

# THE PORTAL

News from the Armstrong Browning Library

*"A wondrous  
portal opened  
wide..."*

Number 54 • Fall 2009

## ABL STAFF

**Rita S. Patteson**  
Interim Director &  
Associate Professor/Curator  
of Manuscripts

**Dr. Avery T. Sharp**  
Professor/Museum  
Coordinator  
and Research Librarian

**Cynthia A. Burgess**  
Associate Librarian/Curator  
of Books and Printed  
Materials

**Christi Klempnauer**  
Administrative Coordinator

**Kathryn Brogdon**  
Public Relations,  
Newsletter Editor, and  
Facilities Supervisor

**Martha Ervin**  
**Gertrude Kousz**  
**Mary Rodriguez**  
Library Hosts

*I trust in nature for the  
stable laws*

*Of beauty and utility.--  
Spring shall plant,*

*And Autumn garner to  
the end of time...."*

*A Soul's Tragedy — RB*

## Benefactors Day: A Celebration of Inspiration

Benefactors Day began under the directorship of Mairi Rennie in 1998 as a way to thank friends and donors—"Guardian Angels"—for their generosity. Rennie chose September as the time of celebration because it was also the Brownings' wedding month. Each Benefactors Day, the Library showcases acquisitions resulting from donors' gracious gifts over the past year and features a special program with a guest speaker.

This year's guest speaker, Joshua S. King, assistant professor of English, will discuss how he inspires his students through the resources of the Armstrong Browning Library. A specialist in 18th-century and 19th-century poetry, he received his Ph.D. at Harvard University in 2008 before coming to Baylor.

"Out of the jobs I interviewed for this is the one that most appealed to me," he says. "What seems ... unique to me is the Christian heritage and the fact that many of the scholars and teachers here wish to integrate their faith into their scholarship, teaching and life."

King sends his students to the ABL with a mission to develop knowledge from different kinds of sources and to think independently about the meaning of those relationships.

"One day, perhaps very soon, your textbooks for this class will be sold or misplaced; your lecture notes committed to the trash; and your memory of facts from exams irreparably blurred. But in my mind these things aren't what you should most want to retain," King said in notes to his English 2301 class. "Most essential are the habits and capacities that you have trained by careful reading and the desire for intellectual adventure which I hope our literary pilgrimage has stimulated."

Each semester, King charges his students to do one of several integration projects for their final grade. Some of these projects involve comparison, analysis or interpretation of literary works, art, artifacts or primary sources. Others involve an imaginary response to an author or a work on the class syllabus. All of them require original thought and careful reasoning.

"It's not just about students doing a mandatory tour [of the ABL] and then forgetting about it," he emphasizes.

Preceding the lecture and discussion, Carlos Colón will direct a string quartet in a medley of classical pieces with soprano Jennifer Carron performing. Carron previously delighted an audience at the ABL last May at the Browning Day concert. Two of the pieces will be performed for the first time: *Light* by James Bennighof, professor of music theory and Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Policy, and *Could Ye Bless Him?* by Carlos Colón, based on Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poem "A Child Asleep."

A reception will follow the program. This event is free and open to the public.



Dr. Josh King of the Baylor University Department of English is this year's Benefactors Day guest speaker.



# ABL Visiting Scholars Program Attracts Internationals

The 2009-2010 year brings a wide variety of scholars who applied for and received funds from the ABL Visiting Scholars program. They learned about the existence of the program in a variety of ways. Many heard about it from former recipients, while others saw the annual advertisement in *Times Literary Supplement*, or found information through the ABL Web site.

The first scholar came on June 12. Kirstie Blair, professor of English literature at the University of Glasgow, Scotland, ferreted out information for her forthcoming monograph *Form and Faith in Victorian Poetry and Religion*. Her month-long research culminated with a discussion of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's early religious opinions, particularly in relation to her increasing rejection of the "forms" of the Anglican Church, and her development into a self-consciously "dissenting" poet. Blair used material from the ABL's collection of theological pamphlets and tracts, plus some of EBB's manuscript poems, to show how her views changed



Kirstie Blair of the University of Glasgow, Scotland, was the most recent ABL Visiting Scholar.

over time and discussed the extent to which they were in line with trends in dissenting thought in the 1830s and 1840s.

Five more scholars are scheduled, with two set to arrive in September—Piergiacomo Petrioli, professor of art history from Siena, Italy, and Scott Lewis, editor of *The Brownings' Correspondence*, London. Petrioli will analyze the connection between William Wetmore Story's literary works and sculpture, focusing on Browning's quotations, ideas and style, by consulting

letters between the Brownings and the Storys. Lewis will spend a total of five months (September-November, April-May) researching the Armstrong Correspondence archives for material to include in a new biography of Dr. A.J. Armstrong. It is scheduled to be published in 2012. Lewis will also be the guest speaker for the annual Browning Day lecture on May 7 and will discuss his findings.

October brings William Gibson, director of the Oxford Centre for Methodism & Church History at Oxford Brookes University in England, who will use a newly formed collection at the ABL, the 19th-Century Theological Pamphlets. His topic of research and his current project, which is to advance The British Pulpit Online, fit beautifully with the campus-wide emphasis on Baptist heritage this year. In November, Sirpa Salenius, an independent scholar, arrives from Florence, Italy. She will study American authors who visited Italy in the nineteenth century. The ABL's resources regarding Katherine de Kay Bronson and Edith Bronson will be of particular interest to her. Josie Billington, Honorary Fellow at the University of Liverpool, England, is coming in May 2010 to study the manuscripts of Elizabeth Barrett Browning as part of her research into the poet's characteristic habits of composition and creative procedure.

The Visiting Scholars program is designed to provide access to the Library for those who reside outside the immediate area. Currently an endowment supports the program, but it is only large enough to benefit five or six researchers a year. Each applicant is required to submit a research proposal, formal letter of application, curriculum vitae, and two confidential letters of recommendation. Priority is given to those whose research will most benefit from the holdings of the Armstrong Browning Library.

For more information, visit the Armstrong Browning Library Web site at [www.browning.org](http://www.browning.org) under the Scholarly Resources link.

## Save the Dates

### Baylor Libraries

**November 12:** Ferguson-Clark Lecture, 7 p.m., Waco Hall. Guest lecturer is Max Lucado, author of *Fearless: Imagine Your Life Without Fear*. Patron Reception following at Truett Seminary's Great Hall. For ticket information, visit [www.baylor.edu/library/authorseries](http://www.baylor.edu/library/authorseries) or call (254) 710-7249.

### Armstrong Browning Library

**September 17:** Benefactors Day, 2:30 p.m.

Josh King will explain how he inspires his students through the resources of the ABL. Composer Carlos Colón will present string and vocal music prior to the presentation. Reception following. Free and open to the public.

**October 24:** Baylor Homecoming at the ABL. Open House, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

**November 19:** Baylor Early Music Ensemble Concert, 5:30 p.m. Dr. Jann Cosart will direct students performing music from the Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque eras. Free and open to the public.

**December 6–8:** Baylor Chamber Singers Christmas Concerts, 3 p.m. Sunday and 7:30 p.m. Monday and Tuesday. For ticket information, call the Baylor University School of Music box office at (254) 710-3571.

**February 13, 2010:** Valentine Memories with Dave Tanner, 4 – 6 p.m. If you missed his performance last year, be sure to attend this one. Reception following.

For more information and updates, please visit [www.browninglibrary.org](http://www.browninglibrary.org) or contact Christi Klempnauer at (254) 710-4968.

# ACQUISITIONS SPOTLIGHT

## Internet Sleuth Melvin Schuetz Assists in Building ABL Collections

Melvin H. Schuetz, a Library Information Specialist in Baylor's Moody Memorial Library Access Services, is an avid book collector whose hobby of searching the Internet for interesting items has turned up some great "finds" for the ABL in recent months. Some of these he presented to the Library as gifts. In other instances, he alerted the Library curators about an item of possible interest, allowing them to access its validity, decide if it was a good acquisition for the ABL collections and, if so, to make the purchase.

In July 2009, Schuetz was responsible for the acquisition of two additions to the ABL's important Browning Library collection, books owned either by the poets or members of their immediate family. First, he discovered, purchased and gave to the ABL *Four Great Teachers: Ruskin, Carlyle, Emerson, and Browning* by Joseph Forster (1890), a volume that is inscribed by the author to Robert Barrett ("Pen") Browning, the poets' son.

Surprisingly, within a few weeks he alerted the curators to another Browning library book, which was then purchased by the ABL for the collection. *Defensio Regia, Pro Carolo I* (1649), an anonymously published work by Claudius Salmasius, is a defense of deposed and executed Charles I, which was commissioned by his son Charles II while in exile. This hitherto unrecorded Browning library book can be linked to the 1913 Sotheby's sale of the Browning Collections in London by a bookplate indicating that it came from the library of Robert Browning. The identical bookplate is present in several other volumes owned by the ABL, as well as other collections, and was most likely affixed by Howell & Co., a London dealer, who purchased several lots from the sale. Robert Browning, who wrote the English Civil War drama *Trafford*, had a keen interest in the history of the era.



(l. to r.) The small, vellum-bound *Defensio Regia, Pro Carolo I* (1649), the cover of the marriage register facsimile, and Forster's inscription to Pen Browning in *Four Great Teachers*.

In addition, within the past few months, Schuetz has discovered, acquired and presented several unusual items to the ABL: a copy of the A. J. Armstrong biography *Through Heaven's Back Door* by Lois Smith Douglas, inscribed by both Armstrong and Douglas; an additional set of plaques of Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning by May Dean Smith, unique to the ABL collection in that they are mounted in wooden frames; and an additional facsimile of the entry made in the St. Marylebone Church marriage register by Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning. Schuetz's earliest gift to the ABL was in 1997 when he presented another book from the Browning's library which, interestingly, also includes the presumed Howell and Co. bookplate.

## Now Available For Purchase

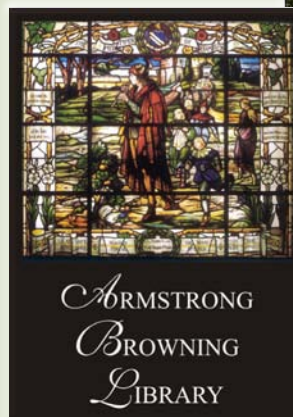
### *Armstrong Browning Library Gift Magnets*

Dimensions: 3.5" x 2.5"

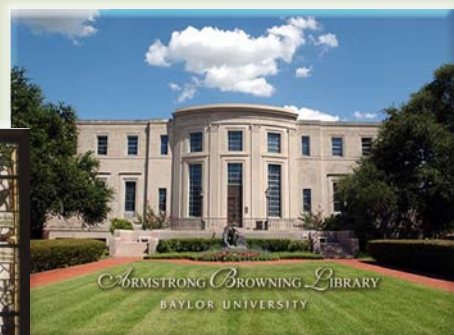
Cost: \$4.00 each

Plus Shipping & Handling  
(Texas residents add 8.25% tax)

To order magnets, please call  
Kathryn Brogdon at (254) 710-4960  
or email [Kathryn\\_Brogdon@baylor.edu](mailto:Kathryn_Brogdon@baylor.edu).  
You can also visit the ABL Gift Gallery  
Weekdays, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Saturdays, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.



ARMSTRONG  
BROWNING  
LIBRARY



ARMSTRONG BROWNING LIBRARY





**BAYLOR**  
UNIVERSITY

*ARMSTRONG BROWNING LIBRARY*

One Bear Place #97152 Waco, TX 76798-7152

Location: 710 Speight Ave. Waco, TX 76706

Phone: (254) 710-3566 Fax: (254) 710-3552

Web site: [www.browninglibrary.org](http://www.browninglibrary.org)

NONPROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
  
BAYLOR  
UNIVERSITY

 Please Recycle

## Become a Guardian Angel Today

The patron organization for the Armstrong Browning Library is called The Guardian Angels, in reference to Robert Browning's poem, "The Guardian Angel: A Picture at Fano." Browning was inspired to compose the poem after viewing Guercino's painting of the same name that hangs in Fano, Italy. In 1946, Dr. A.J. Armstrong, founder of the Browning Collection at Baylor University, initiated this organization of supporters and friends. The Guardian Angel organization is open to anyone interested in helping to build the Library's collections, which are used by Browning scholars from around the world. Your membership ensures the continued growth of the Armstrong Browning Library and its programs.

### Benefits of Guardian Angel Membership:

- receive invitations to all of the Library's events
- be a special guest at Benefactors Day
- receive the Library's bi-annual newsletter
- receive a 10% discount in the ABL Gift Gallery

### Cost:

- Annual Membership—\$50.00
- Lifetime Membership in The Guardian Angels—\$1,000.00

To become a member or renew your membership, indicate "Guardian Angel Payment" on the note line of your check made payable to BAYLOR UNIVERSITY and mail to: Christi Klempnauer, Armstrong Browning Library, One Bear Place #97152, Waco, TX 76798-7152.



*L'Angelo Custode* by Guercino  
(Giovanni Francesco Barbieri),  
1640 Civic Museum, Fano, Italy