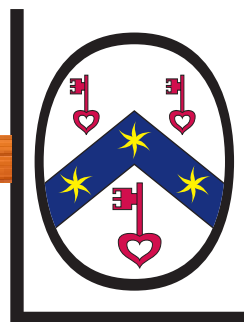


# SHELFMARKS

The Newsletter of the Research Group on Manuscript Evidence

Volume 2, Number 1. Winter 2022–2023



## The Director's Cut

by Mildred Budny

Welcome to **Issue 2** of *ShelfMarks*, the **Newsletter** and **e-Newsletter** of the Research Group on Manuscript Evidence (**RGME**) [1]. Since **Issue 1**, other tasks and activities claimed attention, while we awaited the opportunity, and a Co-Editor, to resume this serial publication. Now we have a Team.

Issue 1 (as Volume 1, Number 1 for Autumn 2014) formed part of our multiple celebrations for an **RGME Anniversary Year** [2]. Issue 2 (as Volume 2, Number 1 for Winter 2022–2023) revives the series of *ShelfMarks*, as we complete two years of successful activities — including several revivals — and look toward the **Year 2023**. We also prepare for our **2024 Anniversary Year**, with 35 years as an international scholarly society founded in England, of which 25 years are as a nonprofit educational corporation based in New Jersey.

Between Issues 1 and 2, we greatly developed the scope of our redesigned **Website** [3]. It has active blogs both on *Manuscript Studies* and our activities at the *International Congress on Medieval Studies (ICMS)*. It describes our projects and publications, offers galleries of images, and reports our events.

As contributions to narrating the RGME's **History**, recording its present, and leading toward its future, these reports show the run of Research Group Seminars in England and our series of **Symposia** in the years before our incorporation as a nonprofit organization, as well as many events since then [4]. Our website also provides open access to many of our **Publications**, available for download [5] — along with our own multi-lingual digital font **Bembino** [6].

Besides continuing with sponsored and co-sponsored sessions as well as other activities at the **ICMS** [7], developments since Issue 1 included organizing **Symposia** and other events, for which we began to publish illustrated **Booklets** [8]. New genres for expression joined the repertoire:

- 1) **Research Booklets** and **Program Booklets** for selected events such as our **Symposia** [9].
- 2) **Interviews** [10] and **Surveys** (see **Page 7** here).
- 3) A **Gallery** of specimens (mostly unpublished) for *Watermarks and the History of Paper* [11].
- 4) **Episodes** for *The Research Group Speaks* [12].

In the first disruptions of the Covid pandemic, when our 2020 Spring Symposium had to be cancelled, we made sure to publish its Program Booklet, as a souvenir for its intentions, homage to its contributors, and a promise to return [12]. Next, as bibliographic and other lockdowns continued, we turned attention to our blog on *Manuscript Studies*, to report many research discoveries which had awaited their moments to write up and announce [14].

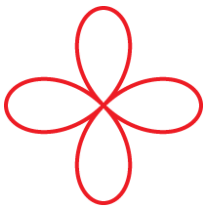
Responding to widespread changes, in 2021 we began the online series on *The Research Group Speaks*. In 2022, we resumed our Symposia, but online, with Spring and Autumn Symposia dedicated to the **Theme** of *Structured Knowledge*. With the Autumn, a Program Booklet appeared [15].

In this spirit of renewal, we revive our Newsletter, and look to 2023 with the **Theme** of *Materials and Access* [16]. We invite you to join our activities.

<sup>1</sup> The endnotes [1], [2], etc., on Page 6 provide the links.



Photograph © Mildred Budny



$n = 2$

## The Bouquet List: A Gathering of Books

— “A Rose by Another Name is a Bouquet of  $n$  Circles” (*Anonymous*)

by Mildred Budny

$n = 4$



This Feature of our Newsletter showcases a selection of books of interest to the RGME. Generally, they are made by, or partly by, RGME people; some belong to, or draw upon, RGME events. The first Installment of this series, in Issue 1, describes the reasons for the flowery title, inspired partly by the genre of **florilegia** (“gatherings of flowers”) in medieval and other sources [17].

As a recap, the title alludes to **florilegia**, which collect extracts of texts from various works, as compilations, anthologies, “Miscellanies”, or “Commonplace Books”. In mathematics, the term **bouquet** — sometimes defined as a ‘**rose**’, also known as a “bouquet of  $n$  circles” — yields a “topological space” by “gluing” together a collection of circles (such as loops) along a single point [18]. The gathering here represents a sampling of interests which converge and overlap.

Given the length of time since the first Installment, I propose, as a sort of ‘catch up’, to celebrate the variety in a group of books which have appeared in recent years. From the moments that they arrived (some with presentation inscriptions by their authors or the honoree), I continue to turn to them, and admire.

In a ‘bouquet’ of six books, five emerged from long-term research by RGME Associates. Three emerged

from their authors’ Ph.D. dissertations. Four focus upon a single manuscript in the setting of its relatives and its period. The others are collaborative. One, by two scholars, both RGME Associates, examines and translates an influential magical text which circulated in several languages. Another presents a collection of essays by multiple scholars on medieval manuscripts and other media in honor of a RGME Trustee, with RGME Associates among the contributors and co-editors.

The authors of the monographs and the translated edition gave previews of stages in their work for RGME events. We heard their presentations at our Symposia, their papers in our sponsored or co-sponsored sessions at the **ICMS**, and their interviews for RGME Episodes in *The Research Group Speaks*, when they told about the processes giving rise (or ‘birth’ with labor pains) to the books — or at more than one of these occasions.

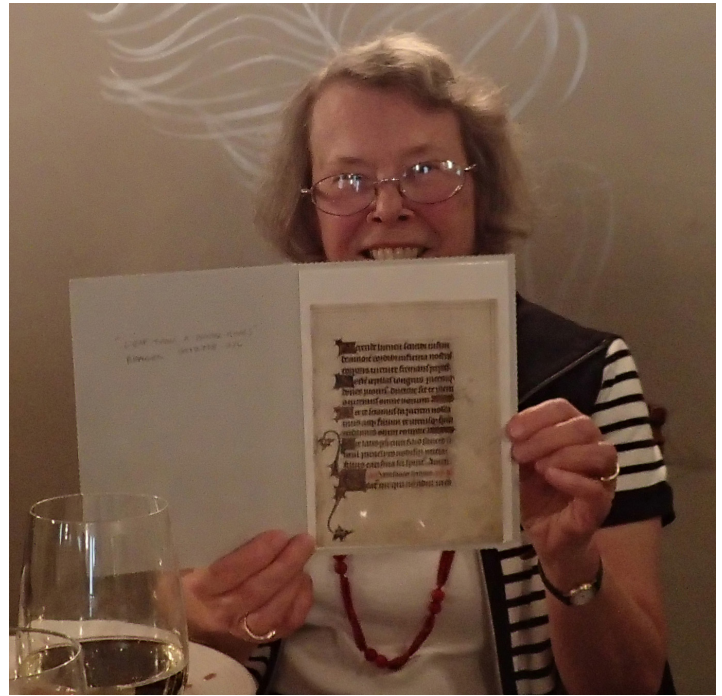
Gladly, I remember introducing the authors then, as they presented aspects or stages of their research interests and discoveries. It has been a pleasure to learn from their reports, listen to the discussions as the audiences responded with questions and feedback, and then welcome the published results.





Above: "Wreath of Blooms at the Door"

Right: Adelaide Bennett holds up a manuscript leaf, a gift upon retirement. Photographs © Mildred Budny.



*des 13. Jahrhunderts. Spiel als Modell guten Entscheidens* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022). ISBN 978-3-11-076440-6 [23].

6) Donncha MacGabhann, *The Book of Kells: A Masterwork Revealed* (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2022). ISBN 978-9-46-426123-3 [24].

The *Tributes* to Adelaide Bennett, a long-time friend as well as colleague and RGME Trustee, comprise a celebratory 'wreath' of scholarly papers focused upon a multitude of medieval works of art and their audiences. As the *Preface* observes (page 5):

The fondness and respect that Adelaide has commanded, both professionally and personally, illuminates all the essays in this volume. Contributed by colleagues and friends from every stage of her long career, they constitute a generous reflection of her impact upon and reach within the field of medieval art history.

The volume was also to include my paper on a medieval image (drawing especially upon knowledge from my Ph.D. dissertation). Adelaide gladly gave advice and suggestions for reading about the import of images of the Virgin Mary in ecclesiastical settings. Our conversations were both enjoyable and illuminating as the writing continued. At a late stage, without seeing the text (next on the list), the collector withdrew the permission

The gathering of 'flowers', in order of publication:

- 1) Gregory T. Clark, *Art in a Time of War: The Master of Morgan 453 and Manuscript Illumination in Paris during the English Occupation (1419-1435)* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2016). ISBN 978-0-88844-197-3 [19].
- 2) *Tributes to Adelaide Bennett Hagens: Manuscripts, Iconography, and the Medieval Viewer*, edited by Pamela A. Patton and Judith K. Golden (London and Turnhout: Harvey Miller Publications, 2017). ISBN 978-1-909400-79-5 [20].
- 3) Celia Chazelle, *The Codex Amiatinus and its Sister Bibles: Scripture, Liturgy, and Art in the Milieu of the Venerable Bede* (Leiden: Brill, 2019). ISBN 978-90-39013-3 [21].
- 4) Dan Attrell and David Porreca, *Picatrix: A Medieval Treatise on Astral Magic, translated with an Introduction* (University Park: Penn State Press, 2019). ISBN 978-0-271-08212-7 [22].
- 5) Michael A. Conrad, *Ludische Praxis und Kontingenzbewältigung im Spielebuch Alfons' X. und anderen Quellen*

(given at the outset) to publish the object, because, he said, of his uncertainty as to what any next owner might decide about any publication. I had to abandon the work. It was too late to complete another subject, waiting in the pipeline, that Adelaide and I had often conferred about and that would suit the theme of the book; it later found another place.

Memorable in this story is the warm generosity of Adelaide's advice and encouragement, in a friendship spanning many years. That same spirit of Adelaide's collegial friendship can be seen to infuse the many papers in the collective volume in her honor.

Turning to the four monographs in our 'bouquet', I begin with two books on books whose pages — the very manuscripts — I have turned, and not only for a brief moment. Memorable books they are, too.

Celia's exemplary and far-reaching book (2019) on *The Codex Amiatinus* and its two (now fragmentary) *Sister Bibles* is a joy to see. Years ago, as part of my long research on the Anglo-Saxon Bible manuscript (and its context) which formed the focus of my Ph.D. dissertation (London, 1985) [25], I had the opportunity, on two separate trips, several years apart, to examine the *Codex Amiatinus* directly, in Florence, where it resides in the magnificent edifice designed by Michaelangelo, the Biblioteca-Medicea Laurenziana. Afterward, I could see it again repeatedly, through the glass case, on display as a centerpiece in an exhibition at the British Library — in the company also of 'my' manuscript, still a beauty in my eyes.

My Ph.D. manuscript is, by my (and others') reckoning, one of the closest extant parallels to the achievement of the *Codex Amiatinus* among Anglo-Saxon and other products. Long have I respected the interest and fascination of the *Codex Amiatinus*, and attended to others' descriptions, but that book did not call to me in the same way as 'my' manuscript had done, and continues to do. While I had learned already from the pages of 'my' manuscript (and learned in its steady company to hone) the integrated approach to manuscript studies that forms a core tenet of the RGME [26], I waited for the right person to find (or be found by) the *Codex Amiatinus* and listen carefully to its full, complex story. Then, I could see that, in Celia, the *Codex* had met its fitting 'match'.



Her own words in the *Acknowledgments* describe the process that I remember: looking over her shoulder, as it were, as she explored the pages and challenges of the *Codex*, and found her way ever more surely. Describing her 'debt' to me, Celia says (page xv):

Over the past six and more years, she has drawn on her vast expertise in Anglo-Saxon palaeography and codicology to advise me on multiple aspects of *Amiatinus* and other manuscripts discussed in this book. The questions I ask about those sources, the clues I seek to answer them, and the scholarly strategies I utilize in the following chapters are fundamentally indebted to her guidance and instruction. Furthermore, she has patiently read and given detailed, valuable criticism on drafts of every chapter, and sometimes multiple drafts . . .

Celia's description evokes my own experience of following along with her in the journey which shaped her book. I remain grateful for the experience, with the chance to engage in the conversation as she pursued



*Left (Page 4):* Entrance to Saint Peter's Church, Monk-wearmouth of Wearmouth-Jarrow, home of Bede (672/3 – 735). Photograph 2022 by Alex Woolf.

*Right:* Donncha MacGabhann at work examining letter-forms of the Book of Kells, gathered in extracts — in photographic copies — from the printed facsimile (1999). Photograph courtesy Sidestone Press.

*Below:* Dan Attrell and David Porreca at their Book-Signing at the **ICMS**. Photograph © Mildred Budny.

*Lower Right:* Michael Allman Conrad and his new Book. Photograph © Stefano Santangelo.



clearer understanding of that magnificent witness to Anglo-Saxon book production and medieval Bibles.

Next, Donncha MacGabhann's book results from long-term dedication to the Book of Kells as a monument and marvel of calligraphy, artistry, and book-production scarcely equalled. Trained as an artist, with a career in teaching, Donncha turned to study the manuscript closely for his Ph.D. dissertation (2016), and then to prepare his own book about it. His interview/conversation for the RGME in November described the process and results [27].

Similarly long processes shaped the other books in our 'bouquet', and similarly we have had occasion to witness stages along the way.

The choices for this Installment of *The Bouquet List* began with Gregory Clark's clear, persuasive book which harvests a long and comprehensive process of study, beginning with his Princeton Ph.D. (1988), and returning (after twelve years on other subjects),

"to re-invent my dissertation as a book-length monograph on the artist within the larger context of Parisian book-painting . . ." (page vii).

Over the years, I often recall Greg's eloquence at our RGME Symposium at Princeton University in 2014, as he described encountering, and endeavoring to overcome, the obstacles for access to years' work recorded on obsolete technology and for their transfer to newer formats — and doing so with resourcefulness and perseverance [28]. From the moment Greg's inscribed book arrived, I can turn to its example, to learn and to admire.

Just as the staging points along the journey to a book experience various weathers, from contemplation through embarkation, travel, detours, delays, pauses, and arrival, so do the makers' senses of accomplishment, at long last, with the completed book, in pages ready to turn, have various moments. Fortunate we are, as ready readers, to see their sense of joy, and perhaps relief, as well as quiet, reflective satisfaction [29] [30].



## Links to Explore

- [1] <https://manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/shelflife/shelfmarks-newsletter>
- [2] <https://manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/2014-anniversary-reflections/>
- [3] <https://manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/>
- [4] <https://manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/events-list/>
- [5] <https://manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/profile/publications/>
- [6] <https://manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/bembino> (*now in Version 1.5*)
- [7] <https://manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/congress-activities/>
- [8] <https://manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/events-list/>
- [9] <https://manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/profile/publications/>
- [10] <https://manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/radio-star/> (*The first of many*)
- [11] <https://manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/watermarks-and-the-history-of-paper/>
- [12] <https://manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/the-research-group-speaks-the-series/>
- [13] <https://manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/2020-spring-symposium-save-the-date/>
- [14] <https://manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/manuscript-studies> *with Contents List:* <https://tinyurl.com/bdh7ftk3>
- [15] <https://manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/2022-symposia-on-structured-knowledge/>
- [16] <https://manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/2023-spring-and-autumn-symposia/>
- [17] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/florilegium/>
- [18] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bouquet\\_of\\_circles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bouquet_of_circles) *and* <http://mathworld.wolfram.com/Rose.html>
- [19] <https://www.brepols.net/products/IS-9780888441973-1>
- [20] <https://www.brepols.net/products/IS-9781909400795-1>
- [21] <https://brill.com/display/title/54031>
- [22] <https://www.psupress.org/books/titles/978-0-271-08213-4.html>
- [23] <https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/9783110764727/html?lang=en>
- [24] <https://www.sidestone.com/authors/macgabhann-donncha>
- [25] <https://tinyurl.com/52wu4u9k>
- [26] <https://manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/> (*"Mission"*)
- [27] <https://manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/donncha-macgabhann-on-the-making-of-the-book-of-kells/>
- [28] <https://manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/2014-recollections-symposium/>
- [29] <https://tinyurl.com/2t7bhx9z>
- [30] <https://manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/falling-in-love-with-a-source-an-interview-with-michael-allman-conrad/>
- [31] <https://manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/profile/publications/>
- [32] *Contact:* [director@manuscriptevidence.org](mailto:director@manuscriptevidence.org)
- [33] *Contact:* [rgmesocial@gmail.com](mailto:rgmesocial@gmail.com)
- [34] <https://manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/contributions-and-donations/>

# The 2022 RGME Participants' Survey

by the Editorial Team

Preparing for the various activities and publications, both revived and new (including our Newsletter), the RGME carried out two **Surveys** in 2022, at the suggestion of Jessica L. Savage, who generously shared her experience with the processes and benefits of surveys at the Index of Medieval Art (formerly of Christian Art) at Princeton University.

First, we surveyed the Members of the **Editorial Committee** (formed in early 2022), then **RGME Participants**, including RGME Officers, Associates, and Volunteers, and visitors, friends, well-wishers, and newcomers. Jessica drafted the questions, added our suggestions, helped to circulate the surveys, and reported the results of their responses to the **Meetings** of the Editorial Committee in August and November. Now, we share the results with you — with our thanks to Jessica and advisers, to Barbara Williams Ellertson and N. Kivilcim Yavuz, who prepared the Minutes for those two Meetings, and to all the **Respondents**.

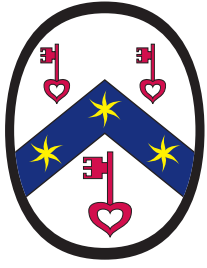
To sum up (from Jessica's Report and Kivilcim's Minutes), the Results of the 2022 RGME **Participants' Survey**: There were responses from 60 **Participants**.

- Most surprising aspect is the broad research areas of their interests; most repeated in the responses are paleography, marginalia, codicology.
- As for interests within manuscript and book studies, history of language, literature, music, and so on, the top two are: history/culture and history of art. Clearly, these are topics to think about for future events, which, to begin with, should include art history, and perhaps decoration as well as marginalia.
- In the free text areas, interest was expressed especially in the “ugly”, iconography, and provenance.
- Respondents said they want to hear more about: Islamic/Coptic/Ethiopic manuscripts/cultures; also, non-common scripts (such as ogham, futhark).
- 21 people are interested in presenting at an RGME event.
- Others are interested in publishing (15 responses), writing a blog post (13), and helping with administration and planning (11).
- 37 people have not presented at an RGME event before; 22 have.
- Suggestions from respondents include: more visibility for the RGME on social media; committee structures modelled on some other organizations (such as the Bibliographical Society of America); and more of our same.
- Also notable: In the comments, the RGME received much thanks, praise, and congratulations.

We heartily thank the respondents for their interest and suggestions. As we follow up with the offers to contribute to our activities, publications, and structure, we invite you to join them in 2023 and beyond.

Word Cloud: Responses  
2022 Editorial Committee Survey.  
Prepared by Jessica L. Savage.



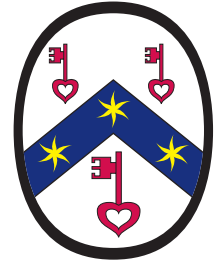


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## ShelfMarks: The RGME Newsletter

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The Research Group exists to apply an integrated approach to the study of manuscripts as well as other forms of the written or inscribed word, in their transmission across time and space. The **Newsletter** rejoins our other **Publications** [31], both online and in print, with the aim to report activities, work-in-progress, research results, questions, and news.

This Newsletter is compiled, edited, and partly written by Mildred Budny. Please send items, announcements, conference or exhibition listings, and other notices to the **Editor** [32]. You could subscribe here: [33].

We invite you to support our Mission with **Contributions and Donations** [34]. **Our Annual Appeal** prepares for the New Year's events, publications, and new projects.