



The Newsletter

OF THE

St. Louis Mercantile Library

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-ST. LOUIS

OCCASIONALLY PUBLISHED FOR MEMBERS AND RESEARCHERS ABOUT COLLECTIONS, PROGRAMS AND BOOKS



Historian, John Mack Faragher, Director of the Howard R. Lamar Center for the Study of Frontiers and Borders at Yale University, welcoming the audience to the Mercantile.



UM-St. Louis history professor, J. Frederick Fausz, speaking after the opening dinner of the Frontier Cities Conference.

Yale/Mercantile Conference, "Frontier Cities," Brings Scholars and Members to the Library

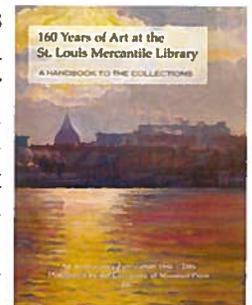
The St. Louis Mercantile Library hosted the second part of a joint conference, "Frontier Cities" February 29-March 1. The conference, sponsored by the Howard R. Lamar Center for the Study of Frontiers and Borders at Yale University and the Mercantile opened its first part in New Haven on the Yale Campus in late September. Additional support for the conference has come from the St. Louis chapter of Les Amis. The conference commemorated the ground breaking work on the history of frontier studies in America by Richard Wade and John Francis McDermott and highlighted the work of many current prize winning historians who have focused on this topic in considering cultures in cooperation, conflict and shared enterprise in various locales and eras, from Goa in the Early Modern period to Montreal in the eighteenth century, from New Orleans in the seventeenth century to early Russian cities like Sitka and Kodiak in North America, as well as better known regions at times synonymous with the "frontier" such as the urban American West.

The second part of the conference appropriately focused a number of papers on St. Louis as well as the comparative experience of Detroit and Pittsburgh, and also highlighted transportation, fur trade and cultural history. Noted historians John Mack Faragher and Elliott West gave opening keynotes in St. Louis. Professor Fred Fausz of UM-St. Louis discussed his recent research on Auguste Chouteau. Peter Kastor from Washington University read a paper on "Mapping the Urban Frontier". Carolyn Gilman from the Missouri Historical Society spoke on the early Revolutionary period trans Appalachian frontier. John Hoover, Director of the Mercantile Library, and Jay Gitlin from the Lamar Center organized the con-

ference and are looking forward to publishing the many papers presented in an illustrated volume by Yale University Press in the coming months. The conference appropriately took place in February, the month St. Louis was founded nearly 250 years ago. Members were feasted to a sumptuous opening reception and dinner, as well as enjoyed a banquet of modern scholarship which never strayed very far from the resounding story of the genesis of St. Louis.

160 Years of Art at the St. Louis Mercantile Library

The Mercantile Library has published its first guide to the art collection in over a century, *160 Years of Art at the St. Louis Mercantile Library*, and the first between hard covers thanks to a generous anonymous gift. The fully illustrated handbook has fold-out enlargements of key objects and an appendix of artists in the collection. The handbook is an invaluable guide to the paintings, sculpture, prints, drawings, and folk and decorative arts that make up the Library's permanent collection and that reflect the institution's past 160 years of cultural activity as well as its ongoing role as a museum for art of the American Midwest. The book is available at the Library for \$39.95 or by calling University of Missouri Press at 573-882-7641.



An Artist Paints Missouri: Landscapes by Billyo O'Donnell



Governor and Mrs. Blunt at the Mercantile Library this spring

On Thursday, May 8th, over two hundred people came to the St. Louis Mercantile Library for the opening reception of *An Artist Paints Missouri: Landscapes by Billyo O'Donnell*. This landmark exhibition is the first public presentation of the 115 paintings created by the Eureka, Missouri artist, bathed in the technique of outdoor light, plein air. His goal was visually to document the beauty and variety of his home state, and he did so by painting one scene on site in each of Missouri's counties and in the city of St.

Louis. The paintings are supplemented by sketchbooks, an easel and other tools used by the artist during his seven-year process of research, travel, sketching and painting.

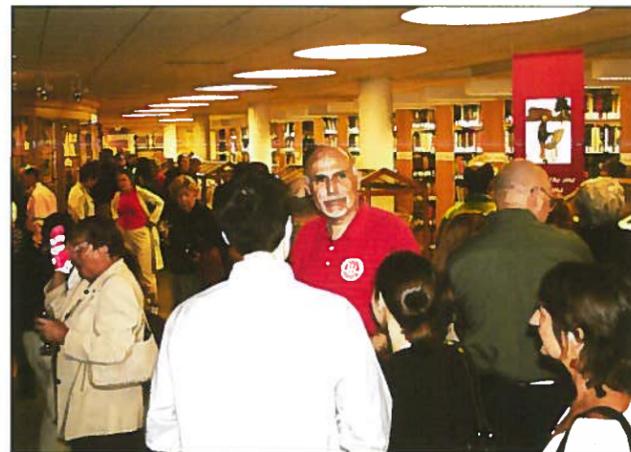
With scenes ranging from river bluffs to gas stations, from brilliant sunflowers to moonlit barns, the exhibition presents a rich visual panorama of our state and its geographic variety. Some visitors to the exhibition immediately seek out the counties most familiar to them, while others allow the compositions to draw them in, regardless of location.

The Mercantile Library has a history of supporting regional artists, going back to the days of Bingham, Wimar, and Hosmer, and we are pleased to continue that tradition with a painter of this caliber. Billyo's work has been featured in one-man and group exhibitions across the western United States from Missouri to Hawaii. His paintings are in the permanent collections of the St. Louis Mercantile Library at UM-St. Louis, as well as museums regionally and nationally.

Billyo O'Donnell has devoted his professional career to preserving the American landscape on canvas. His dedication to his home state is reflected in his ongoing commitment to programs that contribute to Missouri's artistic development; he was the organizer of the "Forest Park Paint Out" (1997-1999) and "Artists Along the Katy Trail" (2000-2001). He then founded "Artists Along the Missouri" which continues this tradition by organizing a group of artists who travel in the spring and fall to a specific region of the state and paint en plein air. These projects reveal his ongoing commitment to the state of Missouri and the preservation of its cultural and natural heritage. The Library is understandably proud to be the inaugural venue for this body of work that so thoroughly encompasses Billyo's personal artistic philosophy.

Billyo's work has received special attention from Governor and Mrs. Blunt who hosted a reception at the Governor's Mansion to honor the artist for his commitment to art in Missouri. Governor and Mrs. Blunt visited the Mercantile Library to view the exhibition and also enjoyed seeing the paintings in the Library's permanent collection.

This exhibition exemplifies the Library's cultural mission by emphasizing the work of a Missouri artist, while also complimenting our archival mission to preserve St. Louis and Missouri history in that each painting is a visual record of that county at this moment in time. This visual history has also been preserved in a commemorative volume published by the University of Missouri Press that features full-color reproductions of each painting and a brief history of each county written by author, Karen Glines.



Opening Reception of "An Artist Paints Missouri," where 200 viewers enjoyed meeting artist Billyo.

An Artist Paints Missouri: Landscapes by Billyo O'Donnell will be on view in both wings of the William Maffitt Bates Jr. Gallery, which is located on Level One of the St. Louis Mercantile Library through October 9th. Our members and the general public will have another opportunity to meet the artist during the Library's third annual Artists' Panel Discussion on October 2nd, when Billyo and other Missouri artists discuss the intricacies and rewards of painting on site, something nurtured in the Impressionist age, and currently being revived by poetic and artistic visionaries like Billyo in the modern age of plein air painting.



New Acquisitions at the St. Louis Mercantile Library



The St. Louis Mercantile Library has long been known as a repository of art and prints and rare books concerning the history, customs and lives of Native American peoples. From Catlin to Bodmer to M'Kenney and Hall and the famous portraits presented at the Mercantile Library painted long ago by Charles Deas of native chieftains, the collection is a distinguished pantheon of this perennially fascinating subject.

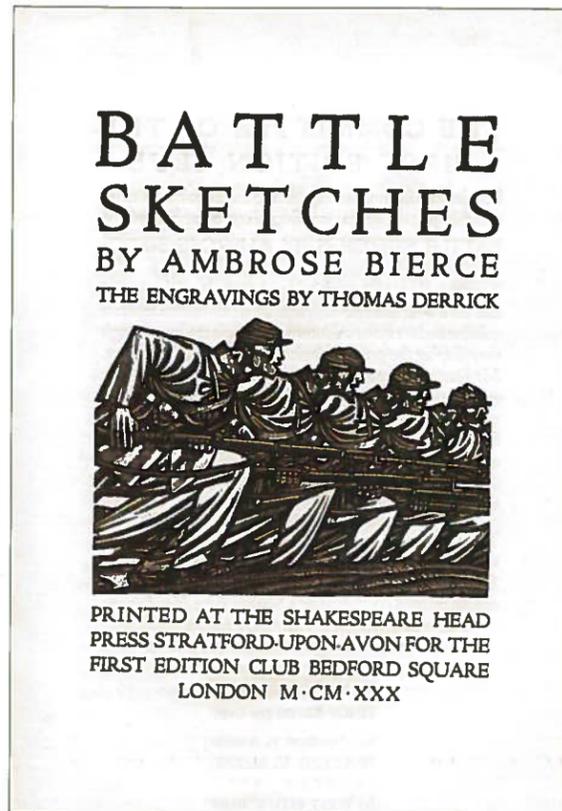
It is ironic that it is not as well known that American Indian artists themselves are also well-represented in the collections at the Mercantile with such masterpieces as the oldest known plains drawings (called ledger drawings because of the paper and binding used) by the Arapaho Chief, Little Shield. Numerous works also present facsimiles of the early art of the first Americans, but it was not until the mid-twentieth century that a visionary art professor at the University of Oklahoma, Oscar Brousse Jacobson, began systematically to teach and educate American Indian artists and to encourage their talent and native subject matter.

This body of work was eventually well documented in two large portfolios which are very rare outside of Oklahoma itself. Published in Europe in a bilingual edition in 1950, *Les Peintres Indien d'Amerique/American Indian Painters* was an elaborately and beautifully conceived testament to "modern" American Indian art. Encyclopedic in scale, it documents the work of nearly seventy Indian painters from various tribes who have influenced American art now for generations. The work is a testament as well to the lithographer's skill in preparing these accurate renditions, some of which are duplicated below. The Mercantile is planning an exhibition to highlight these portfolios in the near future.

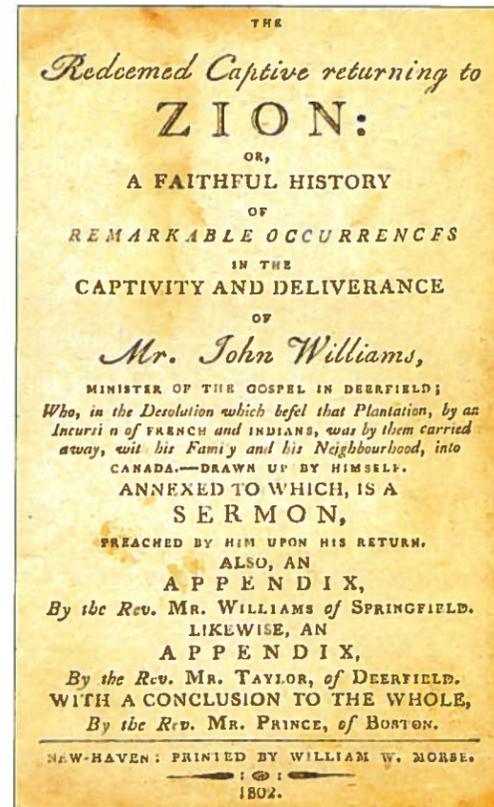


American Indian Art added to the collections from the Oscar Jacobson's legendary compendium.

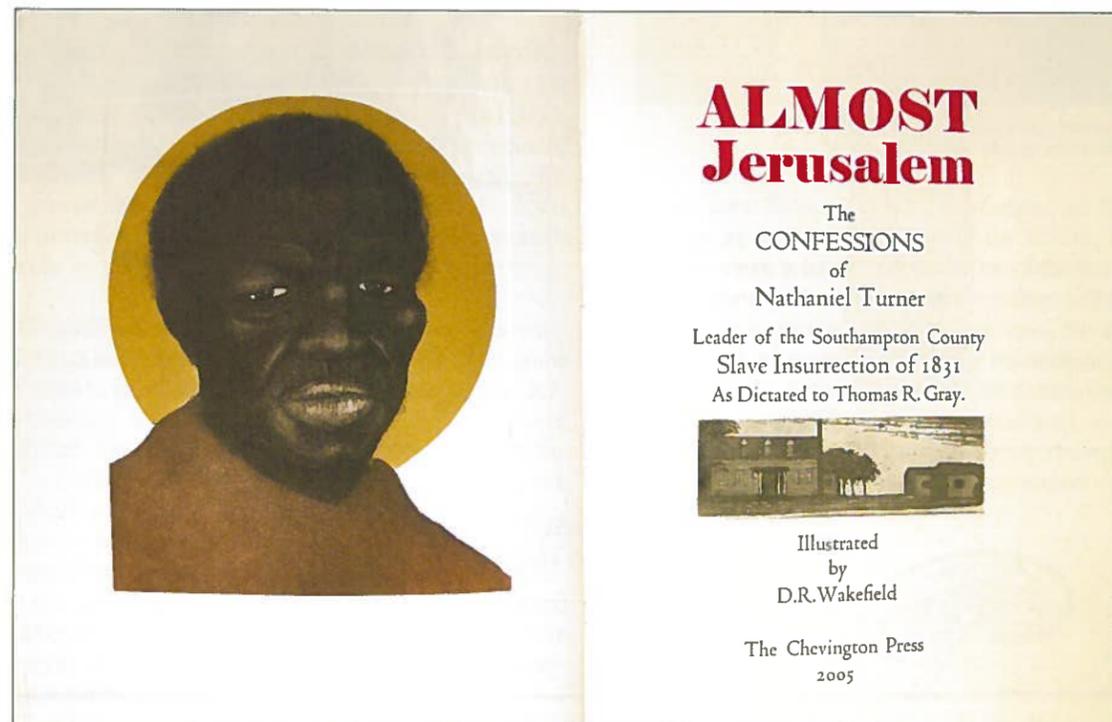
The Library has acquired for its fine printing collection the rare Shakespeare Head Press edition of Bierce's ironic Battle Sketches, with the masterful engravings by Derrick, published in London in 1930.



The Library has added new additions this spring to its Indian captivity collection, including this rare reprint of one of the most famous and earliest accounts.



One of the Mercantile Library's great treasures is a first edition of The Confessions of Nat Turner. The Library has recently acquired this poignantly illustrated version from the Chevington Press, Almost Jerusalem; The Confessions of Nathaniel Turner, printed in 2005 with numerous engravings by D. R. Wakefield.



Print Fair Opens to a Second Year of Enthusiastic Collectors



The Mercantile Library's second annual St. Louis Fine Print and Paper Arts Fair was a great success which attracted hundreds to the three day event. More than thirty dealers from around the country enticed a crowd of new and veteran collectors to the preview reception on Friday evening May 16, 2008. Saturday and Sunday brought even more families and collectors to the Fair to take in all the dealers had to offer.

As last year's Fair, the 2008 dealers offered historical lithographs and maps, fine art engravings and etchings, and examples of fine printing all by American and European artists covering a broad spectrum of time frames and styles. Rare book design and illustration were among the many varied other works of art on paper. Missouri dealers were well-represented by McCaughen & Burr, Kodner Gallery, Creative Art Gallery, Judith Haudrich Antique Prints and 309 Antiques from St. Louis, as well as Green Gate Farm from Richmond, Missouri. This year, booths were also rented by some of the most prestigious print dealers in the United States, including the Philadelphia Print Shop, The Old Print Shop and Susan Teller Gallery from New York, Kiechel Fine Art from Nebraska, Platt Fine Art from Chicago, and Abigail Furey Fine Prints from Boston. Fine artists and fine printing presses were also represented by R. H. Dick of Kirkwood, Missouri and the Gehenna Press from Maine.

An exciting addition this year was a larger number of rare book dealers who further broadened the spectrum of offerings to tempt area collectors. As a result of the growing interest in rare books shown by our visitors and the enthusiasm of the book dealers, the title of the Fair will now reflect this special area as well, and is now "The St. Louis Fine Print, Rare Book and Paper Arts Fair."

Robert McKnight, Securing Our Future



Mr. Robert McKnight, a long term benefactor of the John W. Barriger III National Railroad Library, has once again stepped forward to ensure that future generations have the opportunity to learn about the historic past through rare books, historical archives, and art. Mr. McKnight, trustee emeritus of the John W. Barriger III National Railroad Library Board of Direction, has made a \$1.5 million planned gift to provide for the future needs of the library.

"I am honored Mr. McKnight has made a leadership gift which supports the long term vision identified by the collaborative efforts of the Barriger, Mercantile, and Pott Boards. This vision will help secure our future and better provide for the students, historians and nation," said John Hoover, Executive Director of the St. Louis Mercantile Library.

Mr. McKnight, who served as Associate Editor of *Railway Signaling & Communications* and Editor of *Railway Systems*



The Mercantile's St. Louis Fine Print and Paper Arts Fair at the J.C. Penney Conference Center on the UM-St. Louis campus.

While the Fair serves the admirable purpose of bringing a broad spectrum of quality collectible paper arts to the St. Louis public, it also functions as a fund-raiser for the Library. The Fair has become a signature event for the Mercantile Library. This year's Print Fair Committee contributed immeasurably to the event's success. The Library is indebted to the committee chair, Ruth Bryant, for the energy, ingenuity and leadership she provided. The committee who supported her so ably consisted of Donald K. Anderson Jr., Suzanne Corbett, Don Cresswell, Barrett Erker, Bruce Feldacker, Anthony Garnett, Anne Leners, John Lesser, Cecile Lowenhaupt, Rosalyn Lowenhaupt, Carole Ritter, Alison Roberts and Jim Schiele. Like our faithful dealers, returning for consecutive years, many of these committee members have already volunteered to assist with planning the 2009 Fair. We are very grateful for their continuing assistance. The Committee, members and the public help create needed income to build print and fine art resources through the Library's acquisition funds.

To continue the growth of this very special event, the St. Louis Mercantile Library will offer two day passes (good for only Saturday and Sunday) as a benefit to each paid Mercantile Library membership. Tickets will be held at the door unless mailed to you with your renewal closer to the event. So save May 16 and 17th, 2009 for the St. Louis Fine Print, Rare Book and Paper Arts Fair.

Controls prior to retiring, received an honorary doctorate degree from the University of Missouri-St. Louis in 2001.

Planned Giving

Planned giving helps the St. Louis Mercantile Library by providing a foundation for our future while meeting your current financial and personal goals. Planned gifts may include bequests through your will or living trust, retirement plan or life insurance policy beneficiary designation, charitable trusts and charitable gift annuities.

You may choose to provide funds for the Library's unrestricted use, acquisitions, lectures, exhibitions, or any other aspect of the Library that matches your passion. For more information about planned giving to the library, call John Hoover at 516-7245 or Laura Peterson at 516-4750.

Mercantile Events Calendar

Save the Date -- all are invited and bring a friend



Sunday, **September 7, 2008** 2:00 p.m., Andrei Cherny author of "The Candy Bombers: The Untold Story of the Berlin Airlift and America's Finest Hour," will speak and sign his book at the JC Penney Conference Center. Immediately following the reception the audience will be invited to walk to the St. Louis Mercantile Library for a preview of the Berlin Airlift Exhibition, which will run from September 8-October 12, 2008. RSVP required 516-6620.

Monday, **September 8, 2008** 7:00 p.m., James Neal Primm Lecture; David Blight, Yale University, "'Has Civil War Memory Divided or United America?'" at the St. Louis Mercantile Library. Please RSVP to 516-7242.

Thursday, **September 18, 2008** 6:30 – 8:00 p.m., Annual Adopt-a-Book Event; Julie Dunn-Morton, Curator of Fine Art Collections, will speak and have a book signing for her recent *160 Years of Art at the St. Louis Mercantile Library at the St. Louis Mercantile Library*. Please RSVP to 516-7242.

Thursday, **October 2, 2008** 6:30 – 8:00 p.m., Third Annual Artists' Panel Discussion featuring Billyo O'Donnell and other Missouri outdoor landscapists at the St. Louis Mercantile Library. Please RSVP to 516-7242; a large audience is anticipated.

Thursday, **October 23, 2008** Exhibition opening: *Tools of the Campaign Trail: Selections from the Shopmaker Collection of American Political Campaign Memorabilia* at the St. Louis Mercantile Library. Please RSVP to 516-7242.

Wednesday, **November 5, 2008** 2nd Annual UMSL and St. Louis Mercantile Library NYC Dinner and Reception at the Grolier Club for friends and alumni of the university. Please RSVP to 516-7242.

Friday, **November 14, 2008** at noon Yeatman Lecture at the Missouri Athletic Club hosting Julius Hunter author of a new book on St. Louis. Please RSVP to 516-7242.

January – February 2009, Special Exhibition: *Regional Dialect: American Scene Paintings from the John and Susan Horseman Collection*.

March – October 2009, Special Exhibition: *One Artists' Journey: The Life and Work of James Godwin Scott*.

April-October 2009, Special Exhibition *The West the Railroads Made* with an opening gala marking the 25th Anniversary of the Barriger Collection coming to the St. Louis Mercantile Library Association and eventually UM-St-Louis.



Two Missouri Governors: Governor Blunt looking at Governor William Clark

St. Louis

MERCANTILE LIBRARY

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-ST. LOUIS