

LETTER EXCHANGE

20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE

19th - 21st September 2008

at St Benet's Hall, St Giles, Oxford, UK

To celebrate the first 20 years of Letter Exchange's existence we are holding a Special Conference to discuss, debate, disagree, dissent and even delight, in the company of fellow lettering artists, crafts people and designers.

To set the ball rolling for what we expect to be an interactive event we have invited four practitioners to present their latest ideas on the present state of lettering and how they see the future unfurling.

OUR SPEAKERS ARE CONFIRMED, AND EXACT AND FULL DETAILS OF THE AGENDA AND PROGRAMME WILL SHORTLY BE FINALISED.

SPEAKING FOR OURSELVES - Charlotte Howarth

Can we learn to express ourselves using our own words, or do we leave ourselves to be defined by the language and words of others? Can we create a narrative that can describe our identity, belonging, territory and emotions that is a true representation and expression of our selves? Why spend our lives without a voice of our own? Where do we start - certainly by throwing away the Oxford Book of Quotations!

Charlotte studied lettering at The City & Guilds of London Art School after being introduced to letter carving by her step father, David Baker. She then went on to work with Richard Kindersley in London and Ken Thompson in Ireland. She now works from her studio near Kings Lynn producing carved lettering, sculpture and her documented sketch book of her life.

WHAT'S THE POINT? - John Neilson

John has worked as a letter carver in stone since training with Tom Perkins sixteen years ago. Prior to that he had been a busker in Spain, a French teacher in Shropshire, an unsuccessful signwriter and finally a student of calligraphy at Roehampton. As well as letter carving, his current work includes some book design/typography. A Letter Exchange member since 1996, since 2003 John has edited our journal Forum. He lives in north-east Wales.

LETTER SHAPES - WHO DOES CARE? - Stephen Raw

Why do we take such pleasure in vernacular examples and celebrate downright 'iffy' lettering? Can lettering ever be 'good' lettering? Are there keepers of some sort of standard or is lettering simply appropriate or not? Do the material costs in a lettercarving job allow cutters to spend an inordinate amount of time obsessing about a narrow range of letterforms? (Well, we want debate don't we?)

Stephen has been a Manchester-based freelance lettering artist for 25 years – survival as such allowing him to evade salaried employment. The amount of his own lettering he's ready to show others seems to be diminishing. As a consultant to the Mint he's enjoying not having to produce any lettering himself – a strange and rather wonderful role. Stephen is a past Chairman of Letter Exchange.

PTO!

COMPUTER: FRIEND OR FOE? - Nick Sloan

This will explore the extent to which designs, particularly letterforms, are mentally preconceived, and how the choice of medium or the sequence of media used to realise them, might influence form. Nick's own experience is typically of developing inscriptional lettering from head to stone via various routes, but he would hope to broaden the scope to include at least calligraphy and typography.

Nick gained a BA in art history at the Courtauld Institute. Belatedly realised in 1974 that a living was to be made from lettering, which had long been an obsession, and taken on as assistant by David Holgate. Freelance lettercutter, occasional wood-engraver and letterpress printer from 1976. Much work for Ian Hamilton Finlay from 1978.

In addition to the presentations, arrangements are in hand for visits and attractions during the conference. Details will be sent out to participants with the final programme, for example:

Oxford walkabout to view public lettering
Visit to Pitt Rivers Museum/Ashmolean Museum/Bodleian Library
Visit to a letter cutting studio
Visit to a master bookbinder
Demonstrations of brush lettering
Workshops, and an exhibition of members work

Arrivals and registration from 4:00 p.m. on Friday 19th September, especially for those travelling long distance, and after Dinner there will be time for meeting friends old and new in quiet corners or at local Oxford inns.

Saturday will be a full day of events. The Conference will end after Tea on Sunday.

Accommodation is limited and bookings will be taken on a first come first served basis. The Conference is open to all, Student, Associate and Full Members but, in the event of overbooking, priority will be given to Full Members **if they register by 31st May 2008**. In order to keep the cost of attending to a reasonable amount the Conference is being sponsored by Letter Exchange.

The residential cost for the Full Conference from Friday to Sunday **will be from £200 (see the booking form)** including accommodation Friday and Saturday nights; Dinner Friday; Breakfast, morning Coffee, buffet Lunch, afternoon Tea and Dinner on Saturday; Breakfast, morning Coffee, buffet Lunch and afternoon Tea on Sunday.

The residential Conference cost for those arriving Saturday morning **will be from £143 (also see the booking form)** including accommodation Saturday night; morning Coffee, buffet Lunch, afternoon Tea and Dinner Saturday; Breakfast, morning coffee, buffet Lunch, afternoon Tea on Sunday.

A reduced Full Conference Non Residential rate **from Friday to Sunday of £120 will be available** for members not requiring overnight accommodation and breakfast for Friday and Saturday nights. This will include Dinner Friday; morning Coffee, buffet Lunch, afternoon Tea, Dinner Saturday; morning Coffee, buffet Lunch and afternoon Tea Sunday.

A reduced Conference Non Residential rate for those arriving Saturday morning **of £100 will be available** for members not requiring overnight accommodation for Saturday night and Breakfast Sunday. This will include morning Coffee, buffet Lunch, afternoon Tea and Dinner Saturday; morning Coffee, buffet Lunch and Afternoon Tea Sunday. The Dinners include one glass of wine at each meal. Extra wine may be purchased in the Dining Room.

Please complete your booking form and return it with your deposit to The Honorary Secretary, Michael Rust, Sycamore Cottage, Hastingleigh, Ashford, Kent TN25 5HW

Letter Exchange 20 Year Anniversary Conference at St Benet's Hall, Oxford, 19th - 21st September 2008. Please tick before each line as appropriate.

___ I wish to register for the Conference and enclose my deposit of £35.00
(Non returnable after 31st May 2008). Balance to be paid by 31st July 2008.

For those attending from Friday through to Sunday:-

___ I would like overnight accommodation at St Benet's on 19th & 20th, all meals provided at £200

___ I would like a single room (supplement £24) subject to availability

___ I would like a twin room to share with _____

___ I would like en suite facilities in my room (supplement £30) subject to availability

___ I will arrange for my own overnight Bed and Breakfast elsewhere. Conference fee £120

___ I would like vegetarian meals

For those attending from Saturday morning through to Sunday:-

___ I would like overnight accommodation at St Benet's on 20th, all meals provided at £143

___ I would like a single room (supplement £12) subject to availability

___ I would like a twin room to share with _____

___ I would like en suite facilities in my room (supplement £15) subject to availability

___ I will arrange for my own overnight Bed and Breakfast elsewhere. Conference fee £100

___ I would like vegetarian meals

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

Signed: