Useful Books

An exhibition of material from the Rare Books Collection

7 October 2010 – 23 February 2011
Level 1, ISB Wing
Sir Louis Matheson Library
Clayton campus, Monash University
Wellington Road, Clayton
Introduction

One of our aims in staging exhibitions is to showcase different strengths of our Rare Books Collection. Broadly speaking, history, literature and art are the areas usually represented in such collections. The books chosen for display here are historical, but their usefulness lies in the broad field of social history, the practicalities of the way people lived.

There is a tendency to paint the past in broad brush strokes, but a close study of the books from each period allows us to fine-tune our historical perceptions.

People have a fascination for how things work and these books help us understand the technology and the skills involved. We can see how men and women, professionals, craftsmen and tradesmen made a living and how they amused themselves.

The exhibition includes books on applied science and technology, manuals and trade catalogues. Such books have always played a major role in the publishing industry and are important to those studying the “history of the book,” another of the strengths of the Monash Collection.

Richard Overell
Rare Books Librarian
October 2010

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Monash University
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Curator: Richard Overell
Assistant Curator: Stephen Herrin

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For more images and full information on each of the items, visit
www.lib.monash.edu/exhibitions
1. Agricola, Georg, 1494-1555
   *De re metallica*. (Basileae: [apvd Hieron. Frobenivm et Nicolavm Episcopivm], 1556)
   The earliest authoritative work on metallurgy was written by Agricola, a doctor in Bohemia, at that time part of Central Europe’s most important mining district. As well as medicine, Agricola had studied the natural sciences and, while in Bohemia, had visited mines and smelters, while also reading the Greek and Latin authors on metals. The wood-cut illustrations add to its usefulness.

2. Schott, Gaspar, 1608-1666
   *Mechanica hydraulico-pneumatica*. (Herbipoli [i.e. Wurzberg]: Joannis Godefridi Schönwetteri, 1657)
   This and the following item are two early works on hydraulic engineering, notable for their detailed illustrations. Gaspare Schott was a Jesuit who wrote extensively on mathematics and the physical sciences. The book on display is a copiously illustrated work on the laws of hydraulics. It is open at an illustration of the floating dredge used to deepen Toulon harbour.

3. Belidor, M. (Bernard Forest de), 1697?-1761
   *Architecture hydraulique, ou l’Art de conduire, d’elever, et de menager les eaux pour les differens besoins de la vie ... / Par M. Belidor*. (Paris : chez Charles-Antoine Jombert, 1737-53) 2 pts. in 4 v.
   Bernard de Belidor was a French military engineer with special expertise in explosives and “gloves of compression,” i.e., land-mines.

4. The Practical mechanic’s journal.
   (Glasgow, Scotland : Practical Mechanic’s Journal and Patent Office, 1849-1873)
   Each issue listed the “English patents,” and the “Scotch patents” as well as the registered “Designs for articles of utility.” Vol. 1 is open at an illustration of the “Locomotive passenger engine, Jenny Lind.”

5. Greenwell, George Clementson, 1821-1900
   *A practical treatise on mine engineering / by G. C. Greenwell*. 2nd ed. (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Lambert, 1870)
   This was based on a course of lectures the author gave at the Newcastle-upon-Tyne College of Practical Science. It is well-illustrated with detailed drawings of mining equipment and geological cross-sections, including several colour lithographs of fossils.

6. Benjamin, Park, 1849-1922
   *Modern mechanism, exhibiting the latest progress in machines, motors and the transmission of power*. (London: Macmillan, 1892)

7. Bright, Charles, 1863-1937
   *Submarine telegraphs: their history, construction, and working*. (London: Lockwood, 1898)
   The laying of submarine cables to link distant parts of the world was the major advance in communication in the Victorian era. Port Darwin was linked to Java by submarine cable then by the Overland Telegraph Line through the centre of Australia to Adelaide and Melbourne in 1872.

   This two volume work is notable for its elaborate cut-out, coloured illustrations. Vol. 1 is open at the “Locomotive”; vol. 2 is open at the “Automobile.”
9. Humber, William, 1821-1881
A comprehensive treatise on the water supply of cities and towns with numerous specifications of existing waterworks, fifty double plates and upwards of two hundred and fifty illustrations on wood / by William Humber. (London: Crosby, Lockwood and Co., 1876)
Establishing a clean and dependable water supply was an immediate priority for new towns. Practical books such as these were in demand in the colonies.

10. Grace Brothers quarterly catalogue.
(Sydney: Grace Bros., 1911)
A mail order catalogue issued by the Sydney department store, Grace Bros., for July 1911. People living remote from the cities were dependant on comprehensive mail order catalogues such as these for clothes, furniture, hardware and farming needs. This issue is open at the section for aprons, showing the styles available for women in various walks of life, from laundress to gentlewoman.

11. Kirby, John Joshua, 1716-1774
Dr. Brook Taylor’s method of perspective made easy, both in theory and practice. In two books ... / by Joshua Kirby, painter; illustrated with fifty copper plates; most of which are engrav’d by the author. 2nd ed. (Ipswich: Printed by W. Craighton, for the author, 1755)
A practical treatise with illustrated exercises to enable people to master perspective. The list of subscribers includes artists, engravers, architects, bricklayers, plasterers and instrument makers. The engraving on display is an optical illusion, with the caption, “Whoever makes a design without the knowledge of perspective will be liable to such absurdities as are shewn in this frontispiece.”

12. Bickham, George, 1684?-1758?
The universal penman, or, The art of writing made useful to the gentleman and scholar, as well as the man of business : exemplified in all the useful, and ornamental branches of modern penmanship; with ... various forms of business, relating to merchandize and trade; letters on several occasions; accurate specimens of the Oriental languages, and alphabets in all the hands now practis’d / written ... and engrav’d, by Geo. Bickham. (London : Printed for, and sold by the author ..., 1741)
Bickham was an engraver and tutor in calligraphy. The Universal Penman was, in effect, his sample book presenting various styles which customers could use as models when ordering cards, etc. to be printed. It is open at an example of his skill in achieving the effect of depth in a flat surface. We see a broadside headed “Gaming” with a rather soiled-looking engraving of “Scaramouche and Harlequin at gaming” and a clean playing card laid on top (p. 64).

An 18th century French alchemy manuscript used for transmuting lead into gold.

A collection of botanical samples assembled by Ferdinand von Mueller, the Victorian Government Botanist, for use in schools. Von Mueller was committed to the principle of the usefulness of botany, especially in a country where people were dependant on farming and agriculture. Von Mueller was the Head of the Melbourne Botanical Gardens and believed they should be “predominantly instructive.” The Government, however, wished the gardens to be developed on aesthetic lines, and in 1873, he was replaced by William Guilfoyle.
15. New South Wales. Sydney Harbour Bridge Advisory Board

Report on designs and tenders submitted in connection with the proposed bridge over Sydney Harbour to connect Sydney with North Sydney: final report / Sydney Harbour Bridge Advisory Board. (Sydney: Government Printer, 1904)

Proposals and designs for a bridge over Sydney Harbour were called for in 1900 but those received were considered unsatisfactory. John Bradfield was appointed Chief Engineer of the project in 1912. His design was for a single arch bridge. Work began in 1923 and the bridge was opened on 19 March 1932.

WALL CASE 1

16. Chambers, Ephraim, ca. 1680-1740

*Cyclopædia, or, An universal dictionary of arts and sciences / by E. Chambers. 5th ed. (London: Printed for D. Midwinter, [et al], 1741-1743) 2 v.

Vol. 1 is on display, open at the illustration of “Fortifications.”

WALL CASE 2

17. Chambers, Ephraim, ca. 1680-1740

*Cyclopædia, or, An universal dictionary of arts and sciences / by E. Chambers. With the supplement ... by Abraham Rees. (London: Printed for J.F. and C. Rivington, [et al], 1784-89) 5 v.

The volume of plates is open at the illustration for the Diving Bell and the Fire-engine.

WALL CASES 3 & 4


The first and second parts of Planches sur les Arts vol. 2 are on display. One shows the interior of a printing house where playing cards are being made, with the stencil outlines for the court cards; the other, shows a “Pantographe,” a piece of equipment used for reproducing illustrations to different sizes.

FLAT CASE 1

19. Dobson, Edward, 1816-1908

A rudimentary treatise on the manufacture of bricks and tiles: containing an outline of the principles of brickmaking, and detailed accounts of the various processes employed in the making of bricks and tiles in different parts of England / by Edward Dobson. (London: John Weale, 1850)

20. Prideaux, Thomas Symes

On economy of fuel, particularly with reference to reverberatory furnaces for the manufacture of iron and to steam boilers / by T. Symes Prideaux. (London: John Weale, 1853)

21. Dempsey, G. Drysdale (George Drysdale), d. 1859

Rudimentary treatise on the drainage of districts and lands / by G. Drysdale Dempsey. 2nd ed., rev. and greatly extended. (London: John Weale, 1854)

22. Burnell, G. R. (George Rowdon), 1814-1868

Rudimentary treatise on limes, cements, mortars, concretes, mastics, plastering, etc. / by George R. Burnell. 3rd ed., revised. (London, J. Weale, 1857)
23. Dobson, Edward, 1816-1908
A rudimentary treatise on masonry and stonework : in which the principles of masonic projection and their application to the construction of curved wing walls, domes, oblique bridges, and Roman and Gothic vaulting are concisely explained ... / by Edward Dobson. 3rd ed., corr. (London : John Weale, 1859)

24. Baker, T. (Thomas), d. 1871
Rudimentary treatise on land and engineering surveying, with all the modern improvements : arranged for the use of schools and private students ... / by T. Baker. (London : John Weale, 1859)

John Weale began to publish his Rudimentary series of small, portable handbooks in 1848. The aim of this project was to include sufficient practical information to enable men to perform necessary work, often in remote areas such as the colonies.

Flat Case 2

Work

On display is vol. 2, open at an illustrated article, “A few hints to intending purchasers of cycles” (June 21, 1890). Vol. 3 has a series of articles on “The safety bicycle: its practical construction,” (4 April 1891 et seq.) This was at the height of the initial bicycle craze. “Penny farthings” were just giving way to the “safety bicycle.”

Flat Case 3

“Work” handbooks

26. Hasluck, Paul N. (Paul Nooncree), 1854-1931
Boot making and mending: including repairing, lasting, and finishing / ed. by Paul N. Hasluck. (Melbourne: E. W. Cole Book Arcade, [191-?])
First published in London by Cassell in 1895 as part of their “Work series”, this edition was published in Melbourne by Cole’s Book Arcade, and is part of “Cole’s Useful Books” series.

27. Hasluck, Paul N. (Paul Nooncree), 1854-1931
The mechanic’s workshop handybook: a practical manual on mechanical manipulation: embracing information on various handicraft processes, with useful notes and miscellaneous memoranda / by Paul N. Hasluck. 9th impression. (London: Crosby, Lockwood and Son, 1918)

28. Hasluck, Paul N. (Paul Nooncree), 1854-1931
Wood finishing: comprising staining, varnishing, and polishing, with engravings and diagrams / ed. by Paul N. Hasluck. (London: Cassell and Co., 1919)

29. Jones, Bernard Edward, 1879-
Watch cleaning and repairing / edited by Bernard E. Jones. (London: Cassell and Co., 1932)

30. Avery, Alfred H. (Alfred Henry)

This series was published in conjunction with Work Magazine.
FLAT CASE 4

Trade catalogues

32. D. & W. Chandler Ltd.
General hardware catalogue / D. & W. Chandler Ltd. (Fitzroy [Vic.]: D. & W. Chandler, 1928)

33. Cyclone Company of Australia
Cyclone Fence and Gate Co. Catalogue. (Melbourne : Cyclone Company of Australia, [1889?- ]). On display are issues from 1937, 1938, 1939 and 1948. Trade catalogues are important sources for dating furniture, clothing and equipment.

FLAT CASE 5

Agriculture

34. Lincolne, Abraham
The farm & selection : containing the most useful information to the farmer and selector / by Abraham Lincolne. (Melbourne : A.H. Massina, [1878])

35. Dowling, J. P.
Practical dairying for Australia / by J.P. Dowling; assisted by F. McCaffrey. (Sydney: Written for and published by the Dept. of Agriculture of New South Wales, 1893)

36. Kaleski, Robert, 1877-1961
The Australian settler’s complete guide: scientific and practical / by Robt. Kaleski; with legal chapter by Thos. Rose. (Sydney: Anthony Hordern and Sons, 1909)

37. The Farmers’ handbook / compiled by P.G. Gilder. 3rd ed. (Sydney : Dept. of Agriculture, 1918)
Examples of books published to attract emigrants to the land in the Australian colonies and to inform them of practices appropriate to the soil and climate.

FLAT CASE 6

Birds and animals

38. Wilson, Samuel, Sir, 1832-1895
The Angora goat: with an account of its introduction into Victoria, and a report on the flock belonging to the Zoological and Acclimatisation Society of Victoria, now running at Longerenong, in the Wimmera district/ by Samuel Wilson. (Melbourne: Stillwell and Knight, printers, 1873)
Angora goats were introduced into Victoria in 1856. Sir Samuel Wilson bought a pair from India for £200 and in 1870 was able to buy the flock the Acclimatisation Society had grazing in Royal Park, Melbourne. He also experimented with ostrich farming.

39. Sample, H.
The horse and dog, not as they are but as they should be: old and erroneous theories relative to the management of the horse brought face to face with the facts of the nineteenth century / by H. Sample. (Melbourne: J. J. Miller, [188-])
The training and handling of animals was much more a part of everyday life in earlier generations. Before the advent of the motor car, many families kept a horse.

40. Dear, H. C.
Breaking & training dogs: being concise directions for the proper education of dogs, both for the field and for companions / Part I by “Pathfinder” [pseud.]. Part II by Hugh Dalziel. 2nd rev. and enl. ed. (London: L.Upcott Gill, [1885])
“Pathfinder,” in his “Preface,” makes clear his method is practical rather than theoretical, “I fancy that the books which have been written on this subject are too general in their remarks, and take too much for granted on the part of the dog, forgetting to tell you how to deal with peculiar traits and tendencies in the canine race, ignorance of how to deal with which results in distressing appeals from time to time in the columns of our sporting contemporaries, ‘hoping some of your correspondents will kindly tell me how to prevent my dog from,’ &c.” (p. 4)
41. Russ, Karl, 1833-1899

We learn from the preface that “the fancy for speaking parrots not only dates from very ancient times, but in the present day it is extraordinarily ardent and widespread.”

42. Seyfferth, A.

43. Wood, Samuel
The British bird-preservation; or, How to skin, stuff, and mount birds and animals, with a chapter on their localities, habits, and how to obtain them, also instructions in moth and butterfly-catching, setting and preserving / by Samuel Wood. New ed., with appendix. (London: Frederick Warne [1877])

Part of the “Warne’s Useful Books” series. The Victorian living room often featured a glass case with stuffed birds. The cover of Wood’s book has an illustration of this. He gives detailed instructions for amateurs in the art of taxidermy.

44. Webb, Matthew, 1848-1883
The art of swimming / by Captain Webb, the Channel swimmer; edited by A.G. Payne. (London: Ward, Lock and Tyler, [1875?])
Matthew Webb was the first man to swim the English Channel.

45. Ohashi, Mori, 1861-
Scientific jiu-jitsu: the Japanese system of physical culture, showing defensive and offensive movements / By M. Ohashi. (New York: Richard K. Fox Publ. Co., [1912])

46. Wild game of Australia / compiled by Keith Winser; with art prints portfolio and 14 colour plates of wild duck by N. H. E. McDonald. (Melbourne: Motor Manual, [1953])

With duck-hunting now such a controversial sport, it is useful to look back to a period when it was so popular.

47. How to play Aussie rules / edited by Dick Wordley; photographs selected by Bob Buchanan. (Melbourne: Lansdowne Press, 1960)
The cover image shows a young boy asleep in his room, dreaming of taking a high mark.

48. Bradman, Donald George, Sir, 1908-

49. Robert-Houdin, Jean-Eugène, 1805-1871
Card-sharping exposed / by Robert-Houdin; translated and edited with notes by Professor Hoffmann. (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1882)
This copy has a page pasted to the inside back cover, “Davenport’s professional price list of magician’s sundries.”
50. Hayes, Alice M.
The horsewoman; a practical guide to sidesaddle riding / by Alice M. Hayes. Ed. by M. Horace Hayes. 2nd ed., rev., enl. (London, Hurst and Blackett, 1903)

51. The Art of ventriloquism: containing complete directions by which any one can acquire this amusing art ... : also instructions for making the magic whistle for imitating birds, animals, and peculiar sounds of various kinds : also a complete collections of enigmas, charades. (New York : J.S. Ogilvie, 1903)

52. Belasco, Albert
The twelve best indoor games for two / Albert Belasco. (London: Foulsham, 1923)
The games include cards, dice, chess, draughts and table tennis.

53. Dru, Hayden
Leisure time crossword puzzle book: 40 new puzzles including 18 of the cryptic type / by Hayden Dru. (Melbourne: Robertson & Mullens, 1945)
The cover image is an informal 1940s lounge room scene.
The crossword puzzle craze took hold in the 1920s. They appeared originally in newspapers; the first book of puzzles was published in 1924, with a pencil attached.

54. Carol, Eddie
Square dancing was another craze. It originated in America but enjoyed a boom in Australia in the 1950s.

55. Chaffers, William, 1811-1892
Marks and monograms on pottery and porcelain: with historical notices of each manufactory, preceded by an introductory essay of the vasa fictilia of England / by William Chaffers. (London : J. Davy, 1863)
Hallmarks and monograms are among the arcana of connoisseurs, for which reference books are essential.

56. Nisbet, Hume, 1849-1923
Lessons in art / by Hume Nisbet. (London: Chatto & Windus, 1891)
Hume Nisbet is best known in Australia as a novelist, but the earlier part of his career was spent as an artist and art teacher in Scotland.

57. Aurousseau, George H. (1864-1953)
The analysis of inanimate form, or object drawing / illustrated and explained by George H. Aurousseau. (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1907)
Aurousseau taught art at Sydney Technical College.

58. Crane, Walter, 1845-1915
Line & form / by Walter Crane. (London : George Bell & Sons, 1914)
Line & Form was first published in 1900. Walter Crane is best known for his children’s book illustrations.

59. Leighton, Clare, 1899-1989
Clare Leighton was a well-respected illustrator who believed wood-engraving was an art for everyone. In this manual she gave detailed instructions for mastering it.

60. Bulleid, H. A. V. (Henry Anthony Vaughan)
Trick effects with the cine camera / by H.A.V. Bulleid. Rev. ed. (London : Link House Publications, 1941)
First published July 1936, this book gives details of some of the effects used in film noir.
FLAT CASE 10

Motor Vehicles

61. Woods, C. E. (Clinton Edgar)
The electric automobile: its construction, care, and operation / by C.E. Woods. (Chicago; New York : H.S. Stone & Co., 1900)

In 1897 a fleet of electricity-driven New York taxis were in use. During the 1890s and early 1900s electric cars were more popular than petrol-driven vehicles. They were quieter and smoother than the petrol cars and without the strong gasoline fumes. With the improvement of internal-combustion engines and the problems electric cars had with their range and time taken to re-charge, they were out-moded by the 1930s.

62. Road rider

Hints & tips for motor cyclists / by Road Rider. 5th ed. (London: Iliffe and Sons, [1916?])

Because of their cheapness, motor cycles were very popular, but prone to breaking down. The ability to perform running repairs was essential.

63. Your car: its care and maintenance.
([Sydney]: Shell Company of Australia, [1929])

64. How to drive a car: a complete guide and handbook to the subtleties of motoring under present day road traffic conditions / By the editor of “The Motor.” Ninth edition. (London: Temple Press Ltd. [1925?])

65. Arnold, Mary

Let’s drive better than men / by Mary Arnold. 1934 ed. ([Melbourne?): Vacuum Oil Co., 1934) (From the collection of Ada Booth.)

66. Winser, Keith


Camping and caravanning was popular in the 1950s. This Keith Winser publication includes plans for making your own trailers and small caravans.

FLAT CASE 11

Compendia

67. Enquire within upon everything / [compiled by Robert Kemp Philp]. (London: Houlston and Wright, 1856)

This is the first edition. On the title page is quoted an extract from the first advertisement, ‘Whether you wish to model a flower in wax; to ornament a vase by the art of potichomanie; to serve up a relish for breakfast or for supper; to supply a delicious entrée for the dinner table; to plan a dinner for a large party or a small one; to cure a head-ache; to get married; to bury a relative; to establish acquaintances according to the rules of etiquette; whatever you wish to do, make, or to enjoy, I shall be happy to assist you. I hope you will not fail to “Enquire within.”'

68. Enquire within upon everything. 113th ed., enl. rev. (London: Jenkins, 1923)

Enquire Within remained in print into its 126th edition in 1976. Throughout its history the manual provided information on how life of the time was conducted.

69. Cole’s Progressive almanac for 1907: useful, instructive, amusing. Contains a record of 2,000 very important facts & very funny jokes. (Melbourne: Cole’s Book Arcade, 1907)

An engraving of the exterior of Cole’s Book Arcade is featured on the front cover and one of the interior is on the back. Annual almanacs were the source of a great deal of the miscellaneous information people needed in their daily lives.

70. Philp, Robert Kemp, 1819-1882

The domestic world : a practical guide in all the daily difficulties of the higher branches of domestic and social economy / by the author of Enquire Within. (London: Hodder And Stoughton, 1878)

72. Strauss, Rita

Rita Strauss tells us in her preface, “There was a time when children were not encouraged to ask questions. Today things have changed. Modern educational methods teach us that a child’s power of observation should be cultivated, not repressed.”

73. Carpenter, William Benjamin, 1813-1885

Carpenter was a doctor and lecturer in physiology at University College, London. He was also a keen naturalist, and populariser of the microscope. He specialised in the study of sea-life and was involved in debates over original living forms. The colour frontispiece shows “Volvox globator,” a chlorophyte, found as green algae on freshwater pools.

74. Clarke, Louisa Lane
Objects for the microscope: being a popular description of the most instructive and beautiful subjects for exhibition / by L. Lane Clark. 4th ed. (London: Groombridge and sons, 1871)

This book is notable for its colour plates. It begins with instructions on how to use the microscope and how to prepare specimens for viewing. It gives a recipe “For mounting in balsam,” a process particularly recommended for insects.

75. Wood, J. G. (John George), 1827-1889
Common objects of the microscope / by J.G. Wood; with illustrations by Tuffen West. 3rd edition, rev. and re-written by E.C. Bousfield, with additional illustrations by the reviser. (London: George Routledge, 1902)

This was first published in 1861 as part of Routledge’s “Useful Library.”

76. Ealand, Charles Aubrey, 1877-
The romance of the microscope: an interesting description of its uses in all branches of science, industry, agriculture, and in the detection of crime, with a short account of its origin, history & development / By C.A. Ealand, with 39 illustrations & numerous diagrams. (London: Seeley, Service & Co., 1921)

Microscopy remains an important scientific field. It was a craze with amateurs in the Victorian era, and is still popular, particularly with those keen on botany and zoology.

SCRENS AND CORRIDOR CASES
Selected issues of the American periodicals, Popular Mechanics and Modern Mechanix as well as their U.K. equivalent, Practical Mechanics, are on display.
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**Cover image:** Illustration of an “Automobile” from James Weir French’s *Modern power generators: steam, electric and internal-combustion, and their application to present-day requirements* (London, 1908)