was during this period that she assisted the author and the WES editor to find their way around the Archive when writing their books – both would like to express their thanks.

During her work in the Archive, Mary became aware of the company's history,



how Parker had been built into a dynamic, iconic brand, the way it had been driven and marketed to make it successful and a household name, with the employees being dedicated to the brand. It was obvious from my interview with Mary that she was sad to

see Newhaven close, she was one of the last to be made redundant. However, the Service department do meet periodically for a night out to reminisce.

When I asked Mary what was her favourite line of pens produced by Parker she stated the Premier, introduced in 1983 – "It was slim, elegant and had a classic style." About the time Mary left Parker, the company had started to produce a new Premier line – made in France.

Parker has a very small museum as a token of their presence in Newhaven in Paradise Park, being part of the local maritime museum operated by the Newhaven Historical Society.

Addendum: Parker also has a small office on Denton Island, Newhaven which included Dave Ruderman's office before his recent retirement. Dave has recently been awarded an honorary life membership of WES in respect of the contributions he made to the London Writing Equipment Shows organised by WES Events Ltd (see page 7).

The author would like to thank Mary McCluskie for sharing her anecdotes and allowing them to be published.

**PART 2 OF
THE INKWELL
STUDY GROUP
MEETING
SATURDAY
5 MARCH 2011
REPORT BY
PETER HUNT**

PORTABLE INKWELLS



Before the reliable fountain pen, and when men wore heavier jackets than today, a small portable inkwell in silver or electro-plate was handy for their pocket and, engraved with a monogram of the recipient's initials, made a welcome gift in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Portable wells were also incorporated into novelty gift items, often for tourists, in the Victorian and Edwardian years. Members brought miniature globes, a violin case, hats, an umbrella and an egg. The egg in this picture is of olive wood with a fixed glass well and is a souvenir from Jerusalem.



Leather cased brass wells, often embossed with 'Ink' in gold on the lid, were made in various shapes, sizes and combinations of wells, pen wiper and telescopic pen from the mid 1800s onwards. This has a pen and a pencil which are pushed out by knobs along slits on each side of the brass cylinder. Brought by Stirling Maguire, this has a hinged brass candle holder. Others, such as the pair from Colin Baxter's collection marked "Ink" and "Light", which carried vestas and a hinged strip of metal for striking, had probably been part of a boxed travel set.



Made in England in the 1750s this beautifully designed set has a silver pen and a claw with sliding ring to grip a fine charcoal pencil. Its four sections are housed in the back of the black fish skin box which has an oval press button release. The silver well is covered by a swivelling lid and sealed by a butterfly screw.

At one time manufacturers such as Onoto, Parker and Stephens produced screwtop cases for customers to carry their glass bottles of ink safely when travelling.



Mike Lishman was unable to attend the meeting but Stirling Maguire brought this French walking stick from his collection on Mike's behalf. Its four sections unscrew to reveal a pen, a pencil, a well with cork stopper and, in the silver top, a Stanhope with a view of L'Eglise du St Sepulcre.





With a twisted metal handle and hook catches this small Morocco leather case has two silver topped glass wells and is from about 1800. The rear space is for quills and the front section for wafers.

An unusual ground glass stopper on the well in this shagreen covered case from the 1820s.



PENNERS

Penner is the name generally accepted as meaning a case for holding a pen or pens and inkwell and often a sander and wafers and having a tubular shape which is generally cylindrical but can also be oval, rectangular or like a tobacco pipe.



This horn penner is a foot long. It has a well, quill holder and sander and is probably from the mid 18th century.



Only four inches long when assembled this English silver penner made by Joseph Taylor in 1790 was one of the smallest and neatest we had seen. In four sections its top pulls out to reveal the inkwell.

The four sections of this early 19th century English wood penner consist of a sander, wafer tray and a lid which covers a glass well with an inverted cone to prevent spillage.





Left, an early 1830s example of Tunbridge Ware this wooden penner incorporates a glass well and space for pens or quills.

QALAMDAM

The qalamdam was usually made of brass and was often engraved with complex patterns or, as with this example from Egypt, Arabic calligraphy. However its design varied considerably throughout the Middle East and some, such as those found in the Museum of Islam in Sharjah, are indistinguishable from the Japanese yatates.



This one from John Keller's collection, has a similar construction and purpose to the yatate although its deeper shaft gives space for two or three reed pens.

YATATES

Yatates have been used as writing instruments in Japan since the Middle Ages.



This one above, bought by Peter Hunt when he was in Kamakura in 1975, is probably from the 19th century. Made of a bronze-like metal its shaft is for holding writing tools, usually a fine brush, and sometimes a knife, and there is a half inch long oval hole near the top end of the shaft presumably to allow the brush to dry. The hinged lid to the well has a projecting right angled metal strip so that, when the lid is closed, it will cover the open end of the shaft and stop the brush or knife from falling out. The well was usually filled with old cotton or silk fibre and saturated with ink which, even if it dried out, could be regenerated with water. From the side of the well to the underside of the shaft is a curved link making a hole for a cord so that the yatate can be easily hung from a belt or over the shoulder.

EXCISE WELLS

Riding on horseback or even walking with an open glass well full of ink in your pocket or hanging from a cord on your chest without spilling the ink or breaking the glass could be worrying. But that was the challenge for excise duty collectors in England in the early 18th century. Fortunately the invention of flint glass wells, which were robust, cheap to make and could be mass produced, followed by the design of an inverted cone inside the neck to prevent spillage, made life easier for the excise men. Later, to make it extra safe and non-spill, a second inverted cone was added. However there remained the problem that, when it rained, water could get in through the open top and dilute the ink.



Mike Hughes brought ten examples of the wells from his collection which ranged in height from 50mm to 110mm (2 to 4¼ inches). The one on the right sits in a leather thong with a hole at the top to hang on a hook or a button. At the end of the 19th century ink bottles like these were being sold as "Glass Pocket and Other Ink Bottles" by a wholesale stationer at prices ranging from 1s 2d to 7s 0d a dozen and the note: "Excise Inks – Plain or lipped same price – Cut bottoms 5d per dozen extra".

EDELBERG

A NEW STAR IN THE PEN FIELD

**SAM HETTIARARCHCHI
REVEALS A NEW
CONCEPT OF FINE
WRITING INSTRUMENTS:
EDELBERG CREATED BY
DESIGNER, RESEARCHER
AND BUSINESSMAN,
CARLO E NALDI.**

BIRTH OF A BRAND

The spring of 2010 marked the birth of a new brand, Edelberg, launched by Carlo Naldi, an entrepreneur and designer, well known in the Swiss pen industry. The collection had its premiere at the BaselWorld in March 2011.

Carlo has had a life long interest in collecting writing instruments and objects of archaeological beauty. Based in Zug, Carlo is a distributor of many top quality brands of pens and accessories and operates an exclusive pen shop, which also offers accessories produced by him under the Naldi name. The launch of the new brand and the Edelberg Collection took place on 7 October in Geneva at Brachard, the exclusive Geneva Writing Room, on its 170th birthday.

MOVING ALONG THE PATH OF PASSION

With the experience of having been the exclusive distributor in Switzerland for a wide range of famous Italian brands of pens and accessories, Carlo opened 'Style', in the spring of 2008, a unique boutique shop for pens and accessories in the picturesque city of Zug. The interior design of 'Style' is in the form of a pen arcade with areas dedicated to different brands, using their own traditional advertising settings and comfort zones. Carlo's wife Antonina manages the shop in a very stylish way.



One of his many skills has been the creation of truly spectacular handmade exquisite boxes for storage of pens and watches under the Naldi name. Pens cannot enjoy greater luxury than being stored in Naldi specialist boxes.

EDELBERG – YOU LOOK HAPPY TO GREET ME

Given this respect for brands, it is not surprising that Naldi decided to launch his own brand, Edelberg. Over the last few years he has spent considerable time and energy in planning and developing his new concept. A team of creative minds, led by Naldi have planned and created the products, which have undergone rigorous procedures for quality and durability.

The name 'Edelberg' comes from the combination of Edelweiss and



RG ARMAMENT

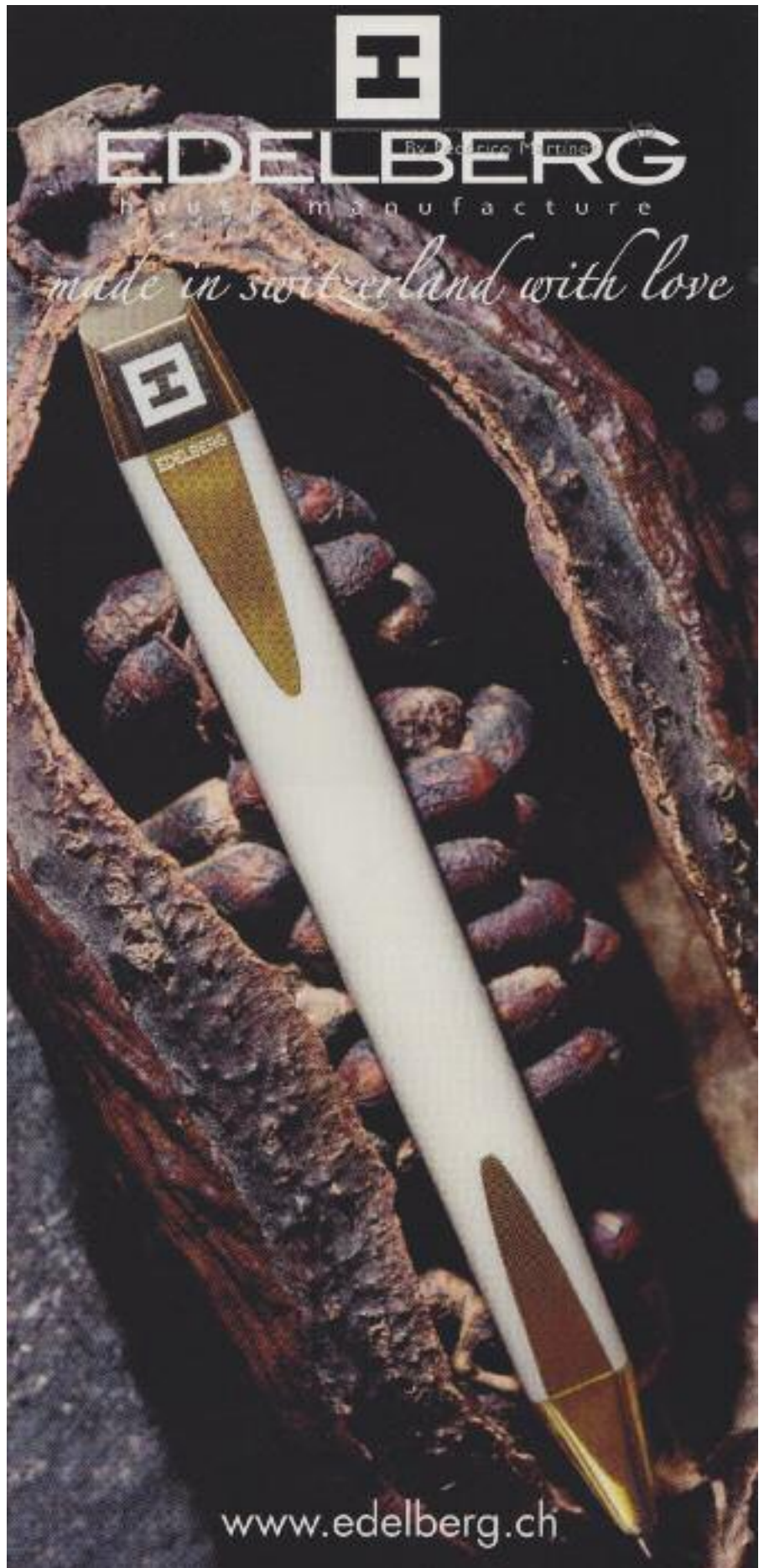
Gutenberg. Edelweiss, a national symbol, is the unmistakable Swiss flower, which thrives on the high alpine pastures.

Johannes Gutenberg was a German blacksmith, goldsmith, printer and publisher who introduced modern book printing. His invention of mechanical movable type printing started the printing revolution and is widely regarded as the most important event of the modern period. He was the first European to use movable type printing in 1439, and the global inventor of the printing press.

His major work, the Gutenberg Bible, also known as the 42-line Bible, has been acclaimed for its clarity and technical quality. Thus the name Edelberg was created to reflect natural Swiss beauty, craftsmanship and innovation, which are important core values of the brand. Naldi's intention was to develop a unique product with a stand-alone character and in this context he has invested heavily in new materials and modern mechanisms. The writing instruments are distinguished by their advanced technology and contemporary design using carbon fibre, stainless steel, aluminium, gold and titanium and fine woods.

The Tachys Collection is composed of pens and rollerballs in nine different versions. The fountain pen is thick and stylized and takes its name from the Greek word for speed. It is made in fine resin with details in 316L stainless steel. Its clip is a hallmark of the series with a design based on the pointer of a speedometer.

The Sloop Collection is very contemporary in style and comprises a range of twelve ballpoints, distinguished by their striped bodies, inspired by the shape of a sailing yacht's hull. The Sloop uses a variety of materials, resin, carbon fibre, lacquer and black PVD. The clip has a sophisticated disappearing mechanism.



PEN PROFILE

KELLY LAWRENCE

About me: Since an early age I've always been drawn to stationery, writing equipment and styles – if you'll pardon the pun . . . Sadly, unable to use my hands well, I have never been able to create the intricate designs of calligraphy. I can however still appreciate the beauty and skill involved and as well as being a bit of a bookworm I'm very interested in writing equipment, particularly from the past.

What I collect: I collect dip pens, inkwells, particularly travelling inkwells, desk sets and pencils. I started out with writing slopes and stationery boxes and still do occasionally pick these up, that said with the limited space available to me, the smaller items are so much easier to display and find homes for.

Best Finds: My best finds are those with a personal history attached to them, something to look in to. Some examples would be a blotter I bought which had a receipt in it, a bible with family details – a full history of births, marriages etc, a lovely deed box with newspaper cuttings, letters etc. I love the social history and the era – I was definitely born in the wrong century, or was I, now at least I get to collect these wonderful pieces of history!

Areas of expertise: If I have any, they definitely aren't around writing equipment. It is too soon to say I have any areas of expertise, especially to the well informed readers of this journal. I am very much a beginner with a steep learning curve and loving every minute of it. If I had to name a topic, the best part of my limited knowledge would be 'Sampson Mordan', who I stumbled upon completely by accident after buying a pencil and then researching the markings. I thoroughly enjoy the research and love to learn.

Burning questions: Where are all the blotters? Not rocker blotters. I have managed to find two blotters, both with letters, cuttings or pieces of social history. They seem quite hard to get hold of. Not only that, but what is the correct term for them? Is it just 'blotter' is it a 'blotter book'; perhaps that's where I'm going wrong? I did say I was new to this!! The other challenge I have is I mainly purchase on line. I'd love to be able to go trawling through the treasure troves around but my large wheelchair never fits through their doors and I would destroy more than I could buy! If anyone does know of any easily accessible places and/or where blotters can be found – I'd love to hear from you.

Latest Acquisition: One of my latest and most sensible acquisitions was a qalandan and several books, purchased from Jim Marshall after finding his details in a previous WES journal. I do tend to go with my heart and collect what I like, which I believe is the way it should be done, but it won't hurt me at all to gain some knowledge from the helpful books out there. Thanks Jim!

Dream find: I guess it could be debatable whether my dream find technically fits into this journal, so I'll let you decide. My dream find is a book – a first edition of the Count of Monte Cristo is what I would love to discover. I recently read this on my eBook, which I use out of necessity due to my disability, and I loved it, one of those books I found very difficult to put down. I think a book fits in fine in this section, what with all the writing materials used to create these beautiful items of craftsmanship. Without meaning to spark off a whole new debate now – I believe there is a place for eBooks – I'm a case in point. That said I personally hope we never come to the stage where books are no longer used. Then again, I guess my eBook is the antique of the future . . .

One final word: I have learnt a great deal already from this journal and have felt very welcome; especially by Harry Scharf who kindly wrote to me after the last journal, so thank you very much and I look forward to meeting many of you at the October Pen Show, my first ever.



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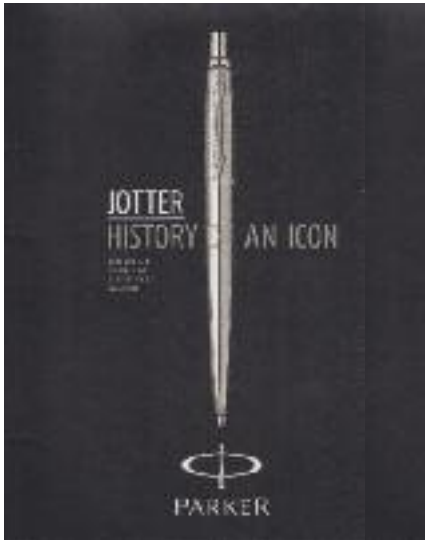
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Jotter: History of an Icon
 by David Shepherd, Graham Hogg,
 Geoffrey Parker and Dan Zazove

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Book review by John Martinson

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If you've ever encountered an advertising ballpoint and looked at the refill, you'll most likely find one with an oversized reservoir and a plug with a ratcheted shape designed to rotate the writing tip a quarter turn with each click for even wear. Few people realize that ingenious little refill was created in Janesville, Wisconsin, by a joyously methodical body of men and women at the Parker Pen Company. Now, finally, after aiding the world's thoughts and ideas on paper for 57 years in silence, the Parker Jotter speaks.

Jotter: History of an Icon is a 329 page compendium of history dedicated to Parker's foresight, an outstanding contribution to society reverberates to this day, through the production of Jotter. With extensive interviews and never before seen photographs, *The Jotter Book* as it's affectionately known, significantly illustrates, chapter by chapter, each painstaking step in the Jotter's creation. It is a fitting tribute to those whose collaborative efforts brought to life the clever little ballpoint that changed all.

The post-war decade saw tremendous changes in America, and with it, great confidence sparking creativity and inventiveness. Lázló Biró, an innovative Hungarian from Argentina, decades before the war, simply wanted a better writing pen with a smudge free, quick drying ink. After improving his invention,

consistent efforts still produced consistent failures. Deep in debt, Biró sold the American rights of his patents to Eversharp in 1944. When Eversharp introduced the pen, it caught the eye of a savvy salesman Milton Reynolds.

In 1946, Reynolds, ready to make quick cash, hired a manufacturer in Chicago to construct a pen made entirely of munitions-based aluminium, with little or no design testing and created the International Ballpoint Pen. Through sensational salesmanship stunts, including a record breaking flight no less, Milton Reynolds sold millions of ballpoint pens. In less than two years, Reynolds was gone along with millions of dollars from unsatisfied customers.

Despite poor performance, the surprisingly prosperous ballpoint sales caught *Time* magazine's attention, who questioned why another company, Parker, had yet to enter the market with a ballpoint. Parker was enjoying its sales of fountain pens and pencils, with more earnings than anyone else, why not join? The reply came directly from Kenneth Parker himself, President of The Parker Pen Company, "If and when we bring out a ballpen, it won't resemble anything now on the market." This was the birth of an icon.

The book chronicles in detail the developments of the Parker Jotter's historic rise, from concept to product, and profiles each individual who made

lasting contributions to the design. Each chapter is a crisp and clear narrative detailing the Jotter's development and evolution. It is invitingly easy to read; good for first time hobbyists and veteran collectors alike.

There is an importance to this book, which should not be overlooked. Parker Jotter isn't just about a ballpoint pen or a refill, or the company, who, late in life all but disappeared from Janesville, and later Newhaven, UK, but about the

people of Parker Pen. It is about the men and women who devoted their lives to a company that cared for their community. Parks with swings and slides were created, because of the Jotter. Generations of teens graduated from high school because of the Jotter. College scholarships were created because of the Jotter. People purchased their first homes and lived better lives because of the Jotter. All this because of the Jotter and Arrow Park,

which produced millions of Jotters for customers throughout the world

Jotter: History of an Icon deserves publicity and availability outside of the pen community. The Jotter's legacy is the example of quality, value and timeless design so intricately complex in its simplicity, it could be mistaken as art. This book should be required reading for engineering and design students interested in accomplishing everlasting contributions to society.

end of scramble

The stakes were high for the first Parker ballpen. Despite fears that the deadline would not be met, the first 100 Jotters were completed on Tuesday 22 December 1953. This was announced in a bulletin from Helen Morrissey, the company secretary. The next afternoon, all of the production staff were given the opportunity to inspect and write with the finished product.

Later on as stocks built up, all 1,600 employees were each given their own Jotter. On the afternoon of 5 February 1954, Phil Hull stepped up to the microphone in the broadcast room of Arrow Park and announced: "In a moment your foreman will give each of you a new Jotter pen. With the exception of those given to the salesmen, these are the first models to be released from inventory. We want you to be the first to own and try one. The pen is yours to keep".



HELEN MORRISSEY, THE COMPANY SECRETARY

The pen was available in four colours, black, grey, green and red (rust), and the list price was \$2.75. The Sales Department had also requested 32,000 clear crystal models for demonstration purposes. Three point sizes were available initially: fine, medium and broad. A choice of five coloured inks was available: blue, blue-black, black, red and green and a new refill cost 69c.



A FIRST LOOK AT THE JOTTER ON WEDNESDAY 23 DECEMBER 1953



UNMARKED DOMED TOP OF ACTUATING BUTTON



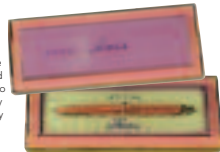
THE FIRST JOTTER COLOUR RANGE AVAILABLE IN 1954



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: CLEAR, RED (RUST), BLACK, GREY AND GREEN.

princess jotter

In September 1958 Parker introduced a complete range of feminine-styled pens called Princess and Debutante Jotters. With a totally new approach to ballpoint marketing, the models came in a variety of pastel shades, all delicately engraved, some by hand. The pocket clip was removed.



The Princess line was a continuation of Parker's traditional emphasis on separately styled pens for women

which began in 1922 with a group of pastel coloured, lady-size fountain pens. Ever since the appearance of

the Parker Duofold, a spectacular scarlet pen which burst on the scene in the 1920s, writing instruments had become more colourful. Before that, practically all pens were black.

Until 1958, all ballpoints had been neutral colours, suitable for use by either sex, according to H Nutley, the Parker design chief. "But with the increased emphasis on styling being put into women's accessories, it became obvious to us that a functional writing instrument like the Jotter should be feminised".

The Princess pens had elaborate designs and were offered in three price bands. Top of the range, at \$10, was a delicate hand-engraved ivy design on white or black caps with an electro-plated gold barrel. It was also available in all black or all White. The \$7.50 model had an engraved cap and barrel in a choice of five colours, Pink, Beige, Turquoise, Blue and Black. The \$5 model was produced in the same colours but had a filigree-engraved cap and an electro-plated gold barrel.



ENGRAVED IVY DESIGN ON BLACK CAP WITH ELECTROPLATED GOLD BARREL \$10 AND IVY DESIGN ON WHITE CAP WITH BLACK BARREL



FROM LEFT: TURQUOISE FILIGREE ENGRAVED CAP WITH ELECTROPLATED GOLD BARREL \$5; BLACK FILIGREE ENGRAVED CAP AND BARREL \$7.50; PINK ENGRAVED CAP AND BARREL \$7.50; BLACK FILIGREE ENGRAVED CAP AND ELECTROPLATED GOLD BARREL \$5

THE PRESIDENT'S PEN

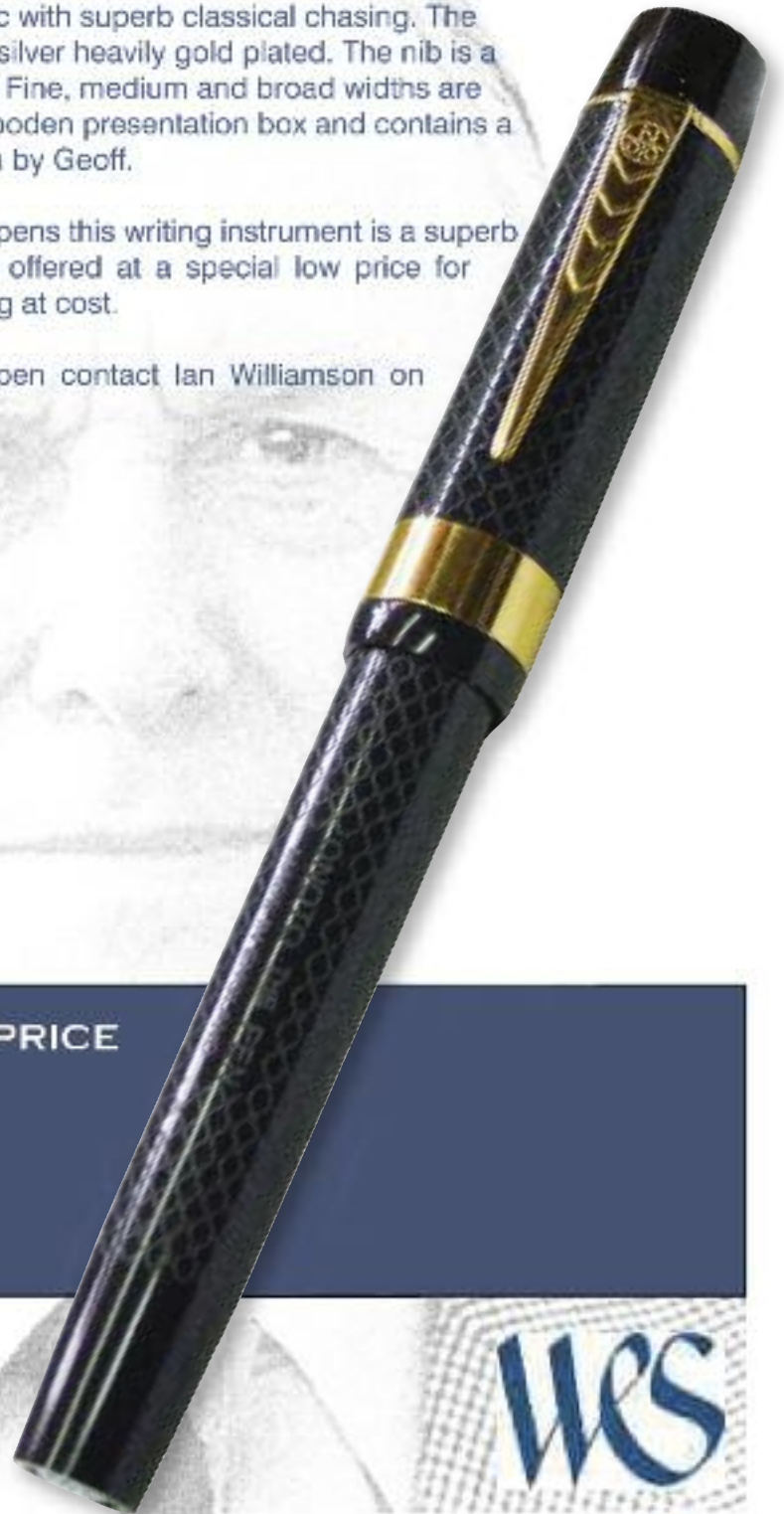
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THEIR FACTORY



THE WORLD FEMOUR SWEDISH BALL PEN
BALLOGRAF

BALLOGRAF

In the 1960s the Ballograf was the first ballpoint pen that you were allowed to use in schools, and for many the brand is synonymous with that special pen you received as a Christmas present, birthday or graduation gift, perhaps with your own name engraved on it. If not, most Scandinavians are sure to have used a Ballograf when visiting a bank, post office or any local government office. Often, the pen was imprinted with the text 'Tillhör Statsverket' (Property of the State Administration) in white block letters and maybe resting in a simple round desk stand, with a chrome chain.

The Ballograf factory is situated in Västra Frölunda in Gothenburg, Sweden. Although being a pen collector and living nearby, I have passed it hundreds of times without ever really reflecting what went on in the large storage-looking warehouse. The building is huge, has no windows on the sides, painted blue and white and has a fairly modest sign with the familiar Ballograf logo.

Now I have been invited by the Ballograf CEO, Jan Johansson to take a look inside the forbidding walls to see the premises where Ballograf pens have been produced since the 1960s. The truth is, I took it for granted that this factory was just an assembly plant, putting together pens from parts manufactured in China and India. As it turns out, I could not have been more wrong.

As most people know, the first reasonably functioning ballpen was manufactured in Argentina in the early 40s by the Hungarian brothers George and Lászlo Biró, but they were soon overtaken by the American, Milton Reynolds, who actually stole Biró's idea and in 1945 flooded the American market with his Reynolds International, selling it with a massive ad campaign where he promised it would have magical properties. Well, the only magical thing about it was that it sold in millions even though it did not work properly.

We started the tour of the factory in the exhibition room where we learnt about the company's history.

In Sweden, a Jewish watchmaker Eugen Spitzer, who had earlier fled from Nazi occupied Austria, heard about the new miracle, and in 1947 he bought a Reynolds pen from the USA for 30 dollars. Together with a friend and engineer, Friedrich Schaechter he copied the principle and then experimented with a customised design. They called the new ballpen Ballograf: ball for the writing pellet and graf for writing.

In a garage on St. Pauligatan in Gothenburg they produced a number of pens that they managed to sell to the large Swedish department store chain Unit Company, EPA. All the pens, the first ever built in Sweden, were returned the next day, because they all leaked. But Spitzer and Schachter did not give in that



Ballograf CEO, Jan Johansson

easily, and soon they created a design that actually worked.

In 1949 a Ballograf Pen cost an amazing 99 kronor (about £9) while most other pens sold for 70 kronor (about £6) or less. But the pens worked, they were made locally, and they sold! Two years later the company, Ballograf Verken, had been established and it moved into new premises on Krokslättsgatan in Mölndal, outside Gothenburg.

We leave the exhibition room and move further into the factory. Jan

BALLOGRAF

Johansson greets and nods to the staff. Most of the work is about monitoring automated processes. The factory has shrunk in just a few decades, from hundreds of employees down to 32, but without having to compromise production volume or quality.

We are entering the machine shop and it is surprisingly quiet. Two men are standing by the windows, chatting. The windows let in a yellowish light from the street. Maybe it's work-talk. Maybe it's a coffee break. This department carries out repairs to the machinery used in the production. Parts wear out and need replacing, adjustments need to be made, and some smaller machines are built from scratch.

In a room further back half a dozen machines are humming, clicking and hissing. We have entered the plastic workshop. Here all the small pieces of plastic and rubber used in the Ballograf pens are being manufactured.

The machines are mostly modern, but some have been sitting here for decades. I would have expected a dusty, rattling, oil-smelling factory floor and sure, some of the machines are moaning and puffing and panting, but dirty it is not. Plastic pellets are melted and then automatically transformed into mechanical parts, caps and pen bodies, which eventually end up on the assembly line where all the parts are prepared for final assembly.

A few of the components are manufactured elsewhere, like Spain and Germany, but no parts are manufactured outside of Europe. One of the few things that are outsourced to a subcontractor is the nickel-plating. Jan Johansson says that nickel plating is toxic and dirty work and that it is better to let the real experts do it. A workshop, nearby in Kungssten, have been doing nickel-plating for Ballograf for decades. A relationship that works well. "It's all about quality. By keeping the production as near as possible, we can ensure the high quality we want", says Jan Johansson.

During the late 1940s and early 1950s, 20 pen manufacturers were making pens in Sweden and the competition was fierce, but Ballograf had established themselves as makers of quality pens and when in 1952 they introduced the model New Copy R55, a push-button actuated ball pen in a modern design, the competitors began falling away. The capless design with its hidden point, assured that the Ballograf pens could now be carried in pockets and handbags without smudging.

The year before, across the Atlantic, the production of the Reynolds ball pen had ceased, Reynolds himself was bankrupt, and Parker would not launch their legendary Jotter until two years later.

On the other hand, the French Baron Bich had already cut an 'h' from his last name and had started to mass produce hyper-cheap ballpoint pens under the brand name Bic. Within ten years Bic was destined to take over 90% of the ball pen market.

During the early 50s the technicians at Ballograf had developed a technique in which the writing ball was fitted in a way that the angle of writing was not as important. The first ballpoint pens had worked only when the pens were used completely vertical. Now writing was much more comfortable.

We are entering another department of the Ballograf factory, the turning room. Here all the metal parts are manufactured. Here sits the most important machine in





Clockwise from top left: the machine shop, the plastic shop, Mikron – turning room, ink cartridges waiting to be filled and the metal shop.



the production line. It's a high, misty cylinder. Large barrels of plastic and metal are attached, filled with smaller cylinders, wires and pipes. They seem to be replicas from the movie *The Fly*. But this is not science fiction. This is the heart of Ballograf. Jan Johansson, leans forward and picks up a tiny little piece of metal, maybe ten millimeters long and about two millimeters wide. I have to stretch my neck to see what he's holding.

Two small containers are feeding the machine. One with thin pieces of steel pipes, the other with small steel balls that go into the machine. It all looks incredibly complicated. Inside the machine the pipes are cut, moulded, pressed, drilled, aligned, fitted with the ball that will eventually turn into the ballpoint itself, and finally squeezed together. There is no room for misalignment. We're talking about a small steel ball of a size less than a millimeter, which is fitted into a tube with a tenth of a millimeter thick walls.

This with an accuracy of one thousandth of a millimeter. The ball is made from tungsten carbide, it's as hard as a sapphire and denser than steel or titanium. The same material is used as the cutter in rock drilling equipment and in armour-piercing ammunition. The balls have small gouges to increase friction against the paper. "I know there are pens that use smooth balls, but not in quality pens", says Jan Johansson.

The machine is labeled Mikron. A Mikron ballpoint machine, or an older sister named Albe, is used in 90% of all pen factories worldwide. Two Swiss watchmakers, Sauro Albertini and Guido Bertoglio, patented the first machine in the early 1960s. Parker, Waterman, Montblanc, all installed an Albe/Mikron machine for their high quality pens. They are purely mechanical and operate without modern computer technology. The Mikron requires 18 different operations to create each ballpoint.

Again, the rest of the production is virtually fully automated. Servo robots from Wittmann ensure that all parts are fitted in the right place. In fact, the robots continue to work even when the staff have gone home.

The big boost for Ballograf came in 1956 when they developed a cartridge with a permanent, light-resistant ink. Until then, it was forbidden to use ballpoint pens to sign official documents or even in school, as the ink was not permanent. The cartridge was also made in a jumbo size, and contained so much ink that it was possible to write a line of eight kilometers before it ran out. This also paved the road for a big breakthrough internationally. The same type of cartridge is produced even today by Ballograf.

We walk into the room where the Ballograf ink-cartridges are manufactured. It's not a secret that it is the cartridges that have been the basis for the Ballograf success. There was a time when even Montblanc bought their cartridges from the small Ballograf factory in Västra Frölunda. Today the ink itself is made outside the factory and is actually imported from Germany. In fact, there are only a half dozen manufacturers of ballpoint ink in the world.

There is a lot of stainless steel around. Clinical. Almost hospital-like, but the ink of course cannot be allowed to be contaminated, it's essential that the cartridges do not



BALLOGRAF

contain any foreign matter that could clog the system. The ink arrives in big, blue plastic containers and an almost ridiculously small, plain machine fills the empty cartridges with ink, into which the newly made ballpoints already have been fitted. They are sorted into round tin containers, a hundred in each jar, where they are fitted with a gel plug that both prevents ink from escaping from the wrong end and is also moving with the ink when it is consumed from the front.

Here the quality control is tough, but quite simple, if ingenious. The cartridges, which are made in a nickel-silver alloy, have been placed with the tip down on a round piece of paper. The cartridges are then centrifuged to get the air out of the ink and if a dot is missing on the paper, that would indicate that something is wrong with that particular cartridge. The process is monitored manually and defective cartridges are simply sorted out. "If there is something wrong at this station, it's almost always about misalignment or dimensional errors", says Jan Johansson.

In the late 50s Ballograf was such a strong brand in Scandinavia that when Bic wanted to enter the Nordic market, they saw only one competitor – and one strategy. In 1959 Bic bought Ballograf. Bic thought it was fantastic that Ballograf was so strong in certain markets and the strategy was that it was much easier to buy the brand than to try to rebuild their own in the region, says Jan Johansson.

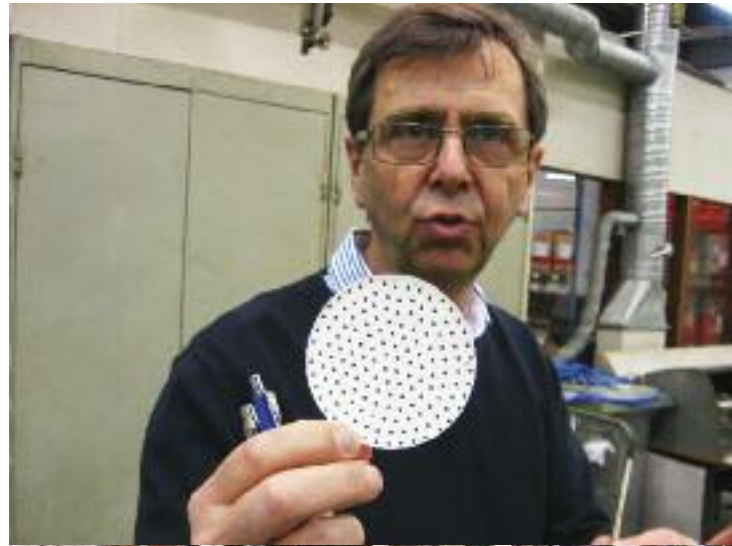
The next stepping stone for Ballograf occurred in 1961 when they unveiled its Epoca, a pen model that became a landmark for the company. The pen was designed by Wolfgang Schweizer and was much thicker than most ballpoint pens of the time, it was also hexagonal, which served to give the user a good grip. You could write for a very long time with the Epoca without getting tired.

Over the years the Epoca has been produced in a variety of different colours and finishes. It was so popular that Ballograf had a problem with others copying the design. After a protracted dispute, Ballograf, in 1968, won its legal case against a competitor. The court concluded that the Epoca was unique and it could be classed as a Swedish industrial craft product and was protected by law from any form of design infringement. The Epoca is still in production and accounts for about half of the nearly five million pens that are being shipped from the factory in Västra Frölunda every year. Today the company has annual sales of approximately 42 million kronor (about £3.7 million).

Jan Johansson is proud of Ballograf's environmental awareness, both in their products and in the production. Everything that can be recycled, is recycled. As an example he demonstrates a machine that manufactures screw parts from bars made from new brass. Although the machine is working with six elements simultaneously in order to fully exploit the raw material, there is still around 40% waste. But the waste goes into a centrifuge, that separates the oil from the brass and everything is reused, he explains. Ballograf also manufactures the world's only eco-labelled pen, called the Friendly Pen. All parts are manufactured with the environment in mind. The pen body is made from recycled paper, the ink is certified and all the other parts are made from environmentally friendly polypropylene plastic.

In 1997 Jan Johansson stepped in as CEO for Ballograf under Bic's flag. "My father worked here between 1952 and 1997, he was also the CEO from 1965. And my mother also worked here on the financial side", says Jan Johansson. He laughs when I ask if he was born into this job.

When the opportunity came in 2004 to take over Ballograf from Bic, Jan discussed the matter with his old friend Tommy Kvist, who then worked in the grocery business. They decided to join forces and buy Ballograf from Bic. A partnership that has worked out well. "40% of all our stock is being sold as promotional pens, with over-printing of some sort. It is obvious that there is a little less demand for promo-





Clockwise from top left: Jan Johansson with a test paper, assembly line, yellow – Epcocas pens, The Friendly Pen, Ballograf catalogue, the Ballograf Botanique pen and the assembly line.

tional products nowadays. We are affected by the recession, it shows in our customers' budgets. The private market is small, but none the less important. The buyers for businesses are also individuals and if they are impressed by our products, they will of course also purchase Ballograf for their businesses", he says, smiling.

All but two employees are working directly in the production line. There used to be in-house technical designers and advertising staff, but today Jan Johansson makes use of external firms. "It's simply no longer economical to have staff assigned to research and industrial design. Presently we are concentrating on further developing our traditional models", Jan Johansson says.

He explains that the pen industry in general is facing hard times and that the market is slowly shrinking. "There are small changes, but things do go downhill and there is almost no technological progress in a pen company nowadays. Sure, there are new models in new designs but they are built, with few exceptions, on existing technology", he says. "Our model Rondo, for example, became very popular. We were absolutely right in the timing with a product that was also quite on the spot. We needed something new in our line-up and the soft grip was becoming fashionable. We introduced the Rondo in 1993. It has a simple and classic design with a smooth surface and sleek design, and it sold very well from the start. There aren't a lot of people that don't like it, actually", Jan Johansson says and chuckles a little.

Today Ballograf is selling nearly two million Rondo units every year, if you include the pencils. But still, it's the Epcoca that's the great seller. A winning design, still after so many years. "It's white that sells best, because so much of what we do goes out with advertising imprints", Jan Johansson says.

Ballograf has its niche in the mid-range market, £2-5. It's hard to compete with the giants Bic and Pilot in the mass production segment. Nor does Jan Johansson want to venture into the high-end range. Some attempts have been made, including a series of fountain pens a few years back, but it was too hard to gain ground. "Sales of high-quality pens have gone down, not only for us, but overall for the industry, and we don't find it economically sound to manufacture expensive pens when we would only sell a few hundred pieces", says Jan Johansson. Instead, he and his colleague Tommy Kvist are working on broadening Ballograf within its strong area, including developing partnerships with other companies. In 2009 Ballograf bought nearly half of the pen manufacturer Rosinco in Filipstad, specializing in eco-friendly whiteboard pens. Each year three million of these pens are being sold.

A well renowned Swedish designer, also a good friend of Jan Johansson, Gustav Widström, has designed a pen called 'Fjäder' – Feather. A pen made of plastic and aluminum, based on Ballograf mechanics. It is a small design masterpiece in its simplicity with clear links all the way back to the quill pen. For each Fjäder sold, Ballograf is donating a ballpoint pen to a school project in Africa through the Save the Children organisation.

Another Ballograf product sold in designer shops in Europe is the Epcoca with the classic round-desk set that has been manufactured since the 1960s. They used to be made in black and blue only, but now, as it is available in several colours it's climbing on the trend lists.

The recession has taken its toll, but there is no doubt that Ballograf intends to stay in business. Quality and tradition have paid off. 500 million Ballograf pens have been sold since its inception. Jan Johansson is hoping for as many in the future. "We believe that we can survive much longer", he says, smiling. He does not seem particularly worried. ■



REFLECTIONS ON PEN VACUUM & PISTON REPAIR



IN THIS ARTICLE JEREMY COLLINGRIDGE REVIEWS SOME FOUNTAIN PEN VACUUM FILLER PROBLEMS WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO DESIGNS FROM PARKER, ONOTO, SHEAFFER AND WAHL AND THE KIND OF SOLUTIONS THAT REPAIRERS WILL PURSUE.



Parker Vacumatic Diaphragm System

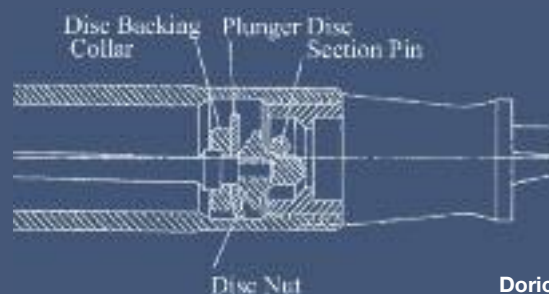
While Parker used their own vacuum filler based on a rubber diaphragm and breather tube, both Wahl and Sheaffer followed a piston design of the same general working method as Onoto. A typical Parker diaphragm system is featured on the left. The Parker diaphragm hardens and cracks with age and creates its own problems in repair, principle amongst them being the removal of a small location ball that retains the diaphragm in the pump assembly. The assemblies were originally easily exchangeable but are generally needing to be repaired now. The nipple that holds the ball hardens with age and is easily damaged in removing the ball so that further repair action is required. The design will however not leak from the top of the barrel as long as the diaphragm is in place.

In the other manufacturers' designs, a piston is pulled up and pushed down with a seal shaped to allow air to pass in the same way as a cycle pump. A vacuum is created on the downstroke. There is usually a wider diameter where the vacuum is released at the end of its downward travel pulling ink into the body through the nib and feed. Wahl added an additional offset pin ('Section Pin') across the upper end of the section together with a shaped

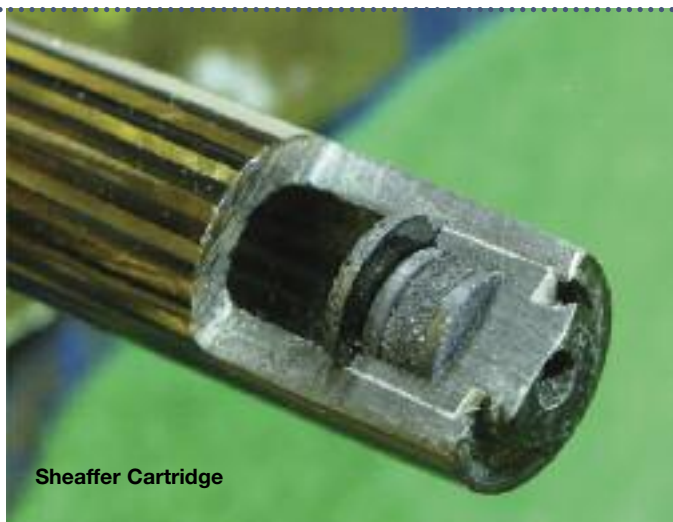
nut ('Disc Nut') which pushes the piston rod off the centre line to ensure a clear path to the ink reservoir. The diagram below should make the operation clear.

Sheaffer produced a large number of rod filled designs from some generally popular priced vertical stripes which are easily available to larger, more expensive marbles. The levers are generally more liked now because of the ease of repair. Wahl produced a number of very attractive and collectable fountain pens in the golden period leading up to 1939. The 12-sided Dorics came out in about 1931 in a series of sizes and in some stunning finishes. They also had some technologies that were clearly intended to help position them at the top of the market. Their pens also came in both lever and rod vacuum filling forms.

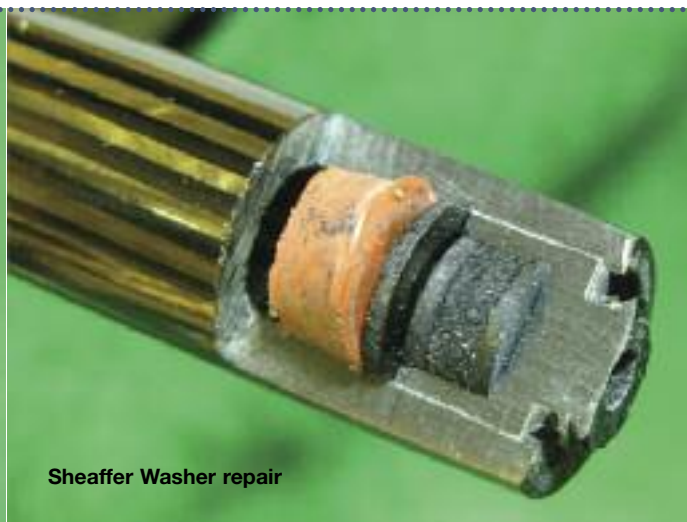
While the lever-fill Doric pens are again better regarded by collectors (and therefore more expensive) because of easier repair, the vac fillers have a number of gorgeous finishes. The barrels include a clear section at the lower end to check ink level. The barrel material tends to discolour with use in the same way as other manufacturers' windowed designs so that clearer examples are more collectable.



Doric Piston Seal and Pin



Sheaffer Cartridge



Sheaffer Washer repair

Successful filling of all vacuum designs depends on both the action of the piston diaphragm and sealing of the top of the barrel cavity where the operating rod passes through. Failure of the piston seal frustrates the vacuum action preventing filling and weakening of the top seal inevitably releases ink to discomfort the user. In spite of manufacturers' insistence on lifetime warranties illustrated by blue diamonds, white dots or little gold medallions, they were not considering a life of more than perhaps ten years before you purchased their latest model. Their service departments would have provided the few complainants with a new, current pen (as long as you have the receipt!) and they certainly did not anticipate the challenge of a repair 80 years later.

The replacement of the piston seal is generally straightforward. For today's repairers, all of the piston seals are relatively easily made and sourced at accessible prices. A small amount of shellac can avoid any leaks round the spindle and ensure the fixing nut does not come loose. Barrels can vary in diameter through age and distortion by up to 0.2mm and it may be useful to increase the seal diameter to roughly 0.5mm oversize to achieve sealing. The Doric seal is advertised as having a series of smaller holes nearer the bore. These holes must themselves be around 0.4mm diameter which is quite a manufacturing achievement in a soft rubber. This was patented perhaps more for commercial than practical reasons. Such seals are no longer available and the repairer will use a plain piston disc.

The life of the piston rod is much longer than the piston seals themselves. Some of them can be plastic coated steel wire. If the plastic fails, the steel can rust making the rod unusable. Sheaffer changed to stainless steel part way through their vacuum production. Both Onoto and Wahl relied on thicker plastic. Replacements are in stainless steel if there isn't another replacement source.

The interesting part of the overhaul comes from the maintenance of the barrel top seal. Onoto used a cork packed chamber that benefitted from a quick and simple change of two cork seal. The Marshall & Oldfield *Pen Repair Manual*¹ covers this process excellently. Attendees at Repair Class Module 2 will be familiar with and practise the use of a tool to open the cavity and replace these seals without dis-assembling the remainder of the pen.

Sheaffer provided repairers with a replacement barrel with its seal cartridge

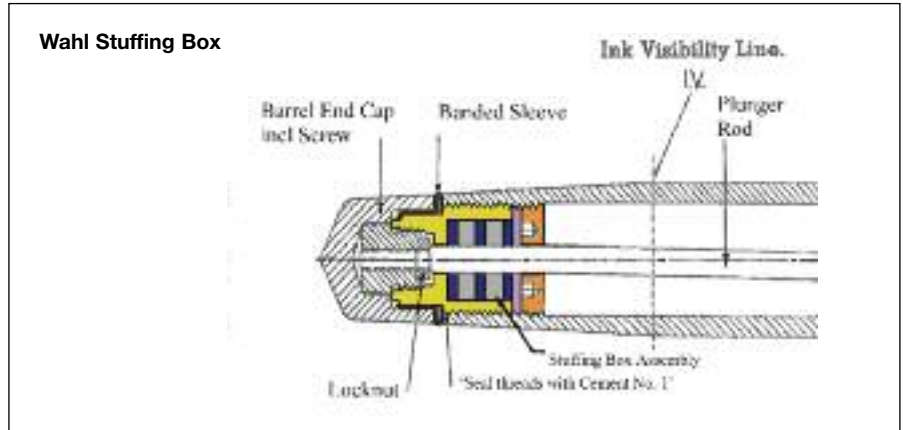
already fitted. This cartridge contains a pair of rubber diaphragms with felt in between to hold lubrication. It has straight cylindrical sides and is glued in place. The original easy repair was to put an additional thick rubber washer up the barrel and is perhaps unfairly much frowned upon by today's repairers. The *Pen Repair Manual*¹ recommends trying first a good clean and regrease to see if the cartridge will recover sufficient effectiveness before more complex repair efforts are tried. In the repair workshop (rather than for the individual repairer), the cartridge would be removed and replaced, if necessary by drilling out the old cartridge. Thanks to some modern technology provided by David Nishimura of Vintage Pens, Providence, cartridges containing a rubber 'O' ring in place of the old diaphragm and felt, allow exchange of the old cartridge for a reproduction that is virtually indistin-



Sheaffer O Ring cartridge

guishable and will work for many years to come. WES Repair Class attendees are asked to consider preserving originality (perhaps with a pen that cannot be used) or making a sympathetic repair using such a cartridge. They also reflect on the balance of the effort and cost in making a repair against the value of the pen and the willingness of its owner to pay for its repair.

The Vac fill Doric started as a generally more expensive pen than its Sheaffer equivalent but gives the repairer additional challenges. Amongst my own earlier repair attempts, I cracked a Wahl section not realizing that the nib unit would unscrew leaving a very thin wall shell. The Wahl workshop manual² shows a steel insert that screws in place of the nib unit to take the load when removing the section. The Fountain Pen Hospital in New York made me a magnificent replacement section for only \$60 at the time. The Doric can feature an adjustable nib sometimes with an ink shut off system that allegedly was unsuccessful. Disassembly of this nib unit has its own traps with a small gold



spring that easily disappears of its own accord. A solution is to take it apart in a large, clear poly bag such that the spring is recovered from the bottom when hands are removed. Reassembly is aided by a piece of cotton that slows and limits its independence as shown below. Ink shut off will certainly be a problem now since its action depends on a soft shaped rubber seal that fits inside the section and that is certainly no longer available. The action of the system is otherwise visually pleasing to a collector.



The top of the barrel features a 'stuffing box' with a lower locating disc both of which screw into the barrel. Pressure is held by three rubber discs separated by an oil-lubricated fabric. Wahl explain that this is 'much more complex and expensive a construction than the competition' (ie Sheaffer). A shaped trim ('banded sleeve') then cosmetically covers the end to make it tidy. Fortunately, this design actually keeps working a lot longer than its competition so that a good clean with ultrasonics and re-greasing can be successful a lot of the time. New Wahl top seal assemblies ('stuffing boxes') were originally available to the repairer for 25¢ where a new clip was 50¢. Otherwise the challenge now is stuffing box removal. It is not only screwed in but also held by 'Cement No 1' which is shellac like. The instruction manual



Wahl Ink Shut Off Nib



A Spring Restrained by Cotton

instructs that the barrel is tapped with a soft mallet to shatter the cement and then gently heated and unscrewed using a plier-like tool on its smaller diameter. It is possible that back before WWII this might have worked but more recent notes by the respected late Frank Dubiel counsel that the barrel will now be brittle and should not be hit with a mallet. This, plus the complete lack of mechanical advantage on the smaller diameter, makes removal much more difficult and I have found resists all the usual efforts of soaking, heating and twisting. It might be possible to drill out the stuffing box but manufacturing another with its external screw thread and tapped end cap location would not now be easy.

We thus come to the common repairer's challenge on restoration and originality. Because of repair difficulty does



Wahl Repair Cartridge

the pen become a non-writing museum piece with just external cosmetic improvement? Should one drill out and replace the old stuffing box? Such a repair would certainly not be reversible and might also frustrate a further repair in the future. A potential solution lies in using the Nishimura technology, making an insert that is fitted invisibly in the barrel and held in place by an external 'O' ring. It is hidden in the part of the barrel beyond the visible ink line. Such a device is illustrated above. These are available from several sources. This particular example is inserted using the little tommy bar with a screwed end as shown leaving the stuffing box otherwise intact and undamaged. In the future, if it needs to be removed, the same tommy bar can be screwed into the insert and it can be extracted.

Thus this beautiful pen goes back to writing as it was intended, albeit with a smaller ink capacity. If someone can find a supply of original stuffing boxes and a way of removing the old one then the repair can be reversed. ■

- 1 **Pen Repair Manual** ISBN 978-0-9562711-5-0. Authors Jim Marshall and Laurence Oldfield.
- 2 **WES Archive #.836. Eversharp Service Manual. Service Repair Manual for Eversharp Deluxe Ink Shut-Off Pens.**

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WRITE *here!*

We hear many people today, perhaps those of us of a certain generation, bemoaning the fact that our town high streets are becoming one a clone of the other. "They all look the same – same old shops; where are the smaller independent shops there used to be?" The large multiples hold sway and there is no longer room for the independent traders. In our Cathedral cities it is only the large multiples; the Nexts, Boots, Specsavers, and Top Shop to name but a few, that can afford the rents charged by the Church Commissioners, as they often own most of the city centre real estate. Even that bastion of the cheaper prices and ranges, Woolworths has gone to the wall.

So how nice it is to find a town like Shrewsbury where there are many smaller independent shops; Mad Jacks deli, ladies clothes shops, travel agents, shoe shops and art galleries. There Anne and I found **WRITE*here!***, a pen shop, come card shop, come stationers, come toy shop that was a real find. It sits proudly in the High Street, just off the Square, and has had a make-over since we were there in early spring.

John Hall, owner and director, is a WES member and his shop proudly stocks Visconti (his favourite), Conway Stewart, Onoto, Worcester, Pelikan, Lamy and other pens. Perhaps his discussions with Sanford will have borne fruit and Parker and Waterman will be there by now. Pride of place when we were there was given to the elegant Conway Stewart 'Charles Darwin' (number 10 of 25) and appropriately so, in this the city of Darwin's birth. But John will also talk about Visconti; from the very stylish 'Homo Sapiens' and a lovely 'Ragtime' set of fountain pen, ballpoint and roller ball, all in an old fashioned roll top desk case, as well as many others. There is an excellent range of Diamine inks too. John talks of the local school who are encouraging their children to use fountain pens from the low end of Lamy's range and John is happy to show the difference a fountain pen can make in one term with his 'before and after' pictures. What a tribute to the independent trader.

John's range of stationery is championed by Leuchterm 1917, a German company manufacturing note books in direct competition to Moleskine. Whilst some ink may show through a Leuchterm 1917 page it doesn't bleed like

the Moleskine pages; a trait which I find makes them so annoying. Clairefontaine (my personal favourite) is coming soon he says. John also has a huge array of cards for every occasion with lovely designs in blank cards as well. So much more than you get from the chains in the high street. We particularly liked the 3D cards for children that were on show. And children are well catered for with a huge range of games, including Jacques high quality games with all wooden boards as well as all the up-to-date board games, backgammon, chess and draughts. And not forgetting that John has one of the best stocks of kites in the West Midlands, kites of every style and colour – and appropriately he is also known as **KITE*now!***

It was, in a way, sad to see the Darwin pen still for sale. 2010 was the 200th anniversary of the birth of the man who changed the way we look at ourselves. You would have thought perhaps that the Town Council, being a bit enterprising, would have bought the pen in the bi-centenary year even if only for signing Council minutes with a bit of style. It could have been an investment perhaps for

signing when it is granted city status. Darwin does seem largely forgotten by everyone; his old childhood house is a council office – no great museum there sadly, but not forgotten by the graffitists whose works of art are proudly displayed with Darwin portraits which we were able to view from the Harlescott Park-and-Ride return bus ride, something that would have given even 'Banksy' some pride. But Shrewsbury remembers 1403 and the uprising and of course the beheading of Harry Hotspur and others.

It was warm early spring when we were there. Now as the evenings draw in perhaps those of you within an hour of driving or on a train journey might go for a little Christmas shopping at **WRITE*here!*** – or just buy some Christmas cards that are slightly different. A game for a grandson, a pen for a grand daughter, a new note book for you. It is well worth a visit. Oh and if you can't get there – well you can visit the shop on line at www.writeherekitenow.co.uk. Go on West Midlanders – support your local WES member.



Starting with www.vintagewatermanpens.co.uk you can visit all of these specialist web sites.

TRADE TALK



TRADE LIAISON OFFICER, CHARLES WHITEHEAD KEEPS YOU INFORMED ABOUT WHATS HAPPENING IN THE PEN WORLD.

What an interesting article my Council colleague Mike West wrote on the subject of handwriting in the last Journal. Hot on the heels of it, my good friend Alan Hobbs sent me an article from *The Times* which announced that in 41 states of the USA the education authorities had signed up to teaching the three Ts (texting, tapping and typing) in favour of the three Rs. Unbelievable but true. Now I clearly use a computer to research and write these articles, but I jot notes down with a pencil on a scrap of paper or in a note book. And at work, where I spend a lot of time on line with SAGE accounts and Lloyds TSB on-line banking, I am always taking written notes and so I imagine do many others. Are we really serious in not teaching our children or grandchildren to write properly, but to text? Typing, yes I can understand but look at the evidence in the article on the

benefits of cursive writing. Anyway this fired me up. At the time, I was reading my copy of *The Oldie*, a magazine for cynical old souls like me who think that not all that the young produce is faultless. So I wrote an article and sent it to Richard

Ingrams, founder and editor, saying that those of similar views to me may just like to turn up in Kensington on the first Sunday in October and have a browse at LWES 2011. They will find a different view of the world there, said I. Thankfully they published the article in the September issue in the Diary section. Good free publicity – thank you Mr Ingrams and *The Oldie*. I know my old mate Pete Garnett in Worthing is a reader

of *The Oldie* and no doubt saw it and perhaps some of you did to. Let's hope it has worked to bring more in through the door.

I was drifting through some websites the other day and came across a new offering – the Caran d'Ache RNX 316. Made of high grade stainless steel 316 (that may mean something to the engineers amongst you), it is round and hexagonal (hence R (round) N (and) X (hexagonal)). Wow! you can't accuse the Swiss of being over sophisticated with their naming of the pen. It comes in stainless steel or PVD black. Now this is where it does get complicated; PVD stands for Physical Vapour Deposition. This seems to come straight out of the random name generator from the 1970s 'management speak' era. Apparently it means that the ceramic body covering is applied to the steel by using a vacuum deposition process. Well I'm glad we cleared that up! The pen took the 2011 Innovation award at the Frankfurt Paperworld show in February and is a pretty smart looking writing instrument with its hexagonal body phasing into round and it looked good to me in black. This is a move away from the traditional Caran d'Ache silver plated offerings. There are pens, roller balls, ballpoints and

Being married to an artist I am drawn to Visconti's three new pens where the inspiration comes from three of Vincent Van Gogh's pictures. *Starry Night*, *Sunflowers* and *Room in Arles* are the three paintings in question and the pens, with the distinctively Visconti clip, are good representations of the colours of the pictures. There are nice reproductions of the paintings in each of the boxes and this seems to be a very reasonably priced pen with a slightly different theme.



pencils. The stainless steel version is cheaper and more readily available than the black.

Looking to our wider interests, and I am reminded by my Council colleagues that there is more to life than pens of all types or pencils, I came across a fact that one of the world's famous glassware designers manufactured inkwells, something that was unknown to me before. Some more research is needed but I hope maybe to put an article together for a Journal in 2012 on this. I am looking for more examples and more designers – any hints, photos or articles readers may have would be welcome. I do struggle to find news on the non-pen subjects of interest to other members, so any help is welcome.



I have been looking to see whether there have been any announcements made for special editions of pens, paperknives, ink bottles, stamp boxes etc., to celebrate the Olympics or the Queens Diamond Jubilee. I have found £1,000 bottles of whisky, mugs and even a battery powered waving Queen but no pens as yet. There is a special silver hallmark though – so we could expect something in silver to come out soon. If anyone gets to hear of anything – please let me know.

Emirates Airlines has partnered with Montblanc to bring out a unique pen and Emirates passengers can win one. The Montblanc skeleton A380 Limited Edition writing instrument (a bit of a mouthful for a pen) is inspired by the A380 Airbus and is in white gold with dark blue precious resin windows. There are 28 faultless diamonds on the rings of the pen and the crown bears the Montblanc emblem. It has an 18 carat gold and platinum nib and retails at around €15,000.



And finally this caught my eye on Wired.co.uk

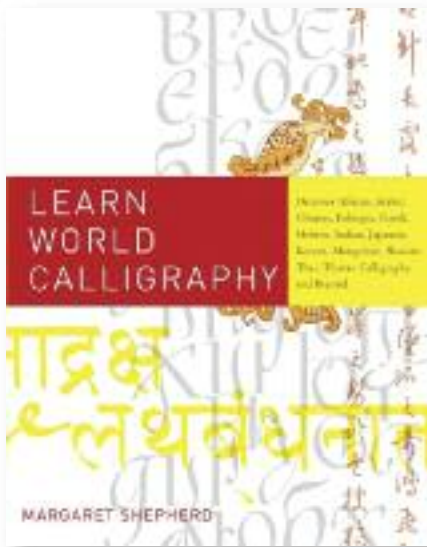
These pictures are incredibly, sorry incredibly, of a dress made out of pen nibs. This is a construction of the originally-named Pen Nib Dress, a shiny, pointy stunning garment created by technologist John Nussey and Central St. Martins womenswear student Steven Tai for his final degree show. The two blended their creative and technical talents to create an A-line dress which uses moveable, vibrating pen nibs as an alternative to sequins or beading. The pair decided to use the tiny motors used to make mobile phones vibrate to animate the nibs. The whole lot is powered by a rechargeable lithium battery, “so it doesn’t have to be plugged in”, explains Nussey – attachment to the wall not being the hottest look when heading down the catwalk. All in all, the dress weighs around six kilograms. So all you nib collectors – do you have the potential to be the next Vivienne Westwood?

My thanks to Wired.co.uk for allowing me to make use of their article.



WES 93 IN OUR NEXT ISSUE!

- PEN BIOGRAPHY**
- GRAHAM HOGG**
- PEN PROFILE**
- ANOTHER**
- THE FIRST PARKER 51**
- DAVID SHEPHERD**
- THE PENCIL MUSEUM**
- JIM MARSHALL**
- HISTORY OF**
- FABER-CASTELL**
- ALAN HOBBS**
- PARKER IN PRAGUE**
- DAVID SHEPHERD**
- ENGLISH PEN**
- HISTORY**
- STEVE HULL**



Learn World Calligraphy
by Margaret Shepherd

Soft cover
192 pages

Random House Books

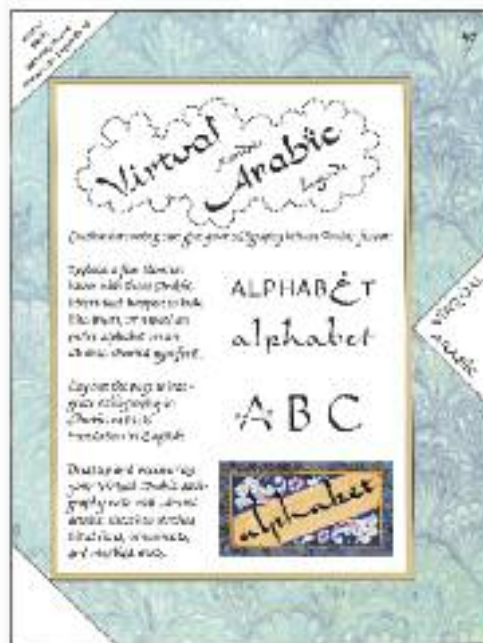
Book review by Mike West

In previous editions of the WES journal we have reviewed two of Margaret Shepherd's earlier books, *The Art of the Handwritten Note* and *The Art of the Personal Letter*. However Margaret is actually a well known and well published calligrapher having over the years produced a number of books on the subject. She exhibits her work extensively and has broadcast regularly in the USA on the theme of writing and calligraphy and was also featured in a recent BBC programme on letter writing. Her latest book, out this autumn, is a formidable text which takes calligraphy to a new and very different level, providing as she puts it 'a virtual trip around the world' offering perspectives on the world's scripts en route.

The intention of the book is to introduce the reader to a wide range of foreign script formats including African, Arabic, Celtic (and Runes), Chinese & Japanese, Hebrew, Indian (including Devanagari, Tibetan and Thai) through to Cyrillic forms with even a passing reference to Middle Earth under the chapter heading 'Otherworldly'. The format and style of these scripts is explained and how they may be used to embellish the reader's own calligraphy. The book is illustrated with sumptuous colour and Margaret Shepherd's own calligraphic texts and explanations. In essence, the reader is encouraged to introduce their own stylized text taking on board the options that other scripts proffer or suggest.



So, how is this presented? The four pages from the 'Arabic section' (below) illustrate how the calligraphic style can be adopted. The Japanese/Chinese section similarly indicates the approach very simply (p 63, 64) – the word 'Chinese' is given a thoroughly Chinese appearance by adopting the Shepherd treatment, as do the runic texts (above). 'Virtual Hebrew' is suggested, where Hebrew letter forms are used either directly or after adaption/rotation to give the text a Hebrew 'feel', whilst maintaining its total readability. Well illustrated too in the section on Indian/ Asian

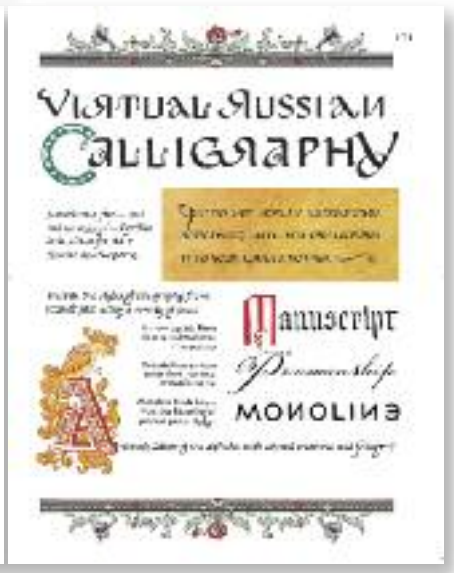




justice. When I received an advanced electronic copy of the text my 'wow factor' went off the scale. The research and lavish pictorial support from around the globe which Margaret Shepherd has incorporated to illustrate her ideas is mind-boggling. With nearly 200 glorious pages of colour, themes, ideas and explanation this is very much a departure from the usual calligraphy texts available and absolutely a book to dip into for calligraphic inspiration.

scripts is the possibility of introducing the flavours of India, Tibet and Thai scripts in to Roman calligraphy as shown by the illustration (above right) with 'celebrate', 'peace' and 'everywhere' as illustrative examples. Similarly, virtual Russian is achieved by borrowing a few appropriate Cyrillic characters (right). Throughout the book, suggestions and calligraphic pointers for the script illustrated appear as part of the chapter.

In a one page WES journal review with limited scope for the reproduction of the illustrative content of the book, it is impossible to do this publication



ANDREWS T

AN A-Z OF THE 100 MEN (AND WOMEN) WHO SHAPED THE ENGLISH FOUNTAIN PEN INDUSTRY: 1875-1975.

THE FOLLOWING MAY BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH STEVE HULL'S *THE ENGLISH FOUNTAIN PEN INDUSTRY: 1875-1975*, LAUNCHED AT LWES 2011. ALL OF THE MEN AND WOMEN LISTED BELOW ARE MENTIONED IN THE BOOK, THOSE NAMES IN BOLD HAVING THEIR OWN MONOGRAPHS.



Companies with which directly involved (as proprietor, director or employee) or associated:

Andrews, Arthur E	Mentmore
Barnes, FP	Felix Macauley; Whytwarth
Biro, Ladislao Jose	Miles-Martin
Brenner, Frederic Ludwig	Brenner-Pocock Trading; Yard-o-Led
Bristow, Cecil	Mabie Todd; Standard; Bristow-Standard
Brookes, H H	Hazell Watson & Viney/Esterbrook ; Waterman's
Brown, Arthur C	Marrian; Mabie Todd; Biro Swan
Brown, H Allord	Altura; Waterman's
Bunyard, John Butler	Burge Warren & Ridgley
Burnham, Henry F C	Burnham
Burnham, William	Burnham; Waterman's
Byford, Norman	Parker
Cahalan, Thirza	Whytwarth
Calton, John T	Jewel



John T Calton
May 1923



Duncan Cameron
June 1907

Calton, William T K	Jewel
Cameron, Duncan	Macniven & Cameron
Cannon, Frank	Altura
Carey, William Harold	Mabie Todd; Biro Swan
Charles, Conrad C	Nibs (1929)
Coit, Richard	Biro Pens; Biro Swan
Crabtree, Norman	Sheaffer
de la Rue, Sir Evelyn Andros, Bt	De La Rue
Dixon, Henry John	Mabie Todd & Bard; Corona; De La Rue; Henry Dixon
Dixon, James	Parker
Dixon, James H	Henry Dixon; James Dixon
Dixon, Thomas	Parker
Epstein, Samuel	Unique
Finburgh, Alec	Wyvern



Alec Finburg
October 1922

OZOCOLA

Companies with which directly involved (as proprietor, director or employee) or associated:

Finburgh, Alfred	Wyvern
Finburgh, David	Wyvern
Finburgh, Sydney	Wyvern
Fry, Bertram ('Bert') E	Conway Stewart
Fry, John G	Conway Stewart
Fry, Walter DB ('Bob')	Conway Stewart
Funnell Christian, J	Own Account; Shipman; Hyde
Garner, Thomas Howard	Conway Stewart
Garner, Reginald ('Rex') H	Conway Stewart
Gilbert, A	Mentmore



J Funnell Christian
May 1895



James Glass
1905

Glass, James	Ormiston & Glass
Goodall, Mortimer J	Chas Goodall; Conway Stewart
Gray, A Nicol	Waterman's
Greer, Sir Henry	Stephens
Guildford, Frederick C	Waterman's
Guildford, Horace F	Waterman's
Harris, Oscar Drewe	Felix Macaule; Whytwarth
Hazell, Ralph	Hazel Watson & Viney; Esterbrook Hazell Pens
Hearson, Thomas Alfred	De La Rue
Hamilton-Jones, J W	Eversharp
Hancock, Alan	Conway Stewart
Jarvis, Francis Charles	Conway Stewart
Jarvis, G R ('Ronnie')	Devobond/Conway Stewart
Jarvis, Kenneth C	Conway Stewart
Jarvis, Stanley William	Conway Stewart
Jeffreys, Richard W	London; International Pen Syndicate; Altura; De La Rue
Johnson, Leslie William	Mabie Todd
Johnson, William Frederick	Own account; Mentmore; Spot
Jones, Arthur Stanley	Conway Stewart
Kearney, John	J Kearney
Kimpton, Charles W ('Kimpie')	WH Smith
Knight, Edward Gibson	De La Rue
King, L John ('Jack'), MBE	Parker
Lamert, Sidney Streatfeild	De La Rue

Sidney Lamert
May 1924



The list is by no means exhaustive, since some of those who should probably feature remain anonymous today. For instance, along with George Shand, who were the other pioneering pen manufacturers and jobbers who made pens and parts (including 14ct nibs) for the bigger manufacturers and own-brand customers in the early years? Who ran the Whytwarth companies under the alias John Whytwarth? Who managed the Wirt Fountain Pen Co (c1888–c1911) and Conklin Ltd (c1922–c1933) in London? And who was the man, working for Hartley Reece, responsible for the re-introduction of MontBlanc pens in the late 1950s?

In addition, we know very little yet about many of the other important people listed, particularly the Finburgh brothers of Wyvern, the Wades and Livseys of Lang/Curzons/Summit, James Glass of Ormiston & Glass, JW Hamilton-Jones of Eversharp and Elizabeth Watts of Mabie Todd. Great detail on the Wades and some information on the Finburghs is known to exist and it is to be hoped that it will be available in the form of articles in WES Journals (or even books!) in the future.

Companies with which directly involved (as proprietor, director or employee) or associated:

Livsey, Charlesworth	Lang/Curzon Lloyd & Macgregor
Livsey, William	Lang/Curzon Lloyd & Macgregor
Mabie, George	Mabie Todd & Bard
Maginnis, James Porter	[Early Historian/Collector]
Marrian, William L	Marrian; Mabie Todd
Martin, Henry George	Miles-Martin
Miller, Hemsley Charles	Mabie Todd; Biro Swan
Molesworth, Viscount	Parker
Mordan, Francis	F Mordan
Phillips, Reginald C	RC Phillips; De La Rue; Biro Swan
Robinson, Charles Woodbury	Import Agent (Mabie Todd & Bard, Cross, Caw's, LE Waterman etc); London
Robinson, Mrs M	London
Ridgley, Henry	Burge Warren & Ridgley
Rudderham, Thomas E	WJ May; Auto-Cap Fountain Pen Co
Sears, Edward Stephen	Mabie Todd
Shand, George	Shand/Conway Stewart
Shaw, William Thomas	De La Rue
Sloan, Lawrence Gunn	L&C Hardtmuth; LG Sloan; Waterman's



Viscount Molesworth 1926



Charles W Robinson April 1892



Lawrence G Sloan January 1919



AR Zoccola November 1926

Smith, George Frank	Conway Stewart
Spain, Albert Meredith	Totus-Securus
Stewart, William Washington	Mabie Todd; Mabie Todd & Bard
Sweetser, George	De La Rue
Tant, William Henry	WH Tant
Vivian, George Stewart	Valentine; TB Ford
von Hardtmuth, Franz	L&C Hardtmuth/Waterman's
Wada, Setsuji	Namiki
Wade, Mrs E	Nibs (1929)
Wade, Ernest Macauley	Lang/Curzon Lloyd & Macgregor
Wade, Eric Ernest Samuel	Lang/Curzons/Summit
Wade, Osmond Blyth	Lang; Maypen; Capless; WJ May; Rotapen.; Totus-Securus
Warren, William Bartlett	Burge Warren & Ridgley
Waterman, Frank D Jr	Waterman's
Watts, Albert Kasan	Mabie Todd & Bard; Mabie Todd
Watts, Andrew Calvin	Mabie Todd & Bard
Watts, Mrs Elizabeth	Mabie Todd; Biro Swan
Westall, Bernard C, OBE	De La Rue
Worth, Harry S	Conway Stewart
Wylie, Donald S	Summit; Sheaffer; Pencraft
Zoccola, Alexander Raphael	Parker

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PILOT LAMY
PORSCHE DESIGN

ORIENTALS

ON AN ALMOST SUMMERY MID-APRIL SATURDAY, TEN MEMBERS OF THE STAMP BOX STUDY CIRCLE MET AT THE HOME OF ONE OF ITS LONDON MEMBERS, AND THOROUGHLY ENJOYED THEIR DAY TOGETHER, ESPECIALLY THE DISPLAYS OF ORIENTAL STAMP BOXES, WHICH WAS THE MAIN THEME FOR THIS MEETING. WE WERE HONOURED TO HAVE AS A GUEST A DELIGHTFUL JAPANESE LADY, WHO GAVE US A FASCINATING ILLUSTRATED TALK WHICH SET THE SCENE FOR US. REPORT BY JEAN ELLEY.

She explained that Japan had introduced postage stamps in April 1871, 31 years after the world's first postage stamp, the Penny Black, had been introduced in the United Kingdom. Japan had begun to open up to international trade in the 1850s after a period (essentially from 1639 to 1854) during which most of such trade had been prohibited, the exception being a limited amount with Holland, China and Korea. The pace of change quickened after the Emperor was restored to power in 1867. The following year saw the start of the Meiji period which lasted until 1912. A high-ranking government official, Kagenori Ueno, made an extended visit to Great Britain in 1870/71 in order to sort out issues relating to a national debt and other official affairs. He was accompanied and supported by Hisoka Maejima, who used his spare time learning the detailed workings of the British Post Office. On their return to Japan, Maejima set up a postal system for Japan along British lines, introducing postage stamps, pre-stamped postal

cards and distribution methods for mail.

It seems that the Japanese did not use specially-made stamp boxes in the way that our Victorian forefathers did, but some signature seal boxes had a compartment in which stamps could be stored. Personal signature seals are used as a hand signature and are carried in a specially-designed box which also holds an ink pad. There are 'everyday' seals and 'registered' seals for use on legal-type documents, both types usually 6cm long with a diameter of 1cm for an 'everyday' one and slightly larger for a 'registered seal. Boxwood is traditionally used but resin, plastic or metal could also be used. 'Registered' seals can be of horn, ebony or even amber or jade. Both types of seal for individuals are usually cylindrical, while an official 'company/corporate' seal can be either square or cylindrical, and artists' signature seals on Japanese/Chinese paintings and calligraphy are normally square. Several websites currently offer a service of designing and



Japanese three-compartment brass box with hinged lid decorated with dragons. Symbol on right and left side.

TAMPBOXES

making signature seals – Chinese as well as Japanese.

As trade with both Japan and China grew in the late 19th century, so did the western world's interest in oriental design – and this interest coincided with the period of greatest popularity of stamp boxes for use in Europe and the USA were made in the Far East and exported in considerable numbers. These were made in a variety of materials using a number of traditional techniques, including lacquered *papier maché*, carved lacquer, *cloisonné* enamelling, metalware, *Shibayama* and porcelain.

Traditional craftsmanship in Japan was highly-skilled, very painstaking and time-consuming. It is the quality of design and the skills used which matter more than the value of the materials used. With the increase in exports to the west, less labour-intensive ways were found to achieve results which while still attractive were not as excellent as items made in the traditional ways. This happened also in China, and eventually, similar items were mass-produced in England (mainly Birmingham) but were inevitably of inferior quality.

Oriental design can incorporate a variety of local elements – real and mythological – including dragons, birds, flowers, butterflies, pagodas, temples and people in traditional costumes. Borders can be in a continuous geometric pattern similar to Greek key design, or be of stylised flowers, such as chrysanthemums. Chinese characters such as the ones meaning 'auspiciousness' or 'fortune' can sometimes appear as part of a design. We had set a second display theme for this meeting – porcelain boxes, which are not only of oriental origin but were and are made in many other places including England and France – but that will have to wait for another occasion as our time had been fully and enjoyably spent with these fascinating Japanese and Chinese stamp boxes.



To Western eyes there is a similarity between the various oriental scripts – all of which derive from ancient Chinese characters. In Japan the Chinese characters became known as *kanji*. Our guest showed us examples from different countries and also used the wording for Japan Post on Japanese stamps to illustrate the different script orientations. Traditionally Japanese scripts are written vertically from top to bottom and right to left. Sideways orientation started appearing in some writing in the late 18th century, initially from right to left, but in the 1940s this changed to read from left to right. Japanese is now written vertically from top to bottom, with the columns reading from right to left or horizontally from left to right from top to bottom, as in the West.

After the scene-setting, we enjoyed looking with fresh eyes at the various stamp boxes that had been made in Japan or China that we had all brought to the meeting. They had been made for the Western market, but employed materials, techniques and designs true to their origins. Our guest happily read Chinese characters on our boxes and identified places shown.

Lacquer is the natural sap of the lac tree (*Rhus Vernicifera*), patiently collected and refined through several separate processes before multiple applications on items made of *papier maché*, thinly-planed pinewood or metal, such as a variety of writing implements, including stamp boxes. Joins and pins were first papered over to ensure the smoothest possible surface on the finished articles. The patient build-up of many thin layers of lacquer results in a very fine finish. (Subsequently, English craftsmen imitated this technique with paint and varnish instead of oriental lacquer, using a technique which became known as 'japanning'.) Illustrated is a lacquered stamp box with two compartments and a hinged lid decorated with two Japanese stamps.

Japanese two-compartment lacquered box with hinged lid featuring two Japanese stamps issued in 1896

Another use of lacquer involves patiently building up thicker layers of lacquer, again on a base of *papier maché*, thinly-planed pinewood or metal, each layer needing to dry thoroughly before the next is applied. The lower stratum will be of a dark colour, with the top stratum coloured. To achieve the colours, natural pigments are mixed with the lacquer – cinnabar for the red, with the white colour being derived from white lead for example. The lacquer surface is subsequently intricately carved so that the darker colour lower layer will show through to provide a contrast with the lighter, brighter top layer, often red or white although green is also used. Most stamp boxes of this type will have been made in China and it seems that the basis of the boxes is metal. They have one or more compartments, and a hinged lid.



Two Chinese carved lacquer boxes

Above **Single compartment box in white with hinged lid**
 Left **Three-compartment box in green with hinged lid**



Shibayama is an art form that originated in Japan and involves inlaying thinly-sliced pre-shaped and carved pieces of semiprecious stone and shell into prepared 'hollows' on a base of ivory or bone. Items decorated in the *Shibayama* style range from vases, boxes and table-screens to swords and entire ivory tusks – and also include stamp boxes. Due to the delicate nature of the art form and to the fragility of the resulting pieces, intact *Shibayama* items are highly valuable and prized by collectors. Unfortunately, the two-compartment stamp box illustrated has lost some of its delicate decoration on the insects on the sides, but the flower spray and butterfly on the lid gives a reasonable, albeit simplified indication of this work.

Japanese two-compartment box with hinged lid, decorated in the *Shibayama* style, showing the lid and side.





By far the best of the oriental metalware boxes were those made in Kyoto in Japan, which have become known as *Komai* ware after the distinctive style of the family workshop which has specialised, from around 1865, in this intricate inlaid work of gold and silver set into iron or steel, known as damascene ware. It seems that damascene had first been brought to Japan about 2,000 years ago, reputedly from Damascus, through Korea. A great variety of items of all sizes has been made, and continues to be made today. Steel is the usual foundation of the articles, though bronze, silver, and gold are occasionally employed. The work is very time-consuming and painstaking, involving many processes, some of them repeated many times over. Two stamp boxes in this ware were at the meeting – both with single compartments, one with a beautifully-fitting lift-off lid and the other with a hinged lid, the latter depicting Kinkaku-ji (the Temple of the Golden Pavilion) in Kyoto, which our guest kindly identified.

Japanese single-compartment box with a hinged lid in the Komai style

Metalware stamp boxes from China and Japan include those with intricate *cloisonné* enamelling. A design, perhaps floral or incorporating butterflies, was outlined in fine wire, and the shapes so formed were filled in with coloured enamels. The interior and base of the boxes were also enamelled, in a single colour. The boxes would have one or more compartments, and a hinged lid.

A less expensive type had the design, perhaps of dragons or birds, stamped out in base metal and sprayed with metallic paint.

Chinese two-compartment *cloisonné* enamelled box with hinged lid



Stamp boxes in speltre were also made in Japan. Speltre is an alloy chiefly composed of zinc, much used around the latter part of the 19th century as a cheaper substitute for bronze. It is soft and malleable, but when cast tends to be crystalline and brittle. Two-compartment stamp boxes exist, with hinged lids, decorated in a traditional manner.

Japanese two-compartment box in speltre with a hinged lid

The Japanese also made delightful stamp boxes in fine porcelain, with one or more compartments and lift-off lids, decorated with, for example, a floral pattern, a stag's head or scenic views.



Japanese two-compartment porcelain box with a lift-off lid

We had set a second display theme for this meeting – porcelain boxes, which are not only of oriental origin but were and are made in many other places including England and France – but that will have to wait for another occasion as our time had been fully and enjoyably spent with these fascinating Japanese and Chinese stamp boxes.

The Circle usually meets twice a year, with the display theme decided in advance. Meetings also discuss a variety of matters of interest to the Circle, in particular maintaining the Circle's website (www.stampbox.org.uk), which has become an extremely useful resource and reference tool. For any further information on the Circle, please email jse29@talktalk.net

BOOKREVIEW



Stylus Pen Annual 2011
edited by Nancy Olson

Hard cover
215mm x 275mm
202 pages

Fine Life Media
www.stylusmag.com

\$24.95

Book review by David Shepherd

The Stylus Annual 2011 is filled with the latest news about writing instruments. The 200 pages are filled with stunning pictures of fountain pens from all the major manufacturers. As well as all the usual features, there are some important and exciting additions to this year's publication. First, there are 20 interviews with some of the main 'shakers and movers' in the pen business: these include Count Anton Wolfgang Von Faber-Castell, Chairman of the Faber-Castell Group, Chris Care and Mary Burke from Conway Stewart, Jean Charles Hita from Parker, and Wilfried Leuthold from Pelican. They share their unique and candid perspectives on the present state of the pen business.

Another innovation this year, is the inclusion of several articles about collecting and repairing new and classic pens. Paul Erano, the new editor of *The Penant*, gives an overview of how to date a particular vintage pen. David Isaacson has surveyed the range of Parker Pens from the 1930s, discussing the many pens of the lower-tiered Parker family. Ron Zorn and Richard Binder have contributed articles on pen repair and the joys of writing with the perfect nib.

The book is primarily intended for the American market but don't let that deter you, as it is a one-stop encyclopaedia about pens created with passion and enthusiasm.



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phone as value is highly contingent on
the condition of the pen. If you would
like a valuation, please post the pen to
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PAYMENT METHOD: UK MEMBERS: Cheque/Paypal/Standing Order (preferred, if you use this method your membership subs will be held at the current rate until 2016), OVERSEAS MEMBERS: Paypal in GBP only PLEASE CIRCLE PAYMENT METHOD RENEWAL RATES: UK MEMBERS - GBP32 OVERSEAS MEMBERS - GBP35 STUDENT - UK GBP15/OVERSEAS - GBP18 (Proof of full time education reqd. Please make cheques payable to THE WRITING EQUIPMENT SOCIETY , if paying by Paypal please send your payment to membership@wesonline.org.uk (You still need to send us this form)			
YOUR INTERESTS: What is your PRIMARY interest?		ARE YOU:	
Fountain Pens	Mech. Pencils	Wooden Pencils	A Collector A Dealer/Trader
Stamp boxes	Ballpoint Pens	Desk Accessories	A User
Steel Nibs	Ephemera	Dip Pens	A Researcher
Ink Wells/bottles	Other		Please delete as appropriate
PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR PRIMARY INTEREST AND TICK ANY OTHER INTERESTS THAT YOU HAVE.		IMPORTANT NOTE: IF ANY OF YOUR DETAILS HAVE CHANGED PLEASE ADVISE THE MEMBERSHIP OFFICER BY SENDING DETAILS BY EMAIL TO membership@wesonline.org.uk	
<p>A new members' directory is scheduled to be published with the 2012 Spring journal, when we intend to publish the following information about each member. if you object to this information being published, please email membership@wesonline.org.uk stating your objections. MEMBER NAME, PRIMARY COLLECTING INTEREST, OTHER INTERESTS, USER/COLLECTOR/RESEARCHER, TELEPHONE NUMBER, EMAIL ADDRESS, COUNTY, COUNTRY. For security reasons we do not intend to publish member full addresses.</p> <p>The Writing Equipment Society is run for your benefit by a team of hard working volunteers who all have families and therefore attempt to have a life outside of the Society. You could help them to achieve this almost impossible task and improve the Society's finances by renewing your membership in a timely fashion. Thank you for your consideration and your valued support.</p> <p>Please send your completed form along with your cheque, if you are using that payment method (Cheques may be post dated to January 1 2012) to:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ian Williamson, Writing Equipment Society, Membership & Marketing Officer, 79 Trent Valley Road, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 6EZ Tel: 01543 415603</p>			

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'PEN PROFILE' CALL FOR ENTRIES!

The editor would like to hear from members who wish to feature in Pen Profile (see page 22). Please send details of what you collect, best finds, areas of expertise, burning questions, latest acquisitions and dream finds.

Details to the Editor:

David Shepherd
60 Surrenden Crescent
Brighton
BN1 6WF

☎ 01273 554378

david@parker51.co.uk

WES JOURNAL ADVERTISING RATES

READERSHIP AND DISTRIBUTION

A largely professional body of 500 members, and up to 1,000 readers who collect writing equipment and associated ephemera. Distribution is by mail direct to Society members, including dealers, manufacturers and retailers of writing equipment.

MECHANICAL DATA

Page size: (A4) 297mm d x 210mm w

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