

DANISH MILLIMETER BINDING. We continue with our "how-to-do-it" series of reviews covering presentations at the latest Guild of Book Workers Seminar on Excellence in Tuscaloosa last September. This excellent session was presented by John Hyltoft (see Figure 1) who was one of the first to use this binding technique. Here is what GBW had to say about the session:

"The name of the technique derives from the fact that only a few millimeters of leather or vellum are seen on the cover of the finished book. The binding serves three purposes: 1. Preserves the book through sound construction. 2. Creates harmony between the book's literary content and the physical binding. 3. Produces an aesthetical unity between materials colors and technique. The final result should be a well constructed binding combining the elements of good design, elegance and an economic use of costly materials. The presentation will start with a short history of this binding style and a sketch of the innovative Danish designer and bookbinder in the 1940's, Henrik Park.

John Hyltoft was trained at the Danish government's Institute for Technical Teacher Education with certification in graphic arts and social studies, Anker Kysters Eftf. (Purveyor to His Majesty), and the Graphic College, Copenhagen. Certification with Medal of Honor. Full leather binding techniques studies under Professor Ignatz Weimeller. Former Head of Conservation, Smithsonian Institute Libraries. Since 1993 established as an independent contractor in Virginia."

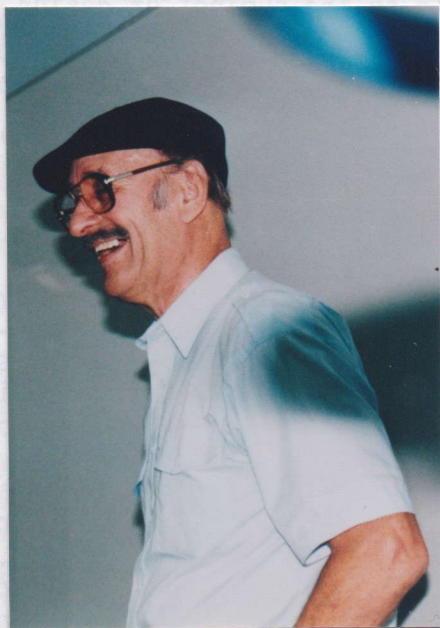


FIG. 1

John started by telling us the world thinks of Danes as having lovely long blond hair; and since he didn't want to distract us he would wear a hat, which he did. (John has very little hair at all, to speak of!) In another session he said he wore the hat because of the movie (video taping?). You can make up your own minds.

"The content of a book is most important, but the binding is also significant and should mesh with content." All proportions should be in fine balance. "If the bookbinder loves the book - it will show in the finished product and in a unique style." But it's important to remember we are all part of a tradition. "We are standing on each other's shoulders." Nobody started things by themselves.

Sometimes John hears remarks about strength of millimeter binding but says fine binding is constructed for gentle treatment. "You can't compare silverware to Tupperware - which claims you