

The background features a complex geometric pattern of orange lines and shapes. A grid of thin orange lines is overlaid on a background of larger, semi-transparent orange geometric shapes, including triangles and rectangles. The overall aesthetic is modern and minimalist.

# THE ART OF LETTERPRESS



Miniature Books



Kent Ephemera



APA Ephemera



Kent Books



Introductory Material



Proprietor Cards



Large Books

Aerial view of layout



Frontal view of layout

Corner layout view



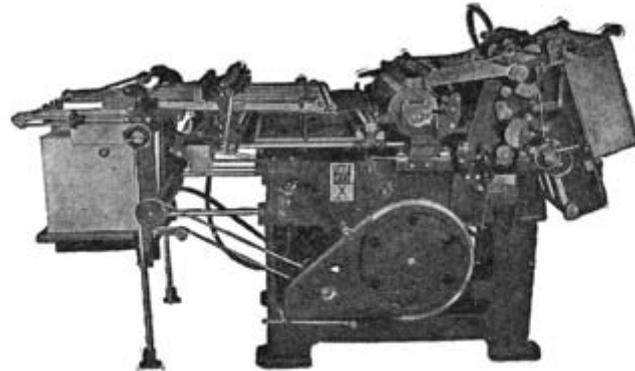
# THE ART OF LETTERPRESS

In the modern age of computer-driven technology and high-resolution laser printers, the printing technique known as *letterpress* is rapidly becoming a lost art. Letterpress is a labor-intensive medium that requires time investment and a keen knowledge of materials. The end result is a unique work of art.



This exhibition embodies the work of a dedicated group of letterpress artists who make up the Amalgamated Printers' Association (APA). The APA is an art-collective with a maximum 150 members at any given time. The group's unified ambition since 1958 has been to keep the flickering flame of letterpress alive and well, and to preserve an art form that has been largely ignored by the art community.

David L. Kent donated this collection of posters, business cards, and books to the George A. Smathers Library, Special and Area Studies Collection at the University of Florida in 2005. Much of the work shown in this exhibit focuses on the closely-knit Kent family and their individual efforts, alongside the work of their friends and colleagues from the APA. Read, examine, and enjoy these colorful works of art.





Introductory Case

## Miniature Books

These miniature books allow you to see through the eyes of a child, and share in their excitement as they learn the art of letterpress. Most of the books displayed below were created by the Kent family children: Susannah, Genevieve, Robert, Zachary, and Clark.

The Kents practiced their new skills in letterpress and their talents in writing, printing, and bookbinding. The miniatures range in style and format, but they all share a quirky sense of humor and beautiful execution. Although some of these books were intended for sale, many were gifts for members of the Amalgamated Printer's Association.

Children aren't the only ones who have fun making miniature books! Both *Test Drive* and *To Cairo Came a Certain Man* were created by adults, but still exhibit the beauty and creativity that make the Kent children's books special.



*Test Drive*  
John Horn  
Shooting Star Press  
1988  
1923 ATF Dainty Border Font on Paper



*The Boy Named Bud*  
Susannah Kent  
The Tarantula Press  
1985  
Ink on Paper

Miniature Book Panel, above Miniature Book Case. Panel features enlarged reproductions of 2 books within case.



Miniature Book Case

## David L. Kent Ephemera

Ephemera (plural for ephemeron) are “a range of collectable items that were originally designed to be short-lived” (Encarta World English Dictionary). The following is a collection of short stories, typeset proofs, poems, one-liners, quotations, and cards created by the APA’s one-time archivist, David Kent. Collectively, the pieces act like entries from the artist’s personal journal, giving you insight into his personality and creative thought processes.

One noteworthy piece, Mexican Red Leg, is collaboration between David and his daughter Susannah. This booklet is a tribute to the Kent Family’s deceased pet (female) Mexican red leg tarantula, John J. Trotter (1980-1999).



Illustration from *On the Way to Pompeii: Riddles for the Road* by David L. Kent



Kent Ephemera Case



# **Mexican Red Leg**

Mexican Red Leg  
Susannah & David L. Kent  
Tarantula & Erespin Press  
1981-2005  
Ink on Paper

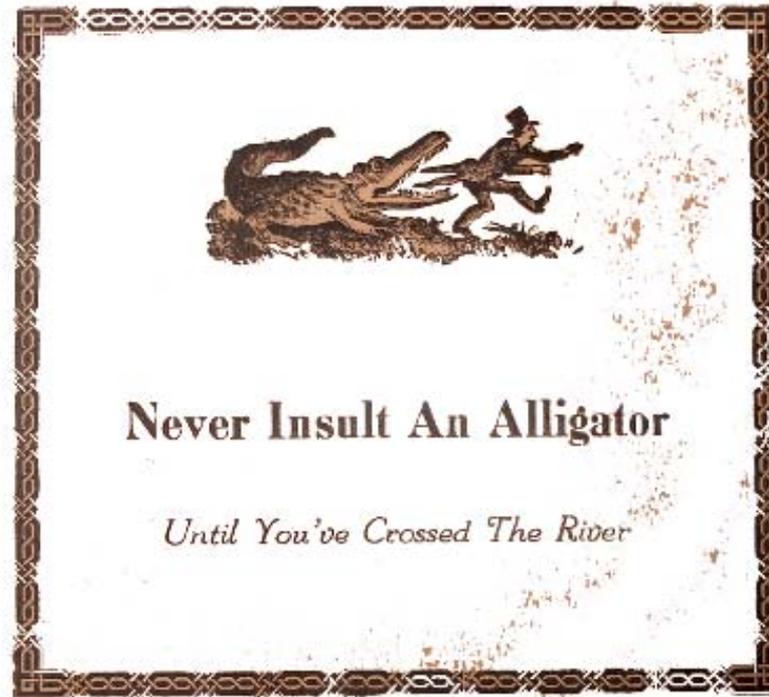
Corner layout view



## APA Ephemera

This selection of ephemera by various APA members includes items that date from the beginning of the organization up to the late 1990's. You can see how this group of closely-knit artists has shared ideas and inspired one another over time through a commonality in medium, sense of humor, and artistic styling.

Based on style, can you pick out which pieces were done by a particular artist?



*Never Insult an Alligator* by Herbert G. Harnish, 1985-1989, Ink on Paper

APA Ephemera  
Panel, above  
APA Ephemera  
Case

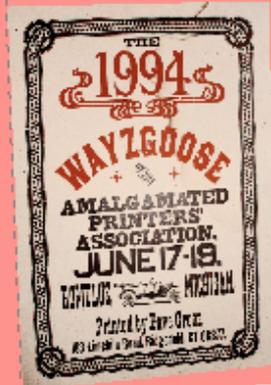


# THE WAYZ

# GOOSE

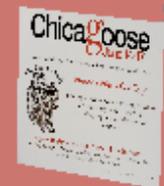
2' 4"

2' 4"



### The Word

...the word is...



Detail view of corner layout

# The Word

As described by Moxon in 1683, a 'way-goose' is an entertainment given by a master printer to his workmen about Bartholomewtide (24th August), marking the beginning of the season of working by candlelight. It later came to mean an annual festivity held in summer by the employees of a printing establishment, consisting of a dinner and usually an excursion into the country.

But why the word 'way-goose'? Nathaniel Bailey's *Dictionary* (5th edition, 1731) defines 'wayz' as a bundle of straw, and 'wayzgoose' as a stubble-goose, an entertainment given to journeymen at the beginning of winter. Bailey is not mistaken, for the word 'wase' appears as early as 1375 with the meaning of a wisp or bundle of straw or reeds. So a Wayzgoose is a Stubble-Goose; and why a Stubble-Goose?

In 1655 Christopher Bennet issued an enlarged edition of *Healths Improvement: or, Rules comprizing and discovering the nature, method, and manner of preparing all sorts of food used in this nation. . . . Written by that ever famous Thomas Muffett*. And little Mr Muffett (1553-1604) there recorded the opinion, 'A young stuble goose feeding itself fat in wheaten fields, is the best of all.' That the printer of this work, one T. Newcomb, seized the image and the occasion to name what is known yet today as the Wayzgoose we have to conjecture.

To those who strenuously resist such homely etymology, we shall have to say that yes, it is possible that the word 'Wayzgoose' derives from the Latin 'res cuius', translated roughly 'their thing'. But, to each as he may prefer.

A keepsake for guests at the Colonial Wayzgoose in Concord, Massachusetts  
Written and printed at the Vernal Equinox 1985 by DL & Carol Kent  
ERESPIN PRESS 929 East 50th Austin, Texas 78751



The Word  
David L. & Carol Kent  
Erespin Press  
1985  
Ink on Paper

David and Carol Kent created this keepsake poster for the 1985 Wayzgoose. But what is a Wayzgoose? Every year the Amalgamated Printers Association holds the Wayzgoose, a large get together for printers and letterpress enthusiasts. Read the poster to learn more about "The Word" and its strange meanings.

## Kent Panel Text, above Kent Case

### The Kents

What began as an amateur interest in printing books inexpensively eventually changed the lives of Carol and David Kent. Originally, their goal was to print the books David wrote about genealogy. They bought a Kelsey press and fell in love with the black art.

By taking up printing as a hobby and then as a business, David and Carol were able to merge their love of books with their growing interest in letterpress printing. Soon they were collecting antique and vintage type, buying presses, and participating in the Amalgamated Printer's Association. Carol served as the APA president from 1985 to 1988, and David has served as their archivist for the last fifteen years. Their children learned to print by watching their parents work, and learned to read backwards because of the way the type was set! Letterpress has had a lasting influence on all members of the Kent family.

### Kent Case



## Large Books Panel Text, above Large Books Case

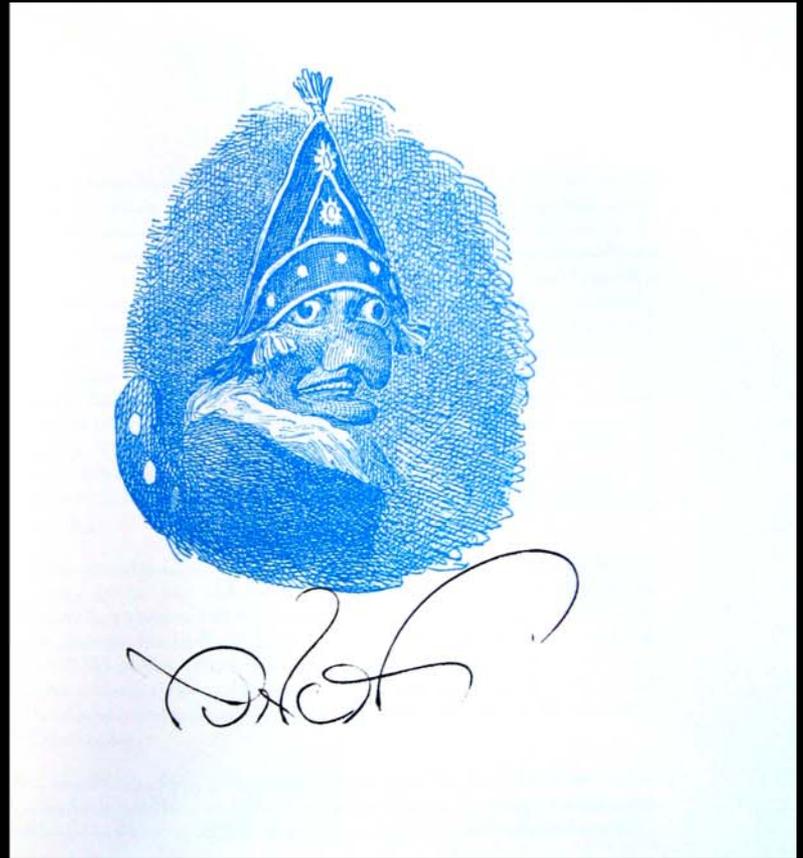
### Large Books

This collection of large hand-printed books brings together two aspects of letterpress, the art of designing the book and the actual content within it. Although these books are large enough to read from, the printer pays most attention to the layout of the pages, the types used, and the color selection.

It is difficult to imagine that, historically, books were printed by hand. Their primary value was in their content- this was the first time that books became available to the masses. Knowing this, we can appreciate the time and effort it took to make this small selection of books. The majority of these books were printed in limited editions of one hundred books or less. Because letterpress is a dying art, the value of these books lies not only in their content but in their unique art form.

Large Books Case





*The Life of Punch* (front cover and first page)

David Kent

Erespin Press

2002

Mohawk and Parisian fonts on paper

Proprietor Cards Group Label, affixed to outside of case

# Proprietor Cards

Proprietor cards, or prop cards, are like business or calling cards for printers. They can be printed in a variety of sizes and styles, but the most common is approximately 3 x 5 inches. Often times they include more than contact information, such as the history of the particular press or printing specialty. They can also include the type of press and typeface used to print the card. Many printers also include their membership number for the exclusive Amalgamated Printers' Association (APA).

Proprietor Cards Case



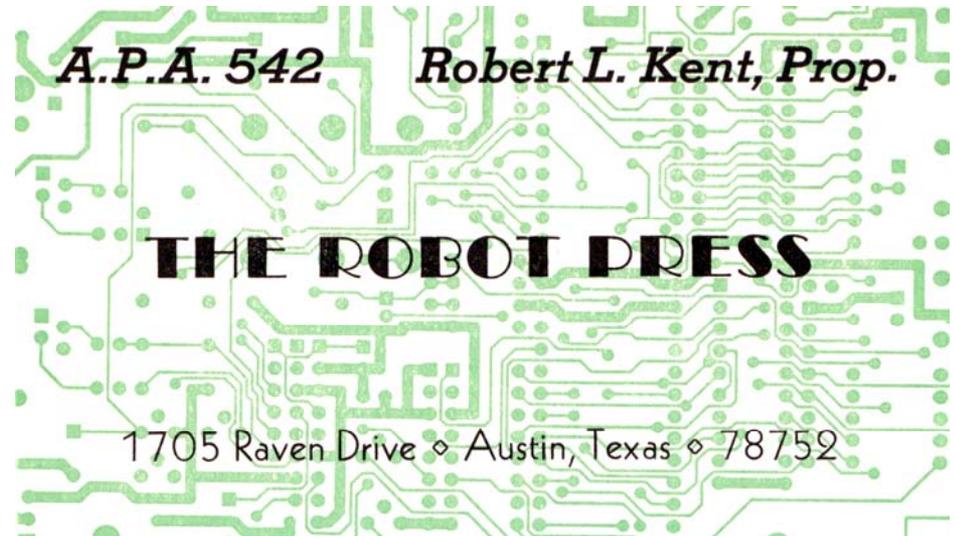


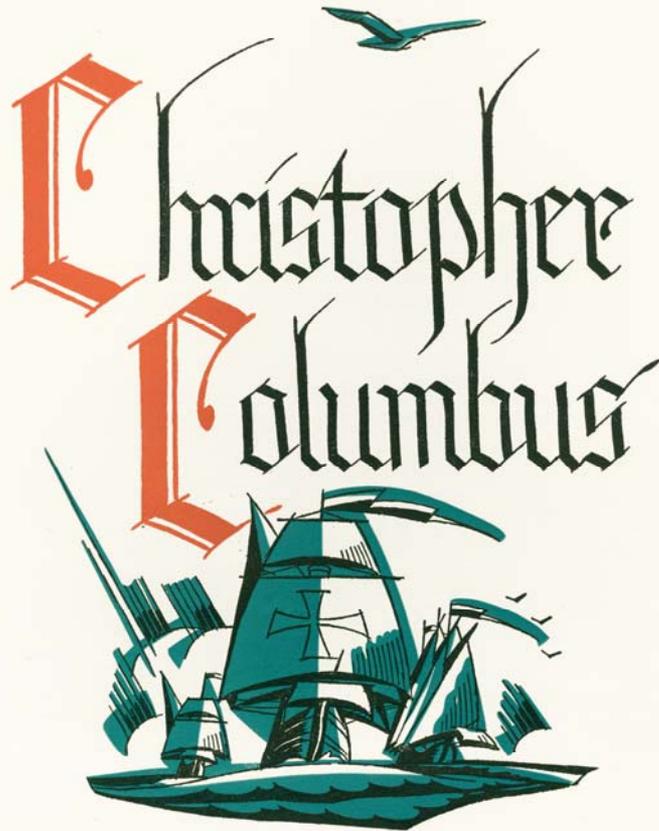
Detail of Proprietor Card layout

**Proprietor Card**  
**Robert L. Kent**  
**The Robot Press**  
**c. 1985**  
**Ink on Paper**

Robert L. Kent printed this card when he was a young boy. The green circuit design was reproduced from an issue of Radio Electronics magazine. The card was then printed again, with the text overlaid.

The number in the upper left identifies Robert Kent as a member of the Amalgamated Printers' Association. At age 11, he was the youngest member of this exclusive organization.





HIGHLIGHTS IN AMERICAN HISTORY • NUMBER 1

**Proprietor Card**  
**Highlights in American History Number 1**  
**Norman W. Forgue and Dale Nichols**  
**The Norman Press**  
**c. 1974**  
**Ink on Paper**

Norman W. Forgue and Dale Nichols collaborated on this special proprietor card. This card is not only much larger than the traditional card but it is also multi-functional. It serves its purpose of identifying the Norman Press and its director, as well as demonstrating both the artist's and the printer's mastery of their tools.

Notice how the large graphic illustrations and use of color differ from the small ornamental images in other prop cards.

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- The background features a complex arrangement of orange geometric shapes and lines. On the left, there are several horizontal rows of small orange dots. A prominent feature is a large, multi-layered orange shape that resembles a stylized letter 'L' or a stepped profile, composed of various rectangular and triangular segments. Overlaid on this are several thick orange lines that form a grid-like structure with some irregularities, including a vertical line that is interrupted by a horizontal line. In the bottom right corner, there is a small cluster of orange dots.
- Jason Bourque
  - Sarah Mullersman
  - Lourdes Santamaría