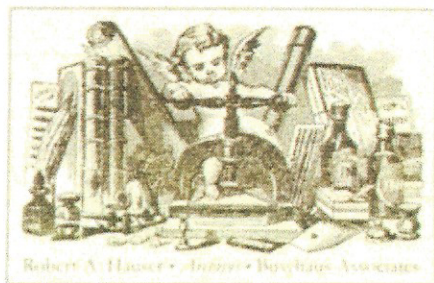


History As History

ROBERT HAUSER

Busyhaus papermaking workshop at the Harcourt School of Bookbinding, Boston, Massachusetts. Sam Ellenport, owner of Harcourt Bindery (far left), Robert Hauser, and Helena Wright (far right).

BELOW: Robert Hauser, *Busyhaus Archives* paper label, 1½ x 2¼ inches. All photos courtesy of the author.



For fifty years, 1963–2013, paper and papermaking have occupied my life as an artist, educator, and museum conservator. My relationships and experience with those who make, use, and preserve paper has enabled me to form an archive consisting of library document boxes and print cases. The archive represents correspondence and unique keepsakes collected from paper artists, decorative papermakers, and fine printers, along with mill watermarks and the work of scholars in America, Asia, and Europe. Additionally the archive contains an international library on paper, papermaking, and paper moulds, both European and Japanese.¹ In this article, I would like to share this history and those people and events that I believe will interest readers of *Hand Papermaking*.

1963–1967

As a student at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, I was introduced to a variety of methods in bookmaking, graphic design, letterpress printing, and printmaking. All of these depended on paper, but I soon learned that not all papers serve all media in providing the desired results. In addition, paper choices and outcomes were often influenced by such factors as department preferences, trial and error, cost, and inexperience in understanding papermaking processes and archival qualities. My understanding of paper increased with study and experimentation at a time when the 1966 flood in Florence, Italy demonstrated the need for international cooperation in improving the conservation of paper-based materials.

1968–1975

During this period, I formed Busyhaus Associates and designed a trademark to formally establish my interest in these emerging conservation and papermaking professions.² To visit with conservators and papermakers in Europe, I obtained a traveling scholarship from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston in 1969. While planning the trip abroad, I began to study all forms of papermaking in America and Europe. Henry Morris of the Bird and Bull Press introduced me to the American hand papermaking icon Douglass Morse Howell who, in a letter to me, expressed his philosophy of hand papermaking: “I keep to old or ancient methods because the historic evidences are our most certain proof as to permanence.”³

In 1971, I began my traveling scholarship abroad. The Dutch paper historian Henk Voorn was my host and advisor. He informed me of European papermakers and papermaking sites to visit including Amalfi, Basel Papiermule, De Schoolmeester, Fabriano, Marten-Orges-Veluwe Mill, Plantin-Moretus Printing Museum, Van Gelder Paper Company, Wookey Hole Mill, and others.

In England I visited R.J. MacDonald of the mould-making company Edwin Amies & Son, Maidstone, Kent. They made for me a laid wire 8 x 12-inch papermaking mould with a watermark of the Busyhaus trademark. Mr. MacDonald also arranged a visit to the famous Barcham Green, Hayle Paper Mill located in Maidstone. Another memorable visit was with T.D.R. Powell of Sheepsitor Handmade Papers in Tavistock, Devon, England. While approaching his home by car on a foggy night I almost ran over a number of his sheep crossing the road. During my stay he showed me many of his papers with watermarks of sheep.

After returning from Europe in 1971 I asked my friend Michael McCurdy to make a 4 x 4-inch wood engraving as a keepsake of hand papermakers I had observed in Europe. He completed the engraving in 1973 and in 2013 it was letterpress printed for the first time by John Kristensen of Firefly Press, on paper handmade by Twinrocker. It is tipped into this publication as a permanent keepsake.

This period of study also included research into the history of William Rittenhouse who was the founder, in 1690, of the first paper mill in British North America near Germantown, Pennsylvania. A study of the watermarks associated with this mill prompted my idea of printing a limited-edition book about the Rittenhouse paper mill and creating a handmade paper that incorporated a selection of those watermarks.⁴ Laurence Barker, founder of the papermaking program at Cranbrook Academy, agreed to make the Rittenhouse watermarked sheets. In 1970, when Barker moved to Spain, his student John Boyd took over the project. Boyd pulped cotton and linen rags, wire-formed the watermarks, affixed them to a laid mould, and handmade 335 watermarked sheets. He later told me, "...I had to form the sheets and very carefully to lift and tilt the screen, allowing the water to drain off the surface smoothly."⁵ To illustrate the Rittenhouse publication, I asked Michael McCurdy to make a 3 x 3-inch wood engraving showing William and his son Claus making paper.

McCurdy printed the engraving using a Vandercook proof press on 500 sheets of paper I made at Twinrocker Paper Mill in 1973 with the support of the National Endowment for the Arts. Alas, due to professional museum and business commitments the Rittenhouse publication was discontinued.⁶

Prompted by my European experience, I began developing an educational papermaking workshop to promote knowledge of the craft and technology among artists, conservators, printers, and others. In 1973 a Busyhaus-designed broadside was mailed announcing the papermaking program. The first workshops were hosted by Sam Ellenport, owner of the Harcourt Bindery in Boston, Massachusetts. A unique addition to the workshops was a demonstration of papyrus making. Professor Hassan Ragab of the Papyrus Institute in Cairo, Egypt provided the dehydrated papyrus and instructions that allowed us to make small sheets of papyrus. In 1975, I was invited to bring the workshop to the University of

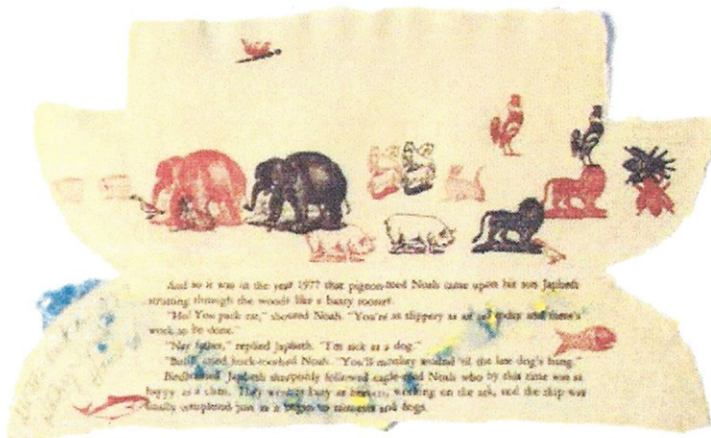
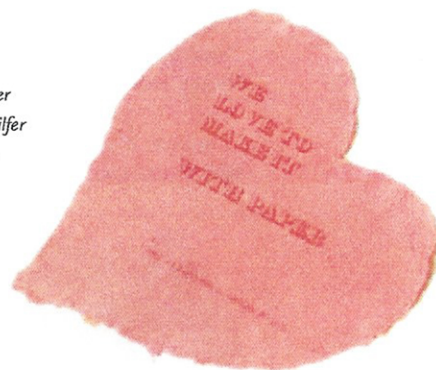
Dallas in Irving, Texas for art students interested in traditional and art papermaking. Afterward, Assistant Professor of Art Juer-gen Strunck told me that the "...lecture and demonstration was [sic] the initial spark for extensive involvement with papermaking and paper casting in our department."⁷

1976-1979

During these years there were several memorable experiences I wish to share with readers of *Hand Papermaking*. I was the recipient of a heart-shaped paper keepsake with the printed words "We Love to Make it With Paper" from Joe Wilfer of the Upper U.S. Paper Mill, Oregon, Wisconsin. Joe's philosophy was "...to make unique works of art in, of and on paper."⁸ A Christmas keepsake featuring Noah's Ark was sent to me by Kathryn and Howard Clark of Twinrocker Handmade Paper, Brookston, Indiana. They

A 1970s heart-shaped handmade paper keepsake, 8¾ x 8 inches, by Joseph Wilfer of the Upper U.S. Papermill, Oregon, Wisconsin.

BELOW: A 1977 Christmas keepsake, 6½ x 10½ inches, by Kathryn and Howard Clark, Twinrocker Handmade Paper, Brookston, Indiana.



once commented to me, "We can only do a certain amount of experimentation and still survive."⁹

A workshop, that required the most preparation, was sponsored by The Centro Venezolano Americano at The Centro de Ensenanza Grafica, Caracas, Venezuela. The workshop was "...conceived as a pilot program to stimulate interest and raise consciousness..." about the craft of papermaking among the students.¹⁰

While the Busyhaus workshops focused on demonstrating Western hand papermaking, it was not possible during the workshops to accurately explain Asian hand papermaking methods. I contacted Timothy Barrett, who was in Japan on a Fulbright studying the *nagashi-zuki* hand papermaking action. With his help, I obtained a Japanese *sugeta* (screen and mould).¹¹ Before sending me the mould, he mailed me a rubbing of its construction joints to document its completion. Barrett once told me that "One of my goals is to make a paper so thin it has only one side."¹²

From 1974 to 1980 Busyhaus conducted some 60 papermaking workshops. At least fifteen were held at the Harcourt Bindery. A workshop was typically limited to between 10 and 20 individuals. This means that some 600 to 1,200 students participated in forming, we can assume, their first handmade paper using the Amies laid mould.¹³

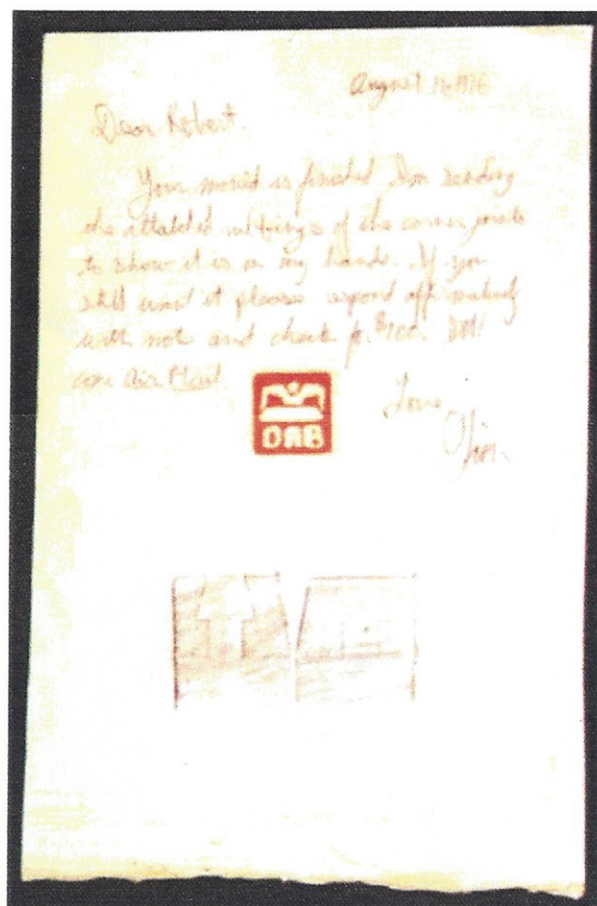
1980-2013

The advances in the preservation of hand papermaking as a traditional craft and the launch of it as an art form were assured with the 1980 International Conference of Hand Papermakers held in Massachusetts.¹⁴ Over 100 conference attendees were asked to make keepsakes and share them with other participants. My conference keepsake was a letterpress printing of the illustration "Paper Making" from the 1926 publication *Scenes of Wealth, or Views & Illustrations of Trade Manufacturers*, published by Produce & Commerce, England. The keepsake included Isaac Taylor's poem "To a New Sheet of Paper."

Lovely is this sheet with whiteness,
Pure from wrinkle, spot, or stain—
Wilt thou long retain thy brightness?
Will thy purity remain?

Starting in 1980 my attention for the next three decades would primarily be as a conservator of museum collections. That year, after giving one of my last presentations on papermaking, I received a letter from a student, Cindy Guiseley, who wrote: "I am fascinated with the art of making paper and am concerned with the permanence of new papers and preservation of old works on paper. I could see my future taking either direction or a combination of both."¹⁵

For 50 years my interest in paper and papermaking remains the same today and is why this history continues to make history.

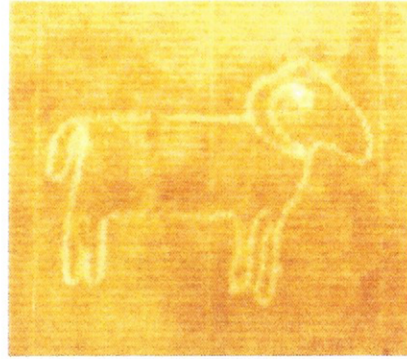
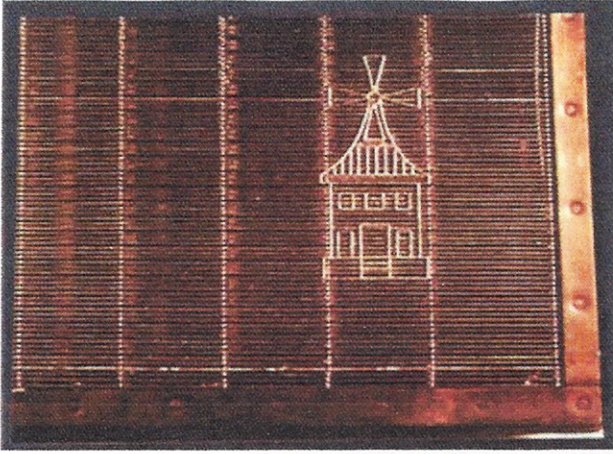


August 16, 1976 postcard, 5¼ x 4 inches, from Timothy Barrett, announcing the availability of a *sugeta* for the author. Barrett made two rubbings of corner joints to document its completion.

The author wishes to acknowledge these individuals for their assistance in preparing this article: Anne Booth for editorial assistance; Annie Card, Creative Photographic Services; Timothy Barrett, Associate Professor, University of Iowa, Center for the Book; Travis Becker, owner and master papermaker, Twinrocker Handmade Paper; Kathryn and Howard Clark, co-founders, Twinrocker Handmade Paper; Sam Ellenport, former owner, Harcourt Bindery; James Green, Librarian, The Library Company of Philadelphia; John Kristensen, director, Firefly Press; Michael McCurdy, director, Penmaen Press.

NOTES

1. The archive also contains Busyhaus business records, a graphic arts and conservation research library, and photographs among other items. Also refer to Penmaen-Busyhaus collection (MSS20000126) at the Thomas J. Todd Research Library, Storrs, Connecticut (www.lib.uconn.edu).
2. The name Busyhaus is derived from the words *Busy* and *Haus* (or *Haus* in German). The windmill trademark is adapted from the Hauser heraldic design. From 1969 to 1982 Ms. Helena Wright was associated with Busyhaus Associates and made invaluable contributions with papermaking research, editing and forming the Busyhaus Papermaking Workshop. Ms. Wright is presently a curator at the National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution. In this capacity she planned the 1990-1992 exhibit and catalogue *300 Years of American Papermaking*.
3. Douglass Morse Howell, correspondence with the author, October 7, 1969.



Author with his collection of European and Japanese papermaking moulds. Photo taken at the New Bedford Whaling Museum conservation laboratory, 2010.

Sheep watermark, $1\frac{3}{8} \times 1\frac{3}{4}$ inches, by T.D.R. Powell of Sheepstor Handmade Papers, Tavistock, Devon, England.

ABOVE LEFT: Busyhaus windmill watermark, $2\frac{3}{8} \times 1\frac{1}{8}$ inches, on a laid wire 8 x 12-inch mould made in 1971 by Edwin Amies, Maidstone, Kent, England.

4. The watermarks used are the "Clover-leaf" seal of Germantown with a shield and crown design; the word "Pensilvania" (sic); and the initials "WR" attributed to William Rittenhouse. These watermarks are commonly accepted as used by the Rittenhouse Mill. However, scholars have found that some aspects of Rittenhouse watermarks can be found in use by European papermakers. Refer: Green, James, *The Rittenhouse Mill and the Beginnings of Papermaking in America* (Philadelphia: The Library Company of Philadelphia, 1990).
5. John Boyd, conversation with the author, August 10, 1970. Advice for wire forming the watermarks was provided by Richard Thomas, professor of metal smithing at Cranbrook Academy. Boyd has retired as professor of printmaking at Wichita State University's School of Art and Design, Kansas.
6. Although the limited-edition Rittenhouse publication was never completed, I wrote an account of this research project, "Papermakers and Papermaking in America — William Rittenhouse First American Papermaker," which appeared in the *Guild of Book Workers Journal*, vol. XXVII, no. 2 (1989). Also, "Decorative Papers for the Fine Printer," *Guild of Book Workers Journal*, vol. XVIII, no. 1 (1979–1980). In 1977 the National Endowment for the Arts funded the Busyhaus publication, *Restoration Papers: A study of Restoration Papers used by American Print and Book Conservators* (out of print).
7. Juergen Strunck, conversation with the author, January 1977. Workshop took place February 21–22, 1975.
8. Joseph Wilfer quote source: *Wisconsin State Journal*, Sunday, November 7, 1976.
9. Kathryn and Howard Clark, undated letter attached with a letter from the author dated March 11, 1974.

10. Lourdes Blanco, correspondence with the author, November 15, 1978. The workshop took place January 29–February 1, 1979.
11. Timothy Barrett, postcard dated August 16, 1976. The sheet size of the mould is $12\frac{1}{4} \times 16\frac{5}{8}$ inch. The maker of the keta (mould) is attributed to a Mr. Nozawa and the su (screen) to Mrs. Fukuishi, both of Ogawa-machi, Saitama Prefecture.
12. Timothy Barrett, in conversation with the author, May 14, 1978, at a Japanese handmade papermaking workshop for paper and book conservators. The workshop was planned by Busyhaus and hosted by Elaine and Donna Koretsky at the Carriage House Paper Studio, Brookline, Massachusetts.
13. This doesn't include some 30 lectures and collaborative events attended by hundreds of participants. In 1977 Busyhaus designed a paper history exhibit at the Boston Institute of Contemporary Art. The exhibit "The Handmade Object" was organized by the Santa Barbara Museum of Art. Busyhaus in collaboration with Andrews, Nelson and Whitehead Papers hosted a lecture by Simon Green of the Hayle Paper Mill, England.
14. The conference was planned by chairpersons Elaine Koretsky of Carriage House Paper Studio and Bernie Toale of Rugg Road Papers. It was jointly held at these two locations and with the Boston University School of Artisanry, Massachusetts, October 2–5, 1980.
15. Cindy Guiseley, correspondence with the author, June 23, 1980. She attended "Paper on Paper: Its History and Preservation," a series of 1980 Busyhaus lectures held at six New England learning institutions.



*Busyhaus Tip-In:
European Papermakers*

TEXT BY ROBERT HAUSER

European Papermakers, a 1973 wood engraving by Michael McCurdy, depicts the work of hand papermakers as I observed when visiting European papermakers in 1971. This tip-in was letterpress printed for the first time by John Kristensen, director of Firefly Press, in the summer of 2013 on cold-pressed, cotton rag paper handmade at Twinrocker Handmade Paper. The stock was suggested by Kathryn Clark and selected by Travis Becker, now owner and master papermaker of Twinrocker Handmade Paper. John Kristensen told me that he was an apprentice to Michael McCurdy during 1979 to 1981. I think this is a nice detail given that he printed the engraving.

PAPERMAKING

BUSYHAUS WORKSHOP ANNOUNCES A PLANNED LECTURE PROGRAM ON THE ART AND HISTORY OF PAPERMAKING

PAPER HISTORY

Writing and drawing surfaces began as bark, stone, bamboo, papyrus, animal parchment, etc. The appearance of the camel's hair brush in the second century B.C., with the development of calligraphy in China, were precursors to the Chinese invention of paper in the first century A.D. Traditionally, Western papers have been made from cotton, flax, and hempen rags, whereas in the Orient the natural vegetable fibers of plants were customarily prepared. In the ancient craft fibers are macerated into pulp by human or water powered wooden and stone stampers. Commonly, the papermaker or vatman dips a hand-held mould into a vat of fibers suspended in water, after which he allows water to drain from the surface of the mould, skillfully shaking and felting the captured fibers to form a sheet of paper. Papermaking was practiced in Europe by the twelfth century, four hundred years after Charlemagne's libraries had been inscribed. The Fabriano Mills of Italy were the cradle of European papermaking and the practitioners of watermarking in the thirteenth century. Johann Gutenberg's accomplishments with moveable type in the fifteenth century prompted the spread of printing and the book arts, now transmitted on paper, the preserver of ideas. In the seventeenth century, William Rittenhouse, America's first papermaker arrived in Philadelphia from Europe. In the eighteenth century the English printer John Baskerville pioneered the making of paper for

graphic processes, while American paper-makers proffered their hand-made against imported papers. The rag materials used by Western paper-makers became scarce, beginning a search for alternate materials that ended in the nineteenth century with the advent of wood pulp. The invention of the Fourdrinier and cylinder mould machines provided the models for today's machinery which is capable of forming a continuous rolled web of paper that can be beaten, bleached, sized, coated, glazed, dried, and cut simultaneously. Paper technology has supplanted hand papermaking, but words from paper's historical past, foolscap, ream, deckle, laid, etc. are familiar names regardless of how we share its use.

LECTURE PROPOSAL

The burden of mankind's cultural achievements are communicated and stored on paper, yet knowledge about the past and present state of papermaking among artists, educators, students, etc. remains obscured even while it is essential to one's means of expression and learning. This proposal for introducing the historical and physical nature of paper to art schools, universities, library and technical colleges, museums, arts and crafts associations, historical institutions, etc. would involve a traveling program comprised of a lecture, demonstration and exhibit on papermaking. The lecture would be an audio-visual presentation on hand and machine papermaking history offering films and a slide library compiled from personal visits to paper museums,

mills, schools, research libraries, and private collections in Europe and America. Manufacturing methods, paper terminology, chemistry, book and graphic arts, care of prints, marbled papers, etc. will be discussed. Information on the present activity of hand paper-makers, and sources for obtaining kinds of paper, materials and equipment for making paper, and a bibliography of literature about papermaking will be provided. In conjunction with the lecture, a demonstration and explanation of hand papermaking will be given using prepared pulp and a watermarked hand mould. The optional exhibit would be a capsule account of the presentation, designed with text, papyrus and parchment artifacts, rare books, watermarked papers, photographs, etc. This prospectus has attempted to summarize the history of paper and to announce an educational program being prepared about papermaking to remedy its relative unfamiliarity. This will be made available and scheduled according to the curriculum, activities, and needs of those wishing to participate.

SURVEY REQUEST

In order to evaluate the response to this program and to incorporate the suggestions of potential subscribers, please return the postpaid card enclosed. Responders will be notified when the program is to be offered, with fees and detailed particulars more fully described. Prospectus designed by Robert Hauser, Busyhaus Workshop, Box 422, North Andover, Massachusetts 01845

