An Australian Hopalong Cassidy Cabinet of Curiosities

BY DERHAM GROVES

Introduction

In November 1954 William ‘Hopalong Cassidy’ Boyd visited Australia and caused a sensation. Huge crowds greeted the American cowboy hero of comic book, film, radio, and television, in Darwin, Melbourne, Adelaide, and Sydney during his 16-day visit to raise money for ‘crippled children,’ the majority of whom had had polio.1 A typical response was the 100,000-strong crowd that turned up to see the 59-year old actor arrive at Myer’s department store in Melbourne onboard a Christmas float (figure 1). Only the British pop group the Beatles attracted larger crowds when they toured Australia in 1964.

A selection of 1950s Hopalong Cassidy swap cards created by Fyna Foods in Australia.

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Welcome back from summer! Your conscientious ESA Board of Directors has been working on your behalf, planning a full calendar of special events. Remember that this Journal, your website, and the eNews will keep you informed about all of our past and upcoming activities.

The theme for *Ephemera 36*, March 17-20, 2016, will be *Politics, Patriotism & Protest*, and is set to be an exceptional election year topic. We look forward to working with our new Fair promoter, Marvin Getman, of Impact Events, and hosting another memorable weekend.

In May, the Anniversary Tour to London celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Ephemera Society (UK) and the 35th anniversary of our Ephemera Society of America. Carefully planned by Chairman Valerie Jackson-Harris, there were formidable trips to museums and many special programs, culminating with the gala presentation of their Pepys Medal, to the ESA. As your President, I accepted the honored medal (my acceptance speech is on the following page), which acknowledges our efforts to advance *ephemera*, and will be its guardian during my presidency.

July was highlighted by the collaboration with Philadelphia’s Center for Conservation of Art and Historic Artifacts, at a preservation program held at the Portland (Oregon) Museum of Art. Our Board Member, Glenn Mason, and his wife, Judith, represented us beautifully in their home city, where they provided an exceptional display of ephemera, and coordinated refreshments.

I am excited to announce that we have become members of FABS, The Fellowship of American Bibliophilic Societies. As a member, you will be receiving their bi-annual newsletter, and 7,500 other scholars and collectors will be learning about us, as well. For more information: [http://www.fabsocieties.org/about.html](http://www.fabsocieties.org/about.html)

Our annual Mid-Year event will take place in Allentown, PA, October 1-4. Please let us know if you would like to participate in special area tours, in conjunction with the Allentown Paper Show.

You will again find us sharing information about our organization at our table on Cultural Row at The Boston Book Fair, November 13-15. Your assistance is needed, and by volunteering, you will have a great time, and be enormously appreciated by your Society. Contact us!

In this, my final letter as your President, I wish to express my gratitude to everyone for your generous support. Thank you for three exceptional years and an unforgettable experience. I have been fortunate to have been assisted by a superb and dynamic Board of Directors, and an incomparable Administrative Director. The Ephemera Society of America is strong, our presence has expanded through our website and our numerous outreach activities, and more and more people understand the significance of the magical material we enjoy. As always, we value your membership, and welcome your expertise, your suggestions, and your involvement; you are essential to our success.

Sincerely,

Nancy Rosin, President
Accepting the Pepys Medal

“The Pepys Medal presented by The Ephemera Society on the occasion of its 40th Anniversary to The Ephemera Society of America in recognition of its pivotal role in advancing ephemera studies in North America” [Engraved on the back of the medal that was accepted by our president, Nancy Rosin, Thursday the 21st of May 2015 in London, and which will be worn on formal occasions by succeeding presidents.]

On behalf of the Ephemera Society of America – all 780 members, across America, Europe, and Asia – I thank you for this remarkable honor. This medal signifies all that we stand for in scholarship, and in friendship. As our mentor and parent, we appreciate the guidance YOU provided in our early days, and are gratified that you, the original Ephemera Society, with its esteemed tradition and history, have recognized our diligence and achievements.

Tonight, we share a unique bond – that of ephemera, also known as “bits and pieces of paper that were never meant to be saved!” Across thousands of miles, we have come together, to celebrate the enduring creation of our two Ephemera Societies. Forty years. Thirty-five years. A combined seventy-five years of people sharing a unique passion. We thank Chairman Valerie Jackson, for her devotion to ephemera, for dreaming this magnificent event, and bringing it to fruition, for all of us.

Samuel Pepys, for whom this illustrious medal is named, was a diarist – his commitment to his diary, his daily commentary, provided a unique window into life in the 1600s. His “bits and pieces” illuminated a period in history, so that we could envision his life and the society in which he lived, in even the most mundane details. We continually discover and recognize the importance of these details of everyday life. For me, personally, the fascinating description of his own Valentine’s Day celebrations created a special visual history, adding a unique and important addition to my own collection. Mr. Pepys has long been one of my idols!

In this extended world, to which we all belong, those little “bits and pieces” are integral to the stories in which history is written. No longer destined to be discarded, every piece has value. These remnants of paper, the detritus of daily life, and even many of the things that were meant to be saved, are now regarded as important historic documents, and everyone here is to be commended for their valuable contribution.

Maurice Rickards would be so thrilled! While I never had the pleasure of meeting Maurice, I have a feeling he would be in awe of what he inspired. Camaraderie, shared pleasure, scholarship, research, preservation, students becoming ephemerists, families finding touchstones to their heritage, hobbies, careers, and so many surprising benefits within the world of ephemera. This has all happened in a short time – forty years. Congratulations, and Happy Anniversary!

—Nancy Rosin

In this Issue...

What links the articles in this issue is the personal involvement with the ephemera involved.

Derham Groves, a professor of architecture, recognizes that the design of advertising is intimately connected with culture and an understanding of the past – and presents some of his students’ interpretations of possible promotions for a 1954 visit to Australia of an American cowboy star. Nancy Siegel, a professor of art history, decided to test her assumptions about the role of images in early American culinary pamphlets by actually cooking from the directions. John Grossman, an artist (reported here by our ‘resident’ graphic artist, Dick Sheaff) sought to understand chromolithography at the most intimate level – by creating his own multi-layered print. Molly Harris was moved to investigate Sapolio after reading Dick’s article “Excelsior!” in our January 2014 issue and realizing that it answered something she’d long wondered. In her words: “Why did the Hamm Brewing Company place an ad in a Sons of Hermann brochure with a young man carrying a banner climbing a mountain? Very simply because the original name for the brewery was the Excelsior Brewing Co. So then I followed the trail of Excelsior that led to the parodies of the poem that in turn led to the Bret Harte booklet and Sapolio. I really love that little piece which neatly summarizes all the kinds of outdoor advertising then available, ending with the bill poster holding his stencil while he waits (on the mountaintop) to be sure everyone with luggage has Sapolio stamped on their bags!” And I reflected on Molly’s work when reading Ruth Goodman’s 2014 How to Be a Victorian: A Dawn-to-Dusk Guide to Victorian Life, for Liveright publishing chose as a cover illustration the 1895 oil painting by George William Joy, The Bayswater Omnibus, that shows more than one placard promoting Sapolio. The ubiquity of Sapolio advertising on both sides of the Atlantic was reinforced by displays in the Museum of the City of London, and The Museum of Brands.

—Diane DeBlois, editor
Nominations for a 3-Year Term on the Board of Directors.

There are four candidates for four open slots on the Board of Directors; there are also five candidates who are running for a second term. We are asking for a vote in support of the entire slate. Candidate profiles are contained here and a ballot has been inserted in the magazine. The board elects its officers in January.

DAVID FREUND (2nd Term): I have long been a Society member, involved in collecting as well as thinking about ephemera. My article on personal visual albums appeared in the January 2012 issue. I also collect, have written about, and curated exhibitions of photo post cards. At Ramapo College, where I am currently Professor Emeritus, I chaired the Visual Arts for more than fifteen years, and headed the Arts and Lecture Committee, responsible for all college performances and exhibitions. For six years I was on the Board of the Society for Photographic Education, and for them chaired three national committees. It has been an honor and a pleasure to serve the Ephemera Society as a board member.

SHERYL JAEGGER (2nd Term): I have been involved with ephemera for 25 years (collecting childhood memorabilia and paper with a secret), and a member of the Society since 1991. With partner Ralph Gallo, as Eclectibles, my personal and business mission is The Promotion and Preservation of Ephemera. Sheryl Jaeger Appraisal Services is a member of the Appraisers Association of America. Other memberships include the Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America, The Manuscript Society, The Ticknor Society, The American Papercutters Guild, the American Game and Puzzle Collectors, the National Valentine Collectors Association. I feel that my experience and interests provide a unique prospective and advocacy in advancing the mission of the Ephemera Society.

DAVID H. MIHALY (New Board Member): I have been an ESA member since 1992. Some people look at ephemera and see beautiful images or valuable information. I see stories. Each object holds a story about its origin, its creator, how it was made and used, and what influenced its design. These stories have inspired me for more than 30 years as a curator, exhibit developer, and project manager for major institutions and private collections including the Amon-Carter Museum (TX), Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Chrysler Museum of Art (VA), John Grossman Collection (DE), Kansas State Historical Society, National Parks Service, and the New York State Historical Association. I am currently Curator of Graphic Arts and Social History at the Huntington Library (CA), actively building and promoting ephemera collections.

DAVID LILBURN (2nd Term): I started book selling in London as Antipodean Books, Maps & Prints in 1976, and joined the UK Ephemera Society around 1980. Soon after relocating to the U.S., I found the ESA and have felt at home with our fellow paper enthusiasts ever since. As a past president of the ABAA, and knowing most of the dealers in both the ABAA and the Ephemera Society, I feel I can help the ESA raise its professional standards and visibility.

JEREMY ROWE (2nd Term): I have collected, researched, and written about historic photographs for over 30 years. My research revolves around ephemera and its role in revealing stories about our past, as primary source research materials that are equal in importance to, and that augment traditional text resources. Ephemera are under recognized and appreciated historic documents that carry embedded information which, once identified and released, provide significant opportunities to expand knowledge. I am active in the Daguerreian Society and National Stereoscopic Association and am exploring opportunities for collaboration among these and other collectors’ organizations to expand the visibility of the importance of ephemera as an historic resource.
RICHARD SHEAFF (New Board Member): I am a retired graphic and communications designer who worked over the years with numerous clients including corporations large and small, universities, book publishers, paper companies, non-profit organizations and research think tanks. I designed or art-directed over 500 U.S. postage stamps. I collect ephemera and postal history, research various subjects and write frequent articles and blog posts, with a particular interest in design and typography. I also maintain an ephemera-related, non-commercial website (www.sheaff-ephemera.com). I have previously served several terms on the Ephemera Society’s board of directors, and I am longtime member of several philatelic organizations.

HENRY VOIGT (New Board Member): As a collector of menus and related culinary ephemera, I enjoy the process of historical discovery, uncovering long-forgotten details of our foodways, social customs, and other aspects of everyday life. I maintain a blog and enjoy exploring new ways that ephemera can be cataloged and shared to substantially increase its research potential. In 2006, I retired as the chief executive officer of DuPont Teijin Films, culminating a thirty-eight year career in international business with E. I. DuPont de Nemours. I look forward to serving with other members of the board to ensure that the goals and primary constituents of the Ephemera Society are served and that adequate resources are secured to fulfill its mission and purpose.

DONALD ZALDIN (2nd Term): Like music was to folk song writer and performer Harry Chapin’s “Mr. Tanner,” ephemera is “my “life … it is not my livelihood,” and it makes me feel so happy and good, sing from my heart and makes me whole. I was co-founder (with Barbara Rusch) and Vice-President of The Ephemera Society of Canada, and an active member of The Ephemera Society of America and a presenter at four Ephemera Symposia over the past quarter century. I have had the privilege of serving on President Nancy Rosin’s Board of Directors for the past three years, contributing to and addressing the society’s legal issues and serving the interests of its dealer, collector and institutional members.

TAMAR ZIMMERMAN (New Board Member): I have been a collector of ephemera — trade cards, children’s books, card games, paper mechanicals and anything that appeals to my aesthetic taste or sense of whimsy — since the 1990s. And my own art is inspired by and inspires my collecting. A member of the Society since 2007, I presented, “The Playful Victorian Eye” at Ephemera 33 in 2013, tracing the history of Victorian puzzle and other optical images back to Classical, Renaissance and 18th century models, and up to the current day, describing their influence on my own work. With a background in art history, I am also interested in the vast scope of information that can be found in the ephemera world. I would like to help introduce young people and students to the great research possibilities of these treasures.

Ephemera Society of America
Board of Directors Ballot Enclosed with Magazine

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Fax 315-655-9139 or mail the enclosed ballot by November 15 to: Ephemera Society, PO Box 95, Cazenovia, NY 13035-0095
In 1946 William Boyd had very astutely purchased the commercial rights to Hopalong Cassidy from Clarence E. Mulford, the author who had created the character, and Harry Sherman, the producer who had made the Hopalong Cassidy films. Subsequently a large part of Boyd’s income came from royalties for the sale of a vast range of licensed Hopalong Cassidy products around the world, including Australia, such as bedspreads, cowboy suits, greeting cards, lunchboxes, pens, watches—you name it, Hopalong Cassidy had endorsed it!

During the 1950s Australia had a vibrant—albeit highly protected—manufacturing industry, which ensured that all of the Hopalong Cassidy merchandise then sold in Australia was manufactured locally. Following are the stories behind just a few of my favorite bygone Australian products: a failed Hopalong Cassidy soft drink, an old-fashioned Hopalong Cassidy board game, and some teeth-rotting Hopalong Cassidy candy. Only a lack of space prevented me from discussing many more. My essay concludes with descriptions of four faux Australian Hopalong Cassidy products that could profitably have been sold during William Boyd’s Australian tour in 1954.

Hoppy Cola

In 1954 Keith Harris & Co. Ltd., a leading manufacturer of food colorings and flavors in Australia, was granted licenses to produce Hopalong Cassidy cake decorations, cake frills, paper serviettes, and—more significantly—a new soft drink called ‘Hoppy Cola’ which the company hoped would give Coca-Cola and Pepsi Cola a run for their money Down Under. The new brand of cola had an eye-catching red and white label featuring Hopalong Cassidy with one of his pistols drawn and riding his horse Topper (figure 2). The bottle cap was deliberately (but, one hopes, not cynically) designed to look like the Hopalong Cassidy Crippled Children’s Appeal badges, which sold by the thousands to raise money for charity during Boyd’s Australian tour.

In January 1955 early sales of Hoppy Cola were “really very good considering the initial pioneering period was just prior to Christmas, and there was none of this line available at all in New South Wales until after your departure from that State,” Larry Cleland, William Boyd’s representative in Australia, enthusiastically reported to Robert Stabler, Vice President of William Boyd Enterprises.3

Keith Harris planned a big advertising campaign for Hoppy Cola, which included a radio commercial recorded by William Boyd. The company also considered using any left over Hopalong Cassidy Good Luck coins—the souvenir aluminum coins which Boyd gave away to his Australian fans—to promote Hoppy Cola, and if that worked then locally minting more coins later on. However the advertising campaign was not as big as the company had anticipated, most likely because the network of over 51 small independent bottlers around Australia who were also involved in the production of the soft drink were reluctant to contribute to the campaign’s cost. Consequently some bottlers placed their own advertisements in their local newspapers. For example, Sheekey’s Ltd. of Wagga in New South Wales ran a series of ads in the Daily Advertiser that declared:

Figure 1: Hopalong Cassidy and Santa Claus outside Myer’s department store.

Figure 2: A Hoppy Cola bottle and label.
“Now—the drink you’ve been waiting for! ‘Hoppy Cola,’ the perfect kola flavor. It’s new! It’s delicious! Serve it cold. The whole family will love it. See Hopalong and Trigger on every label. Now on sale everywhere. Bottled by Sheekey’s Ltd., Wagga.”

Of course every young Australian would-be cowboy in 1954 could have told Sheekey’s that Topper was Hoppy’s horse while Trigger belonged to his screen rival Roy Rogers.

Hoppy Cola’s ultimate downfall in the marketplace was not, however, due to poor advertising but a result of the soft drink’s unwieldy chain of production. Keith Harris did not actually produce Hoppy Cola but only the concentrate used to make the soft drink. The company sold this concoction to the small bottlers who produced Hoppy Cola using their own methods and techniques. They also independently distributed the soft drink to grocer shops, milk bars, etc. in their local areas.

With so many small autonomous bottlers in country towns all over Australia making Hoppy Cola it was impossible for Keith Harris to monitor the soft drink’s quality and consistency. Even the shapes of the bottles and labels could vary from one bottler to another. For example, Hoppy Cola bottled by W.H. Moyle & Co. of Port Pirie in South Australia had tall clear glass bottles and square labels while those bottled by Cosgrove & Co. of South Brisbane in Queensland had short brown glass bottles and rectangular labels.

As Keith Harris was unable to properly oversee the production of Hoppy Cola it insisted that a clause concerning the satisfactory performance of subcontractors be deleted from its licensing agreement with William Boyd in order to protect itself from being sued. They understood the problem but couldn’t solve it. One irate Hoppy Cola consumer even wrote to William Boyd in Los Angeles to warn him “about the racket a well-known drink factory by [the] name of 7X drinks of 261 Dorcas St., South Melbourne [is] selling dirty dishwater in bottles to children called ‘Hopalong’ [sic] and telling children there is a motorcar prize for the lucky number. It’s the biggest take for kids and charity, so please look into it. Am enclosing a label off [a] bottle. [It] is for sale in all little shops at 7p[ence] including tax.”

In 1959 Keith Harris & Co. Ltd. did not renew its license to produce Hoppy Cola. Not only had the soft drink sold far below expectations but also the Hopalong Cassidy craze was by then well and truly over.

The Hopalong Cassidy Game

W. Owen Pty. Ltd. was a very early manufacturer of board games in Australia from the 1900s until the 1970s, under the brand name ‘National Games’ at their factory in Ballarat, 100 kilometers northwest of Melbourne. In 1954 the company was granted a license to manufacture the
Hopalong Cassidy Game in Australia (figure 3). Production was timed perfectly to coincide with Boyd’s Australian tour as indicated by the following advertisement which was aimed at potential retailers of the game: “An entertaining new National Game just in time for Hopalong Cassidy’s visit. Don’t miss the wonderful sales of Hopalong Cassidy games. Order your stocks now at all wholesalers.”

Two, three or four players could play the Hopalong Cassidy Game, which involved capturing outlaws and collecting reward money as the rules explained:

Hopalong Cassidy, the County Sheriff, has been told that there are outlaws hiding in the nearby hills. Rewards up to $12,000 are offered for the capture of some of these desperadoes. Hopalong sends a posse, comprised of a number of deputies (2 for each player), to bring in these law-breakers: (taking them prisoners, bringing them into the Sheriff’s office, and collecting the reward money). The game board represents the wild country where the action takes place. The centre of the board is the Sheriff’s office with Hopalong Cassidy himself pictured there. The corners of the board show the hideouts where the bandits are hidden. Between the Sheriff’s office and the hideouts, many trails lead in all directions. These trails are followed by the posse to round up the bandits and bring them to Hopalong’s office.

The Milton Bradley Co. produced the Hopalong Cassidy Game in America and sold over 635,000 between 1950 and 1956—which was more than 20 times the number sold in Australia by W. Owen between 1954 and 1958. While the Australian and American versions of the game were exactly the same to play, as a result of keeping production costs down in Australia, there were a number of differences in their appearance.

For example the Australian version had a thin cardboard game board while the American one had a thick cardboard game board with a red paper backing. Also the Australian-made game board had nothing printed on the back while the American one had a silhouette of Hopalong Cassidy and Topper above the cowboy’s name printed on the back.

The Australian version’s player pieces consisted of tiny colored wooden blocks while the American one’s consisted of small colored plastic figures of cowboys on horseback. The wooden blocks would have been cheaper to produce than the plastic figures—at least in Australia in 1954 (but today perhaps not). To move the player pieces around the board, the Australian version used a plain cardboard cylinder and a standard die while the America one used a red plastic arrow mounted on a cardboard square featuring portraits of Hoppy in each corner. A generic box and die would have been cheaper to supply than a specially made spinner.

Some differences were very minor indeed. Both versions of the Hopalong Cassidy Game had colored cardboard tokens with the outlaws’ portraits printed on them, however the Australian’s tokens were square while the American’s were circular. Once again the square tokens would have been cheaper to produce than the round ones.
been easier and thus cheaper to produce than the circular ones. Printed on the lid of the cardboard box that contained the game was the recently introduced ‘Official Hopalong Cassidy Trade Mark’. However the Australian Trade Marks Office objected to the word “official” because it cast doubt on the authenticity of Hopalong Cassidy merchandise that predated this trademark. William Boyd’s people consulted the Melbourne patent attorney Clement Hack & Co. for advice, which resulted in some Australian licensees receiving small refunds. In the end all of the fuss didn’t seem worth it. 30,000 copies of the game sold in Australia; significantly about 10,000 of these were sold in November 1954, the month of Boyd’s visit, which indicates the screen cowboy hero’s personal selling power.

Hopalong Cassidy Candy

Since children were Hopalong Cassidy’s biggest fans it is not surprising that two Melbourne confectionery companies, Fyna Foods Pty. Ltd. and Bester’s Sweets Pty. Ltd., wanted their candy to be associated with the cowboy star in order to earn as much of his young fans’ pocket money as possible.

Arthur Campbell had founded Fyna Foods Pty. Ltd. in the 1940s, best known for ‘sherbet,’ a sweet fizzy powder consisting mostly of icing sugar, which was very popular with school-age children in particular and no doubt contributed to the baby boomer generation’s notoriously bad teeth.

From the early 1950s Fyna Foods produced a number of sweets named for Hopalong Cassidy, including Hoppy Chews, a candy bar that came in four flavours; Hoppy-Ade, a powder that was mixed with water to make a sweet fruit-flavored drink; Hoppy Ringsticks, which were toffees on sticks that each came with a child’s adjustable ring featuring an image of Hoppy and Topper; Hoppy Pops, which were described on the display box as “Two Sweets in One … Lolly Pop and Sherbet … Dab the Pop in the Sherbet”; and finally—the most ambitious of the company’s Hopalong Cassidy range of sweets—Hoppy Belt Pouches (figure 4).

The latter consisted of a cardboard pouch (78mm x 50mm x 150mm) featuring pictures of Hopalong Cassidy’s smiling face, a pair of six-shooters and a pair of stirrups printed on the front, which contained three ounces of hard candy that was chosen because it would (ominously) “keep indefinitely in all climates”.11 As several large chain stores in Australia were interested in selling Hoppy Belt Pouches, Fyna Foods placed an initial order for 100,000 pouches, although the company optimistically anticipated that “more than likely this figure will be doubled or trebled.” Notwithstanding, few Hoppy Belt Pouches have survived.12

The pouch was designed to hold other things after the candy had been eaten - printed on it was the recommendation: “Use this pouch to hold your ‘Hoppy’ swap cards issued with ‘Hoppy’ Pops and ‘Hoppy’ Chews[s].” During the 1950s Fyna Foods issued at least three series of Hoppy swap-cards with these particular types of sweets. The first series depicted 36 scenes of the Wild West (see cover illustration). Typically, card number 16 from series one had a colored drawing of Hopalong Cassidy shooting a rattlesnake on the front, and the following caption on the back: “The rattlesnake is one of the deadliest reptiles found in the West. On his tail is the rattle that gives him his name. Before he strikes, these rattles vibrate rapidly, making a loud buzzing sound. The skin, when tanned, makes beautiful belts.”13

The second series of Fyna Foods Hoppy swap-cards showed 22 scenes from the Hopalong Cassidy film Sinister Journey (1948) while the third series showed 22 scenes from another Hopalong Cassidy film Silent Conflict (1948). Typically, card number 16 from series three had a black and white photograph of Hoppy and his sidekick California Carlson (played by Andy Clyde) on the front and the following description of the scene on the back: “Hoppy and California are resting after riding hard in search of Lucky, when they see a figure approaching in the dusty distance. ‘It’s Lucky!’ California jumps up and runs toward him. As he gets close, Lucky lifts his gun, takes careful aim, and fires!”

Fyna Foods offered to exchange any 36 swap-cards from series one for “[six] ‘Hoppy’ post card photos and one enlarged autographed ‘Hoppy’ photo suitable for framing,” any 22 swap cards from series two for just the six post card photos, and any 22 swap cards from series three for just the autographed photo. In this way children could redeem their duplicate swap cards for yet more giveaways while the company could possibly put the unwanted swap cards back into circulation.

In 1954 Bester’s Sweets Pty. Ltd. was granted a license to produce two kinds of candy: Hopalong Cassidy Bar 20, a chocolate-coated macaroon bar in a yellow paper wrapper, and Hopalong Cassidy Ranch Toffee, individually wrapped toffees in an octagonal tin (figure 5). On the lid of the toffee tin was an autographed color photograph of Hoppy looking straight ahead with his hands on his hips, and on the sides...
of the tin was written “Hopalong Cassidy’s Troopers Creed for boys and girls”:

1. To be kind to birds and animals.
2. To always be truthful and fair.
3. To keep myself neat and clean.
4. To be courteous.
5. To be careful when crossing streets.
6. To study and always learn my lessons.
7. To obey my parents.
8. To avoid bad habits. 

The production of Hopalong Cassidy Bar 20s and Hopalong Cassidy Ranch Toffees was exactly timed to benefit from William Boyd’s Australian visit as well as to supply Christmas 1954. In September—the first month that Hopalong Cassidy Bar 20s were produced and two months before Boyd’s arrival in Australia—5,591 boxes of the candy bars each containing 48 pieces were sold. Given the large number of orders, almost every milk bar in the state of Victoria must have had at least one box of Hopalong Cassidy Bar 20s in anticipation of the Hollywood cowboy’s visit. 

In October—the first month that Hopalong Cassidy Ranch Toffee was produced and one month before Boyd’s arrival—2,820 tins of toffee and 985 boxes of candy bars were sold. In November—the month when Boyd was in Australia—3,148 tins of toffee and 75 boxes of candy bars were sold. Evidently many milk bars had not yet sold out of their initial supplies of Hopalong Cassidy Bar 20s. Finally in December—the month after Boyd left Australia—10,306 tins of toffee and 91 boxes of candy bars were sold. Hopalong Cassidy Ranch Toffee was seen as an ideal Christmas stocking stuffer because after the toffees had been eaten the decorative tin could be used for holding other things, such as color pencils. Sales of Hopalong Cassidy Bar 20s and Hopalong Cassidy Ranch Toffee gradually tapered off after 1954. During the first six months of 1955, for example, a total of 1,745 tins of toffee and 443 boxes of candy bars were sold.

While both types of candy were commercial successes for Bester’s Sweets they were not very lucrative for William Boyd who received only a two percent royalty for each item sold. Thus the cowboy hero’s payments for the sweets ranged from a high of £110/14/10 for the month of September 1954 to a miserly combined total of £2/13/10 for the months of January, February and March 1959, by which time Hopalong Cassidy was definitely old hat with most Australian children.

Faux Hopalong Cassidy Merchandise

I asked the Master of Architecture students in my Popular Architecture and Design course at the University of Melbourne in 2012 and 2013 (160 students in total) to travel back to 1954 in their imaginations and make some Hopalong Cassidy products to commemorate the cowboy star’s Australian visit. In the process they could comment on the fads and fashions of the day, such as the ‘Americanization’ of Australian popular culture, the popularity of film and TV Westerns, playing Cowboys and Indians, etc. Let me describe just a tiny sample of what the students made.

Vegemite is a dark brown paste that is usually eaten on bread or crackers. It is loved by most Australians but regarded with deep suspicion by the rest of the world. If William Boyd had sampled some Vegemite in 1954 he would have certainly approved of its nutritional value but perhaps not its very salty taste. Coincidently that same year Alan Weeks composed a catchy radio jingle called “Happy Little Vegemites” which referred to the healthy dispositions of children who ate Vegemite “for breakfast, lunch and tea.” Architecture student Craig Noyce redesigned the iconic Vegemite label to include a picture of Hopalong Cassidy (figure 6). Thus “Happy Little Vegemites” became “Hoppy Little Vegemites”.

Figure 8: Hopalong Cassidy sunscreen by Tom Eckersley.
Almost up there with Vegemite are Tim Tam chocolate biscuits (i.e. cookies), which were named after the winner of the 1958 Kentucky Derby. Architecture student Nathalie Sanchez thought that any biscuit named for a horse would naturally appeal to Hopalong Cassidy, so she redesigned the distinctive Tim Tam packet to include a picture of the screen cowboy (figure 7). She also redesigned the shape of the biscuit. Instead of a boring rectangle, it is like a chocolate-coated silhouette of Hopalong Cassidy riding Topper (as shown on the right hand corner of the redesigned packet).

Australia has a famously sunny climate – the flip side is that Australians have one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. Architecture student Tom Eckersley selected sunscreen for his product because he believed that the very public-spirited William Boyd would have wanted to promote the idea of being sun smart in Australia in 1954. Tom deliberately selected a trigger bottle over a roll-on ball or pressure pack because it was more strongly linked to the Hopalong Cassidy cowboy theme (figure 8).

Tens of thousands of Hopalong Cassidy toy pistols and holsters were sold in Australia during the 1950s. Architecture student Xiao Wang observed the similarity in shape of a pistol and a boomerang to produce a Hopalong Cassidy holstered boomerang (figure 9). Indeed William Boyd was shown how to throw a boomerang on at least two occasions while he was in Australia in 1954 and received several boomerangs from his Australian fans. Not only was a boomerang a uniquely Australian souvenir but it also expressed the hope that the person who received it would return to the country one day. Alas, Hopalong Cassidy rode into the Australian sunset in 1954 and never returned Down Under.

Endnotes
3 Quote from letter in the Keith Harris & Co. Ltd. file, William Boyd Collection, the American Heritage Center, the University of Wyoming, Laramie.
4 Quote from advertisement on page 4 of the *Daily Advertiser* (Wagga Wagga, New South Wales), December 23, 1954.
5 Quote from letter in the Keith Harris & Co. Ltd. file, William Boyd Collection.
6 W. Owen Pty. Ltd./National Games advertising brochure 1954, William Boyd Collection.
7 Quote from Hopalong Cassidy Game instructions in the author’s collection.
8 See *Hopalong Cassidy: King of the Cowboy Merchandisers*, page 24.
9 See correspondence in the W. Owen Pty. Ltd. file, the William Boyd Collection.
10 Quote from Hoppy Pops sales display box in the author’s collection.
11 Quote from letter in the Fyna Foods Pty. Ltd. file, the William Boyd Collection.
12 As far as I know only one Hoppy Belt Pouch has survived, which is owned by the Queensland Museum. See goo.gl/8mrPH6 (viewed 23rd June 2015).
13 Quote from Hoppy swap card in the author’s collection.
14 Quote from Hopalong Cassidy Ranch Toffee tin in the author’s collection.
15 Sales figures from Besters Sweets Pty. Ltd. file, William Boyd Collection.
16 “Happy Little Vegemites” https://goo.gl/IwVsen

Dr. Derham Groves teaches architecture at the University of Melbourne in Australia. He is the author of several books including *Out of the Ordinary: Popular Art, Architecture and Design* (2012) and *Anna May Wong’s Luck Shoes: 1939 Australia Through the Eyes of an Art Deco Diva* (2011). His email address is: derham@unimelb.edu.au
In 1772 Boston publishers issued the first American edition of Susannah Carter’s cookbook *The Frugal Housewife or Complete Woman Cook*. Included were plates engraved by Paul Revere depicting the proper method for trussing, roasting, or boiling rabbits and assorted fowl [figure 1].

Likewise, the publishers of an 1831 edition of Amelia Simmons’s *American Cookery* commissioned a series of engravings with alphabetic labels to illustrate with precision the carving of ham, mutton, and fowl. Why would publishers go to the added expense of including illustrations in cookbooks that had already proven themselves to be financially successful and what does this convey about changing modes of domestic practice?

As a reflection of familial structures and the methods by which cooking was learned, the majority of cookery manuals, until the mid-eighteenth century, offered limited instruction: measurements for ingredients were often omitted, procedural directions lacking, and cooking time was all but absent. However, what was deemed unnecessary to provide by way of instruction in the eighteenth century would become essential information by the mid-nineteenth century for women with increasing economic, social, and educational opportunities who no longer lived at home because of marriage or work. Cookbooks then, became surrogate teachers replacing the intimate tutorials that occurred in the kitchen between mothers and daughters as part of an intergenerational oral history. Serving a primarily didactic (versus aesthetic) value, the increased appearance of illustrations in cookbooks, both published and in handwritten receipt books, functioned in image and in text as the modern YouTube videos, providing not only the ingredients but also the visual step-by-step how-to. Seeing the desired result in print could make all the difference for the inexperienced cook who would have balked at the notion of serving guests a butchered attempt at hospitality, in addition to the money wasted on expensive bills of fare.

The study of illustrations in cookbooks provides valuable information as part of the history of publishing, the importance of ephemeral documents, and is suggestive of the economic, social, and cultural changes occurring throughout eighteenth- and nineteenth-century America. While my research often explores politically suggestive recipes such as Election cake, Democratic tea cake, and Washington pie, recipes for the preparation and presentation of the common, everyday meal serve in part as socio-economic documents, establishing a dialog between the development of recipes adapted for American cooks, the increasing availability of foodstuffs and sundries in local markets, and advances in kitchen technology. To determine the significance of illustrations in cookery books of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, I put them to the test—literally, in my own kitchen, as part of a two-recipe experiment. The results demonstrate the limits of written instruction and the value of developing culinary languages, verbal and visual, which developed in America simultaneous to the formation of new political structures in the Early Republic.
Noah Webster wrote in 1789, “Language is the expression of ideas, and if the people of one country cannot preserve an identity of ideas, they cannot retain an identity of language.”2 “As an independent nation,” he proclaimed, “our honor requires us to have a system of our own, in language as well as government. Great Britain, whose children we are, and whose language we speak, should no longer be our standard; for the taste of her writers is already corrupted, and her language on the decline.”3 Indeed, as cookbooks in America became increasingly inclusive of native horticulture and ingredients, recipes were rewritten to reflect nationalistic overtones and changing tastes; the culinary language that developed in America after the Revolution reveals much about political, economic, and social expectations. As is well known, in 1796, a modest text titled American Cookery was published in Hartford, Connecticut [figure 2]. Its author, Amelia Simmons, is credited with producing what is widely considered the first cookbook written in America. Simmons utilized a specifically “American” vocabulary of ingredients such as cornmeal for “American Indian pudding,” “Johny Cake, or Hoe Cake,” and included dishes for “pompkin.” Likewise, in her chapter for cakes and sweet breads Simmons provided basic recipes for “plain cake” that were quickly complemented in a second 1796 edition with recipes of a patriotic nature such as “Election cake” and “Independence cake.”

Of particular note is Simmons’s designation as an “American orphan” on the cover of her cookbook. Suggesting a parentless status, this reference to an orphan (and an American orphan in particular) may on the one hand be an intended parallel to the “parentless” position of the new nation—no more Mother England or King George—but it also served as a brilliant marketing ploy.4 Simmons took the opportunity to use the preface of her first and second editions to speak at length about the challenges faced by young orphans such as herself and the importance of culinary instruction specific to America. From the first edition: “the Lady of fashion and fortune will not be displeased, if many hints are suggested for the more general and universal knowledge of those females in this country, who by the loss of their parents, or other unfortunate circumstances, are reduced to the necessity of going into families in the line of domestics … essential to the perfecting them as good wives, and useful members of society.”5 And from the second edition:

[T]he call has been so great, and the sale so rapid, that she [the author] finds herself not only encouraged, but under a necessity of publishing a second edition, to accommodate a large and extensive circle of reputable characters, who wish to countenance the exertions of an orphan, in that which is designed for general utility to all ranks of people in this Republic. She hopes that this second edition, will appear, in a great measure, free from those egregious blunders, and inaccuracies, which attended the first ; which were occasioned either by the ignorance, or evil intention of the transcriber for the press…. she has only to request, that they would remember, that it is the performance of, and effected under all those disadvantages, which usually attend, an Orphan.6

Although Simmons states in her preface that she was left in the care of “virtuous guardians,” it is curious that she would boast of her socially compromised position so readily. By suggesting her low but rising status, she appeals creatively to her target audience—young women of a middling but advancing class. I posit that this reference to orphan status was self-conscious and calculated. In the gendered space of the kitchen, women, as communicators of cultural mores, utilized cookbooks such as American Cookery as educational tools in the areas of social instruction and domestic reform. Cookbooks were

Figure 2: Amelia Simmons, American cookery, or, The art of dressing viands, fish, poultry, and vegetables, and the best modes of making puff-pastes, pies, tarts, puddings, custards and preserves, and all kinds of cakes, from the imperial plumb to plain cake, adapted to this country, and all grades of life (Hartford, CT: Hudson & Goodwin, 1796). Courtesy, The Connecticut Historical Society.
invaluable tools not only for sustenance but also as a means to learn refinement. Take, for example, the act of making and drinking tea. The desirable practice of tea drinking was indeed a learned behavior. Early misunderstandings occurred when some colonists boiled tea leaves as one would a vegetable, ate the tea, and threw out the water—cookbooks corrected this mistake. Culinary efforts in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century also coincided with a reappraisal of etiquette and dining practices. Dictums such as “spit not in the room but in the corner” or “cleanse not your teeth with the tablecloth” were replaced with more decorous advice such as “the world corrupts; home should refine” and provided a measure not only for what one should eat in a democratic society but how one should behave while engaged in social repasts.

Women were also sensitive to the importance of setting the proper table for meals. The family cookbook of Mrs. Frances Fiske of Massachusetts, for example, provided a recto and verso of how to set the table for dinner. The corresponding text is detailed and exact, made all the more precise through Mrs. Fiske’s schematic illustrations for much-needed reference [figures 3 and 4]: “Setting the dinner table / at the head, gentleman of the house / in front of him the carving knife & fork…/ Near the middle of the table at a proper distance, pickles on each corner/ large spoons & salt celler, salt spoon laid acrost it/ at the right of each plate a tumbler & a napkin rolled up in rings… after meat, gravy, vegetables are removed /after the pudding /remove all dishes to next room/ also the white table cloth leaving the dark on the table…” And so on… Mrs. Fiske’s word/image diagrams were not actually unique but part of established aristocratic tradition. For example, Robert Jocelyn, Lord Chancellor of Ireland, kept a dinner book in the 1740s that carefully recorded, dinner by dinner, the placement of meats, vegetables and sundries on his table as well as notable guests in attendance [figure 5]. The sustained importance of setting a proper table as it reflects upon the well-mannered hostess and host has not been lost over time as demonstrated by current illustrated cookbooks such as the place settings provided in Irma Rombauer and Marion Becker’s The Joy of Cooking.

The cultural window opened to us through the examination of cookbooks both published and handwritten reveals information about the role they played as surrogate teachers in the kitchen. In The American Frugal Housewife (the 1832 versus the 1829 edition), Lydia Maria Child lamented the lack of cooking skills of young ladies: “By domestic education, I do not mean the sending daughters into the kitchen some half dozen times, to weary the patience of the cook, and to boast of it the next day in the parlor. I mean two or three years spent with a mother” Cookbooks then, provided material connections for women who no longer lived at home where they could be instructed by their mothers in culinary matters. Additionally, countless examples of books with personalized notations and modifications in the margins or across the page serve as evidence that these publications were in fact much-consulted resources. By the 1830s, dedicated cookbooks were increasingly expanded to
function as domestic manuals, advising young women in the perceived manners and decorum of a wealthier class. One finds this readapted function of the book coinciding with increased educational opportunities for women, economic growth of the middle class that required entertaining and social obligations, plus the ability to purchase a wider variety of sundries and comestibles, along with the employment of household staff (both literate and illiterate) from recent waves of immigration or, in the case of Amelia Simmons, orphan status.

But do we know what women thought of cookery books? Mary Ellen Meredith (wife of novelist George Meredith) wrote a commentary in 1849 with almost 200 pages of critiques on cookbooks written by notable authors such as Dr. Kitchener and Hannah Glasse. This is a fascinating read of popular cookbooks demonstrating their use by women. In numerous places Meredith notes where she felt condescended to, the gluttonous state of modern eating, and the importance of national cuisine. She opined:

If we examine impartially the progress of gastronomy in England we shall find that we have not advanced as far as we think. The last century was distinguished by a generation of hungry gluttons and inveterate topers… If we have abandoned some of their bad practices we have lost some of their good ones; we no longer force our guests to eat more than they can digest or drink till they disappear under the table… and offer to stomachs too fatigued to cope with boiled mutton ambitious failures of all sorts of incongruities. We have added to the number of our dishes and have forgotten how to melt butter. We have let the beer of the people disappear and have grown ashamed of roast beef.

Such terse opinions could serve as parallel criticism of today’s “curated” small plates, or quizzical fascination with molecular gastronomy.

Meredith’s specific discussion of Hannah Glasse’s cookbook is important. In the preface to her Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy, published in London in 1747, Glasse notes, “I do not pretend to teach professed Cooks, my design being to instruct the ignorant and unlearned, (which will likewise be of use in all private families,) and that in so plain and full a manner, that the most ignorant person, who can but read, will know how to do Cookery well.” One assumes the “ignorant and unlearned” referred to hired or indentured help, although Glasse appealed to a wide socio-economic audience. Her publication was enormously influential in America; George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin each owned copies. Glasse’s words address a very important question: Who precisely would need this book? Cooks trained cooks; mothers taught daughters. The apprenticeship system would suffice to provide the necessary skill sets and experience to produce standard bills of fare but for a broader range of meals or special celebrations a reference book would be welcome to the cook in every station of society. Consider our own rotation of everyday meals. Whether narrow or broad, we too consult cookbooks similarly for ideas, advice, and culinary exercise.

The Experiment:

Did these recipes actually result in tasty fare? Could the cook, and we assume from introductions and forewords that the intended reader was a woman, adequately decipher the sometimes-cryptic directions to produce a quality meal without much fuss or fear? The proof, as they say, is in the pudding… or, in this case, in the pullet, and a two-part culinary experiment involving the roasting of a chicken and the trussing of a rabbit in a modern American kitchen (mine). If this, in part, conjures images of Paul Revere’s engravings for roasting and trussing, the reader would be correct.

First the bird. Hannah Gasse’s The Art of Cookery made Plain and Easy was an appropriate place to begin given the popularity and wide dissemination of her cookbook. The recipe to roast fowl seemed simple enough. She instructed: “To roast Geese, Turkeys, etc., . When you roast a goose, turkey or fowls of any sort, take care to singe them with a piece of white paper, and baste them with a piece of butter; drudge them with a little flour, and sprinkle a little salt on; and when the smoke begins to draw to the fire, and they look plump, baste them again, and drudge them with a little flour, and take them up.” Simple, yes? But what of that fire? Advice appears as follows: “I... must desire

the cook to order her fire according to what she is

to dress; if any thing very little or thin, then a pretty
little brisk fire... if a very large joint, then be sure a
good fire be laid..."17 Amelia Simmons offered little
additional help to the modern reader although cooks
in 1796 would clearly know the difference between
a specified "brisk hot fire," "steady solid fire,
and "clear good fire." The omission of definition
or instruction assumes that the building of and
maintaining a proper fire was an essential daily chore
whether performed by the cook or the housewife,
one learned by rote. So, a fire, yes, but how long
to cook this bird? Cooking times varied: Glasse,
whose instructions for preparing versus roasting
fowl appear pages apart, suggests a medium-sized
chicken takes half an hour, small chickens twenty
minutes; Simmons omits cooking times, but by 1829,
Lydia Maria Child suggested "An hour is enough
for common sized chickens to roast."18 Thusly,
eighteenth and nineteenth-century birds commonly
weighed between four-to-six pounds; therefore, the
fire would need to register close to 400 degrees in
order to cook the bird in one hour, dependent upon
its proximity to the ashes.19

An estimated half cup of butter and a half cup
of flour basted my 4.67-pound bird. Because I
had neither open fire nor spit, I cooked my bird
breast-side down to replicate as much as possible
the running of juices throughout. The result? In a
word... unctuous. The fatty juices trapped beneath
a crust of crackling skin, formed by the double basting of
flour and butter, sealed in the moisture. Simmons provided
illustrations for carving fowl by 1831, but this home
cook must confess to having torn apart that bird in a most
indelicate manner. So, indeed—roasting, relatively simple.
The main concern would be a dried-out bird, but little
technique was required.

Part two: now for the rabbit and those Revere
illustrations. While Paul Revere’s engravings for The
Royal American Magazine are well known, he maintained
a lucrative career producing engravings for almanacs,
magazines, cookbooks, bookplates, certificates of
memberships, invitations to Masonic meetings, and
commercial advertisements such as the trade card he
created for Joseph Webb of Boston, ca1759, who sold
kettles, pans, and kitchenware [figure 6]. Revere’s second
culinary commission provided illustrations for the 1772
Boston edition of Susannah Carter’s Frugal Housewife
[figure 1]. First printed in London, the frontispiece and
interior pages provided visual instruction to better illustrate
the method for trussing and roasting hare and fowl. Not
only does the inclusion of these images speak to the matter
of disseminating British publications in the colonies, but
it also reflects, as does the trade card for Joseph Webb,
a market for culinary publications relative to increasing
wealth and sophisticated tastes. Curiously, although Revere
faithfully copied the engravings from the London edition,
the American publishers chose not to include twelve

*Figure 6: Paul Revere, Joseph Webb trade card, engraving, ca1765. Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society.*

woodcut prints illustrating proper table arrangements for
dinners.

I procured from the butcher one rabbit; it had already
been skinned and cleaned so stuffing it with its own kidneys
as numerous recipes called for was out of the question.
And, sadly, said bunny was headless, so one would need to
imagine Revere’s inclusion of floppy ears and vacant eyes.
To rely solely upon Glasse’s written directions for trussing
a hare would be as follows: “TAKE your hare when it is
case; truss it in this manner, bring the two hind legs up
to its sides, pull the fore legs back, your skewer first into
the hind-leg, then into the fore leg, and thrust it through
the body; put the fore-leg on, and then the hind-leg, and a
skewer through the top of the shoulders and back part of the
head, which will hold the head up.”20 Such cumbersome
text and the ensuing confusion could be remedied with
the assistance of illustrations. I turned then to Revere’s
engravings for The Frugal Housewife and could precisely
envision how a rabbit should appear properly trussed, a task
I accomplished successfully within minutes.21

The practical experience of recreating these recipes
demonstrates the value of image/text complements. Without
an oral tradition to instill functional memory, coupled with
either perplexing or far too limited written instructions,
the role of illustrations in cookbooks would become
increasingly vital in importance as women moved farther and farther from their mothers' kitchens. One can readily see how this segment of the publishing industry began to flourish in America. Detailed instructions and visual guides (surrogate teachers) for trussing, roasting and carving, table settings, volumes, and weights were expected by mid-century, allowing women greater ease and confidence. The term “Independence” offered new meaning in a post-Revolutionary kitchen. Are today’s home cooks truly much different from those who relied upon Hannah Glasse or Lydia Maria Child? Consider the cookbooks that we return to again and again, marveling at sumptuous recipes replete with glossy pictures of promised success.

Endnotes

1 Susannah Carter, The Frugal Housewife or Complete Woman Cook (Boston: Edes and Gill, 1772 edition of the 1765 London original).
4 Amelia Simmons’s status as “An American Orphan” has been discussed by Karen Hess and noted for example by Jan Longone, “Amelia Simmons and the First American Cookbook,” American Bookseller August 12, 1996. See also the fascinating study by Glynnis Ridley, “The First American Cookbook,” Eighteenth Century Life 23, no.52 (May 1999): 114-123. Ridley equates Simmons’s use of the word “orphan” to an anti-British relationship between the former parent, Britain, and the orphan child, America.
5 Amelia Simmons, American Cookery, or, The art of dressing viands, fish, poultry, and vegetables, and the best modes of making puff-pastes, pies, tarts, puddings, custards and preserves, and all kinds of cakes, from the imperial plumb to plain cake, adapted to this country, and all grades of life (Hartford, CT: Hudson & Goodwin, 1796), first edition, 3-4.
6 Simmons, American Cookery (Albany, 1796) second edition, 5-7.
12 See Janet Theophano, Eat My Words: Reading Women’s Lives Through the Cookbooks They Wrote (New York: Palgrave, 2002).
13 Lydia Maria Child, The Frugal Housewife (1829), 92. Note the title change to The American Frugal Housewife, 1832.
14 Mary Ellen Meredith manuscripts 1849-50, Volume 16, page 44, NYPL.
17 Glasse, 14.
19 Glasse, The Art of Cookery made Plain and Easy (1747) p. 9 versus 14 for complete instructions.
20 Glasse, 21.
21 Curiously, recipes for rabbit fell out of popularity (a topic for a later discussion on foodways and the marketplace); neither Simmons nor Child included them, although Simmons gave direction for how to select rabbits at market.

Nancy Siegel is Professor of Art History at Towson University. Her current project, Political Appetites: Revolution, Taste, and Culinary Activism in the Early Republic, investigates the intersection among American art and political/horticultural/culinary histories. Her work has appeared in Gastronomica, The Burlington Magazine, Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide, and she has been the recipient of research grants and fellowships from the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the American Antiquarian Society, Yale University, Winterthur Museum & Country Estate, the Massachusetts Historical Society, the Culinary Historians of Chicago, the New York Public Library, and the State of New York. This summer, her seminar, “Culinary Culture: The Politics of American Foodways, 1765-1900,” was at the Center for Historic American Visual Culture, American Antiquarian Society.
John Grossman has been a stalwart of the Ephemera Society of America since 1981. An accomplished painter of California landscapes, John assembled over four decades an outstanding and important collection of Victorian and Edwardian chromolithography, *The John & Carolyn Grossman Collection*, which now resides in the permanent collection of the Winterthur Museum and Library. His ever-expanding archive provided John with numerous lines of research, and inspired him to become an entrepreneur of vintage imagery. He successfully marketed giftware featuring images from his archive, ultimately through The Gifted Line, a company created and run by John and his wife Carolyn. David Mihaly, now Jay T. Last Curator of Graphic Arts and Social History at The Huntington Library, earlier served as curator for the Grossman collection.

Before John became an ephemerist (his first purchases of vintage paper came in 1974), he was a painter, one who loved to set up his easel at a carefully selected spot in the California hills and paint in the open air. His oil on panel paintings found their way into California Governor Reagan’s office, were presented to the Emperor and Empress of Japan and to the president of Mexico, and were eagerly collected. All of John’s many paintings now reside in personal, corporate and institutional collections. Appointed by Governor Reagan, John served as member, then Chairman, of the California Arts Commission from 1967 to 1972.

In the late 1970s, John decided to try his hand at creating a lithographic print rather than a painting. “Multiple original lithographic” prints in signed limited editions were trending at the time and he decided to explore that medium. John wanted to execute a print in the difficult manner of 19th century chromolithographic craftsmen: that is to say, by making a number of individual black and white plates (six, as it finally turned out), each to print a one single color. Such was the amazing talent of the chromolithographer of yore: able to draw with black crayon on litho stones while studying a full-color reference painting or drawing, to visualize in his mind’s eye how much of each color in each place would—when printed sequentially, each additional color printed over the preceding colors—produce a final image remarkably faithful to the original color reference piece. It was no mean feat.

John was by then deeply steeped in the world of chromolithography and owned many sets of vintage chromolithographic progressive proofs which showed each...
plate in its one color as well as the cumulative build-up to the final image, as each additional color was overprinted. He determined to attempt a modern landscape print in that same difficult fashion. John chose to work on aluminum plates rather than on traditional heavy lithography stones, given his need to work both at his own studio and at the workshop of important San Francisco master printer and lithographer Ernest F. de Soto, which was to make the print run.

John’s first step was to create a small reference watercolor sketch as a guiding master. Working from a color slide which he took of a selected spot in Marin County overlooking a small valley named Sleepy Hollow, he made the watercolor sketch while limiting himself to the use of only four tints: yellow, brown, blue and pale blue. John was working out, in those four colors on paper, a good approximation of a full-color image. (It is believed that chromolithographers did analogous analyses in their heads, pulling progressive proofs to check the developing image, reworking details as necessary, proofing again and again until achieving the desired final result.)

John made a “keyline” line drawing of his image’s details, at size, on illustration board. It was then photographically reversed by the de Soto shop and transferred onto aluminum plates, as a non-printing guide for the location and registration of shapes and areas of color.

John’s renderings for the final print’s individual colors, done in black and working in reverse, were drawn directly onto four aluminum plates. Each was proofed in its assigned color.

After pulling preliminary proofs, it was decided to add a fifth color, a light grey, to blend and soften certain areas in the middle and far distance. Eventually a light blue-
gray sixth color was also added in order to enhance certain elements. A final print proof in all six colors was signed off by John, and the limited edition run of 150 (plus two printer’s proofs and 24 artist’s proofs) was completed on March 4, 1980. When the print run was finished, all of the plates were then effaced.

John’s deftly-created print constitutes a rather unique 20th century accomplishment, inspired by the work of the 19th century chromolithographic craftsmen which John has so long admired.

Figure 5: John’s non-printing keyline drawing.

Figure 6: A proof of the areas to print in yellow, made from John’s drawing in black on an aluminum plate. A separate drawing was made on a separate plate for each of the six colors to be used, each proofed individually in the appropriate ink.

John Wesley Grossman, Jr. has been a member of The Ephemera Society of America since 1981. In 1991, John was the recipient of the Maurice Rickards Award presented by the Society for his far-reaching involvement in the world of ephemera. His research paper, Chromolithography and the Cigar Label, was presented in 1995 at the Society’s fifth conference in Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia. He gave a presentation, Labeling America, at the Society’s 25th conference in 2005, featuring the work of four generations of George Schlegel lithographers, active in New York between 1849 and 1971. John’s book Labeling America was published in 2011. Serving on the ESA board of directors, John proposed and established our Society’s speakers bureau, and helped formalize the process of evaluating and selecting Rickards award candidates.

John delivered the Maurice Rickards Memorial Lecture before The Ephemera Society, London, UK in June 2000, speaking on the content and significance of his collection. He has been a member of that group since 1980, as well as a member of The Golden Glow of Christmas Past (a Christmas collectors’ organization), The National Valentine Collectors Association, The Smithsonian Associates, the American Antiquarian Society, and the Planetary Society.

Figure 7: A test proof in black ink, from the plate that would be used to print one of the blue inks, pulled to check detail.

Dick Sheaff has been our ‘resident’ artist for over three decades, responsible for logos, mastheads, and brochures. A retired graphic and communications designer, he designed or art-directed over 500 U.S. postage stamps. He maintains an ephemera-related, non-commercial website www.sheaff-ephemera.com.
That little cake of Sapolio, lying half used on the kitchen sink has, perhaps the most wonderful advertising history of any commodity in the world.

— National Magazine 1913

In 1869 Enoch Morgan’s Steam Soap and Candle Company of New York City introduced a scouring soap in cake form they named Sapolio. A contemporary encyclopedia of American industries chose the Morgan firm to show how soap was made (figure 1). According to an instruction sheet, Sapolio was intended for use in general cleaning from pots and pans to floors and woodwork, but not for silver, gold, or glass. Over the next half century the Morgan firm used virtually every form of advertising available at the time to promote their soap, an investment that meant Sapolio, by 1900, was one of the country’s best-known commodities, sharing that distinction with Ivory and Pears’ soaps, St. Jacob’s Oil, and Royal Baking Powder. Improved transcontinental transportation in the post-Civil War era helped Sapolio reach wholesalers throughout the country. New ways to advertise, especially in the national magazines, helped make the Sapolio name known to consumers everywhere. Sapolio’s first small advertisements appeared in Frank Leslie’s Weekly Magazine in 1869 and in Harper’s Weekly in 1870. By the early 1900s quarter page and larger advertisements appeared in The Youth’s Companion, St. Nicholas, and other magazines.

In the 1850s and 1860s, some advertisers used what Frank Presbrey referred to as “iteration,” or repetition of a phrase, a practice that would lead to still familiar advertising slogans. In Sapolio’s case, the phrase was a bold face “USE SAPOLIO,” appearing after a “proverb” and an appeal for the product. Supposedly the Company had a trove of over 300 proverbs, including: “A bright home makes a merry heart,” “Dirt in the house builds the highway to beggary,” “Sloth is the key to poverty,” or even, “If at first you don’t succeed, Use Sapolio.”

In 1871 the Morgans spent $15,000 to promote Sapolio for heavy duty cleaning and Hand Sapolio (introduced that year) as a toilet soap (figure 2). Annual advertising rose to $327,615 by 1890. Success meant litigation with other entrepreneurs over trademarks and imitations. Many Sapolio advertisements, then and later, stressed the need for consumers to be sure they were buying Sapolio and not a poor copy in a similar wrapper - what one trade card called “Humbug.” (Figure 3)

The secretary of the Morgan firm, whose job description included the duties of advertising manager, was Alonzo Selling Sapolio, a Rhyme at a Time

BY MOIRA F. HARRIS

continued on page 22
settlement of Boston with cherubs scrubbing the capitol dome with Sapolio.

When the Gilbert and Sullivan opera, “H.M.S. Pinafore,” opened in New York City in 1878, manufacturers were quick to link their products with its popularity. The Morgan Company published a booklet titled SAPOLI-O-LIC, Selections from E.M.S. Pinafore (1879) including eight images of the major characters with pitches for Sapolio. Mentioned in the copy: the award won by Sapolio at the 1876 Centennial Worlds’ Fair, the million cakes of soap the Company had given away, and the advertising done by the Company “at enormous cost.” A list of Sapolio depots included both European and South American enterprises in addition to the North American ones. Pinafore was perhaps the perfect Gilbert and Sullivan work to choose as so many of its characters sing about polishing and cleaning aboard ship (figure 7).

The Company produced numerous brochures or small booklets such as the Harte Excelsior! (See figure 8.) There were The Modern Household Fairy (1890,) a metamorphic booklet; Oiliopas esu (1881) which, when spelled backwards, revealed an ancient Egyptian link to Sapolio; A Turkish Tale; and Gemini, a Sapolionic Tale (1877), featuring the adventures of Luck and Pluck. Pages with illustrations and brief poems usually faced advertisements for Sapolio. The trademark for the Company was a man looking at his reflection in the shiny surface of a pan; the name, Sapolio, usually appearing in upper-case sans serif block letters (figure 9).

Ward served as advertising manager of the Company until 1910. He then retired, partly due to ill health and partly from the press of other obligations. By then he was a partner in the advertising firm of Ward & Gow which controlled the streetcar card advertising and newsstand displays of all the elevated railways and subways in New York City. According to an interview he was then spending half days at the Morgan’s firm and half at Ward & Gow.

Poetry and Sapolio

Seeking an opportunity in advertising, artists and writers submitted samples of their work to the Company. Bret Harte (1836-1902), a California novelist and short story writer, chose to parody Longfellow’s poem “Excelsior!” which had already inspired a number of commercial endeavors – for which he was paid fifty dollars. Harte’s work was printed as a small brochure by the Donaldson Brothers Lithographers who produced many of the Company’s advertisements (figure 4). Harte’s parody changes the Alpine climber to a Sapolio billposter who carries a stencil plate rather than a banner in his ascent up the White Mountains. He paints the soap’s name on fences, walls, snow banks, rocks and luggage before he triumphantly reaches the top of the mountain (figure 5).

Trade cards printed for Sapolio included games, advertisements that also appeared in the brochures, and a mystery in four chapters (The Reformed Burglar figure 6). One card, titled “We Polish Up Our Dome with SAPOLIO,” celebrated the 250th anniversary of the
In addition to the brochures and games, Ward is remembered for several initiatives: very large size advertisements, the voyage of the *Sapolio* in 1892, street-car card advertising, and the Spotless Town campaign of 1900-1906. The large advertisements included a 1000 foot painting of the words, **“Sapolio Scours the World.”** which greeted people entering New York harbor; a large painted advertisement (from 1888) on a wall at Broadway and Morris Streets whose text read: “Used every week-day brings rest on Sunday. Man wants little here below, but Woman wants Sapolio;” and, in 1891, one of the earliest outdoor electric signs on a structure where the Flatiron building now stands.

**Sapolio Scours the Seas**

Like the *Pinafore* brochure, the voyage of the small boat *Sapolio* took advantage of a current event. Sponsored by the Morgan firm, Captain William Albert Andrews sailed his renamed 14.5 foot canvas-covered folding sloop from Atlantic City to Palos, Spain, in the summer of 1892 in honor of Columbus’ journey in the other direction 500 years earlier.2 He was fêted on arrival in Palos and, along with information about his trip, he gave Spanish officials material about Sapolio. According to an interview, he handed out 560 photographs of himself and his tiny ship. He and the *Sapolio* returned to America via London and the sloop was exhibited the following year at the 1893 Worlds’ Columbian Exposition in Chicago where a book based on the captain’s log, compiled by Artemas Ward, was distributed. After his arrival in Spain, a poem appeared in many city newspapers.

In Eighteen Hundred and Ninety-two,
With a captain bold (who was likewise crew!),
Went over the sea, bound eastward ho!
A lively boat called Sapolio.
Brave Andrews, with a stouter heart
Than even Columbus, from home did part,
And away to the Spanish land did go.

To scour the seas with Sapolio,
A gigantic task! But then, you know,
You can scour all things with Sapolio.

In many of the Company’s advertisements and in most of the brochures there were short poems, proverbs or “jingles” in the era’s terminology although they were not set to music. Frank Presbrey credits Bret Harte’s parody poem with leading the way to the jingle style in advertising. Earnest Elmo Calkins and Robert Holden wrote that:

These jingles had great popularity, which was partly because they had great publicity. They were quoted everywhere. They have been used as the basis for political cartoons in newspapers. They were kept running persistently in street-car cards for years until all people able to read were familiar with them.

**“Delivering the Goods”**

One illustrator whose work appeared in Sapolio’s advertisements was so proud of his efforts that he printed a small brochure showcasing his work. Elisha Brown Bird (1867-1943) was a Boston designer known for his posters, bookplates, and illustrations for book and magazine covers. Bird described showing his work to Artemas Ward who replied, “We want the best work that can be executed; if you can do work to suit us, in other words, if you can ‘deliver the goods,’ we can do business together, and you are the man we are looking for.” Bird included seventeen of his black and white designs for Sapolio advertisements that appeared between 1900 and 1912.

**The Charm of the Spotless Town**

In 1899 a recent Cornell graduate applied to Ward for a job in advertising. Ward suggested telling the story of a very clean small hamlet, perhaps in the Netherlands. James Kenneth Fraser wrote and illustrated the Spotless Town
series that became famous across the country. Everyone in the Spotless Town used Sapolio: the mayor, butcher, policeman, suffragette, cook, chef, doctor, grocer, maid, professor, and even the dog named, of course, Spot. Each person was shown with a related poem (figure 10). The Spotless Town characters appeared in print advertising, streetcar cards, and were offered as cardboard toys and with rubber stamps to create the figures. Ward wrote a three-act play based on the Spotless Town story that was offered to any church or school group that wanted to stage it. Other towns were inspired to promote cleanliness campaigns, to remake themselves as “Spotless Towns.” Ward brought the ads to a halt in 1906 but they were revived in 1913 and again in 1931, after both Ward and Frazer were no longer associated with the Company.

Franklin P. Adams, the literary critic, once reminisced in The New Yorker about the Spotless Town verses. To him they were “good-natured; their appeal must have been universal. Everybody who saw them remembers them and can tell you what they advertised. They were the Spotless Town verses and they were printed in large, readable type under pictures of gaiety and humor.”

The Spotless Town campaign was even imitated: the editor of the Indianapolis Star opposed the candidacy of his city’s mayor for re-election with a series of thirty Spotless Town-type poems and cartoons that appeared in his newspaper in September and October of 1905, each featuring an actual individual involved in city affairs. The result was the defeat of the incumbent, John W. Holtzman. The young cartoonist, Johnny B. Gruelle (1880-1938), went on to greater fame as the writer and illustrator of a series of books about his daughter’s rag doll, Raggedy Ann.

Despite the clever and attractive advertisements, sales of Sapolio decreased after 1905. Economist Donald Tull examined the Company’s sales and advertising figures and concluded that it was not a lack of advertising that affected sales. There had always been competition in the soap field. Ivory Soap, Bab-O, Bon Ami and Pears’ Soap made bar soaps. In 1905 Armour, Swift, and Cudahy introduced soap in flakes and, eventually, powdered cleansers which were easier to use although not necessarily more economical. Cudahy’s Old Dutch cleanser was supported by an ample advertising campaign. Sapolio did not offer a powdered cleanser in a sifter top container until 1936 - too late to change the market. The Company was first sold in 1949, and then in 1997 to Intradevo in Lima, Peru, a conglomerate still selling an extensive line of Sapolio-branded products, in liquids and powders, to South American markets.

During the fifty years after Sapolio’s entry into the marketplace, the Company became one of the most prolific advertisers in the country. They succeeded in making their soaps known and purchased until rivals surpassed Sapolio’s popularity. The large print runs of Sapolio ephemera enable collectors to find examples and scholars to study Sapolio messages. Sapolio brochures, books, or trade cards have been included in exhibitions focused on women’s work, ethnicity and racism, trans-Atlantic sailing, and Gilbert and Sullivan. Many libraries and museums preserve Sapolio materials; the largest, the Enoch Morgan’s Sons’ Company Collection C1098, is in the Princeton University Library.
Figure 8. Interior pages from *The Modern Household Fairy*, a metamorphic booklet with promotional poems that illustrated some of the household catastrophes that Sapolio could put right.

**Acknowledgments**

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**Endnotes**

1 *National Magazine*, whole number 38 (April-September 1913), 545.
2 *Harper’s New Magazine* of November 1892 included an advertisement with a woodcut of the tiny vessel, and the copy: “HURRAH! We had advertised on land so much, we sought the sea, and determined to scour that also with Sapolio. Alexander of old sighed vainly for more worlds to conquer. Sapolio had reached that point when, with 19th century enterprise, it undertook to scrub the seas, and did that with the same success which attends all its efforts. If Mars is inhabited, our next move will be in that direction.”

Moira F. Harris is an art historian (Ph.D., University of Minnesota) and a former member of the ESA’s board of directors. She is co-author of *Minnesota Modern: Four Artists of the Twentieth Century* (2015). Her current research interests include fans and the dress of Andean archangels.
New Members

We welcome the following new members who have joined the Society since publication of our Spring issue.

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Brian Cassidy, Bookseller
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Silver Spring, MD 20910

Lucinda Cockrell
3120 Downingville Road
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Nat DesMarais Rare Books
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