

15 May 1968

Annual General Meeting

All Meetings will be held in the River Room of
the National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place,
at 6.15 p.m.

Committee

Peter Guy *Chairman* The Folio Society
Thelma Rolfe *Secretary* Francis Chichester Ltd
Lionel Scott *Treasurer* Walter Makin Ltd
Alan Jones Monotype Corporation
Keith Lilley Weidenfeld and Nicolson

Mackays of Chatham

The Galley Club
PROGRAMME 1967-68

4 October 1967: Meeting

The Artist and the Publisher

What is right and what is wrong with publishers' relationships with their artists—and what is left to be desired with attitudes to book illustration?

BRIAN WILDSMITH, *Illustrator*
MARCUS CROUCH, *Librarian and Critic*
H. EDMUND POOLE, *Designer for Chatto & Windus*

18 October 1967: Afternoon visit

Hollingsworth Paper Mill, near Maidstone

Fine mould made papers

8 November 1967: Meeting

Author, Editor and Production Department

Some acute problems in this eternal triangle are considered by

JOHN VAIZEY, *Author*
COLIN HAYCRAFT, *Director, Weidenfeld & Nicolson*
NICOLAS BARKER, *Production Director, Macmillan & Co*

15 November 1967: Afternoon visit

Pictorial Machinery Ltd

A special demonstration of litho techniques for bookwork

6 December 1967: Meeting

The Paper Trade and the Publisher

A look at the balance of power and other problems

MURRAY JUDD of *Gerald Judd & Co*
ROBERT HARDING, *Director, William Sommerville*
NIGEL VINEY, *Production Director, William Heinemann*

17 January 1968

Annual Party

7 February 1968: Meeting

The Printer and the Publisher

PETER COCHRANE, *Director, Butler & Tanner Ltd*
HAYDN STEAD, *Production Manager, Hodder Group*

14 February 1968: Afternoon visit

Hazell Offset Ltd, Aylesbury

6 March 1968: Meeting

Book Marketing, Book Selling and Book Production

What will future developments in the selling of books mean to design and production?

IAN NORRIE, *Managing Director, High Hill Bookshops Ltd*
RICHARD HOLME, *Group Marketing Manager, British Printing Corporation*

13 March 1968: Afternoon visit

Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth

Modern methods of warehousing, packing and distribution

10 April 1968: Meeting

Trends in Publishing

PETER DU SAUTOY, *President of the Publishers Association, Director of Faber & Faber*

17 April 1968: Two day visit

Jarrod & Sons Ltd, Norwich
Richard Clay Ltd, Bungay

GALLEY CLUB - 6 March 1968

It may surprise those of you who read the trade press regularly to learn that there are letters which I don't write to The Bookseller.

Several of these which never get written are concerned with aspects of publishers' production. And some of these unwritten letters have been written mentally many times as I have dressed the shop window or served customers wishing to buy a whole lot of books at one time.

All of them - had they ever actually been written - would have been of a complaining nature.

This is not because I do not have admiration for ~~any~~ the efforts of Production Departments. Many, many books are beautifully and excellently produced every week. A very, very large number of British books are splendidly printed, open perfectly and do not disintegrate with use.

But one does not write letters to The Bookseller to say so. Why should one? It is the responsibility of production departments and printers to produce well-made books. To compliment them on doing the job they are paid to do would be superfluous and patronising. It is when they don't do the job to satisfaction that one comments.

So I am delighted to have the opportunity of commenting tonight.

There are four main points I wish to make.

The first concerns the very boring over use of white jackets. I can only assume that none of you ladies and gentlemen who commission or design or approve jackets have ever dressed a window whose purpose is to display a range of books rather than the particular one you are engaged with at the moment.

By some unhappy chance you all seem to have decided by ~~some~~ ~~unhappy chance~~ that white is a very with-it colour - if, in fact, it is a colour at all - which, production-wise I believe it is not.

Now if you happen to believe, as I believe, that ~~xxxx~~ the function of a shop window is to arrest the passer-by and attract him or her into the shop, then you may agree that colour is an important factor in that attraction.

If you will agree with this, please place yourself in the position of the person dressing the window.

As the window dresser you can have the help of showcards, raised surfaces, revolving stands, peg-boarding, streamers, cut-outs, mobiles - all sorts of display aids - but, basically, what you are putting into the window of a bookshop are BOOKS.

This is the product you are trying to sell. Finally, when all the gimmicks and aids have played their part you must get down to the crunch - THE PRODUCT - THE BOOK .

And when a very large percentage of the books have white jackets this makes window display very difficult indeed, if it is to be effective.

Now you can do it with one book, with a beautifully designed typographical design on white - and you can set this against a bold blue or red or black background.

But how many booksellers, anywhere, at any time, are prepared to consider your book and your book alone as the sole attraction to customers through his window?

You will agree, I think, that most booksellers, most of the time, wish to attract attention to their windows by showing a variety of the books they have to offer.

You may not agree that they should think like this. But they do! So, please may we have more variation in basic colour in your jackets.

It would be equally irritating if you all decided that BLUE or RED or EIME GREEN were with-it colours, and all felt compelled to use those ad mauseum.

But if you could, when you are thinking of jackets for your next list, deliberately, choose contrasting or even clashing colours for them, it would help to make window displays more interesting, for those of us who believe that windows should use colour as a first medium of striking home at the passer-by.

I find myself frequently using the same books again and again in the window because they are the only ones that have the required colour for breaking up the tendency to white, white, white.

It probably all comes back to the necessity of recognising that yours is not the only book which is being offered for sale in the bookshop.

Just because it is your wow title of the week doesn't mean that fifty other publishers haven't got the same idea.

I don't blame you for being brainwashed by your directors into momentarily believing this. I just wish you wouldn't all think that a white jacket is the answer

You may think I am overstating the case. Undoubtedly I am. But the next time you go into a bookshop just look around the books which you would think of displaying in the window if you were the bookseller and see if there is not some truth in what I say.

My second complaint is against the positioning of prices on books, and their jackets.

There is still, even in these days of the great group commercial publishers, a lingering idea that books are not part of business, and that the fact that they should actually have a price should be hidden.

I do not need to ~~xpx~~ expound the daftness of this notion.

What is necessary, however, is to comment on the sub-Freudian motives that lead those who are supposed to be engaged in helping to market them, in concealing what they actually cost from the immediate gaze of the booksellers assistant and the customer.

It is astonishing the lengths to which production departments will go to make the finding of a price on a book a sort of mystery tour of the cover, jacket and blurb,

This is particularly so of paperbacks and laminated backs. If you put yourself for a moment in the position of the booksellers assistant in a shop like mine you will realise what I mean. You are quite likely to be confronted, several times a day - and several times an hour on Saturdays - by a good bookbuying member of the public wishing to purchase six or more paperbacks.

On any six of these the prices are likely to be found to be found on the top right front cover | the top left hand front cover | the bottom left hand front cover | the bottom right hand front cover | the top left hand back cover | the bottom right hand back cover | inside the front cover half way down ; on the bottom right hand of the half title page | or even hidden in the main drawing on the cover.

And as if this were not enough, the price when you do find it, is often printed in dark blue on slightly less dark blue | or in red on orange | so that it can only be seen by being held at a particular angle to the light.

On this point I do not exaggerate at all. Come and serve in any busy bookshop and see how it holds up the time taken to serve a customer

Jacketed books are less of a nuisance in this way but, even so, if anyone supposes that all jacketed books are priced at the right hand bottom of the front fly leaf they would be very much mistaken.

Would it be asking too much - would it be giving way to awful uniformity - to all agree to put the price in the same place on every book ?

It is a natural step from this to my next complaint, which is about those jacket designs which seek to make a great guessing game about who wrote the book beneath the jacket, and what it is called.

There is a wretched tendency - and the imprint Antony Blond comes to mind but they are not the only offenders - to make the whole wrapper a complete design so that it can only be appreciated if it is taken off the book, laid out flat and considered as a work of art in itself.

Is this the purpose of book jacketing? I don't think it is.

No book jacket design is any good - however, brilliant it may be by itself as a work of art - unless it clearly conveys both on the front and on the spine the title and the author's name.

If you dispute this, I would ask you to consider that what it is wrapping up is what you are actually trying to sell. And what you are trying to sell is a work by one or more authors - not the packaging phrus round it.

Unless of course you are guilty of trying to sell by packaging alone. In which case I hope you may come unstuck very quickly indeed but I don't imagine ~~anyone~~ anyone here seriously thinks like that.

And the fourth complaint is against the mad proliferation of book sizes which is going on despite the printing trade's quite genuine advice that this can only put up ~~the~~ costs.

Those of you who have noted this may think instinctively of Allen Lane, the Penguin Press, whose efforts in the direction of

