

After 41 years in the printing business (starting at age 18), Bob Giles #782 faced retirement. What to do in retirement? What else does a person do who is a third generation printer?

He starts a print shop—this time in his home.

For over six years B&S Letterpress (that's Bob and Sharon—Bob's wife) has been doing numbering, scoring and perforating for local printers. He also does some letterheads, envelopes and a variety of other jobs including crash imprinting. About a year ago he started printing wedding invitations for an internet-based designer. He said it worked out well as she does all the design work and customer relations so that he doesn't have to deal with the "bridezilla" directly. He said she usually provides the



paper and he enjoys working with some of the more high-end paper he gets.

Being he has no automatic presses, Bob said his press runs tend to be in the one to a few thousands range but he admits to a few jobs that ran as high as 12,000 but now he usually refuses any jobs over 5,000.

“My favorite type of work is something that I can set myself from the Linotype and handset rather than polymer,” Bob said. He



Form ready for the press.

stated that he recently printed a label where he set the type and composed a box and grid using the miter machine, the broach machine, table saw and put borders around the job. Bob confessed that he really enjoys the challenge of putting forms together in lead.

All is not work in the print shop. Bob lets on that he works from two to six hours a day and that even when there isn't a job to do, you'll probably still find him tinkering around in the shop. Not all work is commercial as he finds time to put out his APA pieces.

As you might imagine, Bob's shop is not the typical "hobby shop." Among his equipment is a model 31 Linotype, three C&P's—8x12, 10x15 and 12x18. He also has a Vandercook SP-15, a Ludlow plus an Elrod machine (not working yet). The shop also contains six cabinets of handset type.

Bob says he's not looking for any more equipment now because



Bob at his Model 31 Linotype.



Two of Bob's three platen presses.



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welcomed. The publication is published as the spirit moves the editor but a monthly schedule is hoped for. [Contact the editor.](#)

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of space—but he also adds: “...I’m a sucker for anything letterpress, so who knows what I’ll buy next.”

In the shop he has used polymer, copper and zinc engravings and his Mac computer has helped in a few instances with some jobs. “Philosophically I have no problem with using modern means to print letterpress,” Bob states, but “I just prefer to do it the old fashioned way,



Bob Giles

the way I was taught.”

When asked what he thought about the possible demise of letterpress—back came a loud and clear “phooey!” “I think there is a timeless quality of the look and feel of a properly printed letterpress piece,” he opined. He expanded: “I don’t think that quality will ever be completely unnoticed in the world. Most are too busy or indifferent to notice, but there will always be some of us who will appreciate beautifully printed letterpress pieces.” Then he added, “Even if it’s just those of us in APA!”

We did mention that Bob is a third generation printer and no doubt was born with ink in his blood. His grandfather was a printer in South Dakota and Oregon and owned and worked for numerous newspapers during his life.

Bob’s father worked for his father at all the various newspapers. The last newspaper his father worked at was the *Corvallis Gazette-Times*. In 1969 when the *GT* went cold type/offset his father started his own small print shop and until his death in 2004, worked the craft every day.



Vandercook SP-15.



Lockup area.



Paper cutter ready for action.



Linotype magazines.

Bob started his career at the *Corvallis Gazette-Times* in 1962. He did all the jobs associated with producing a daily newspaper in hot metal.

His career took a dramatic change in 1969 when the newspaper went cold type and converted to offset.

He said the transition to cold type was easy for him. "I was young and eager to embrace the new technology," Bob quipped. He confessed that when he looks back, it seems that he should have been more concerned about the demise of letterpress.

During this time he was introduced to a wide variety of cold typesetting equipment. He learned paste-up and was a markup man.

In 1974 he left Corvallis and moved to Eugene and worked at the *Register-Guard* for five years. His work at the *Register-Guard* was as a substitute but with his union card he found work every day.

In 1978 Bob said he got married and he left the *Register-Guard* for more stable work. He worked for a small print shop who were traditional letterpress printers but who had begun the transition to cold type. Bob said it was the best of both worlds for him. He helped the firm move into cold type but they still had letterpress equipment, which he could operate. Working there rekindled his love of letterpress. Unfortunately, Bob said it was a brief romance.

After about five years the company fell on hard times and sold out to one of the largest, and oldest printing companies in town. Bob came with the sale!

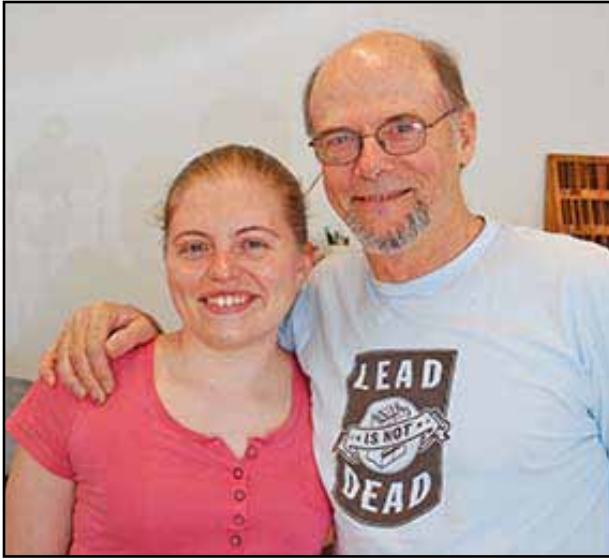
He said that when he got there everything was printed offset but they were still setting type by hand and Linotype and then making repro proofs. With Bob's past experience in cold type, it wasn't long before they converted their typesetting methods. He became a leader of the typesetting department and spearheaded the transition to computers. Bob learned all the new programs so that he could teach others. He confides now that it was indeed a challenging time for him.

He worked for them for 19 years and saw all the changes that were rapidly taking place in the printing industry. He retired in June 2003.

Bob came across APA on the [Letpress List](#). He enjoys the bundles and says he's "blown away" by some of the fine work that members do.

It's obvious that besides promoting and using his letterpress equipment, he isn't opposed to helping others get started in letterpress.

A few years ago a girl came to his door and asked if he was the one who printed letterpress. She was looking for some help to get started in letterpress. She had some ex-



Kristin Walker, one-time apprentice of Bob's and now a letterpress entrepreneur.

perience in working with letterpress at the University of Oregon and had just graduated with a degree in Printmaking. She worked with Bob some in his shop and he taught her many things regarding the ins and outs of letterpress. Later he said he gave

her a Kelsey to start and she finally graduated to an 8x12 C&P. Now she is printing cards, invitations, etc. and he said her work is very good.

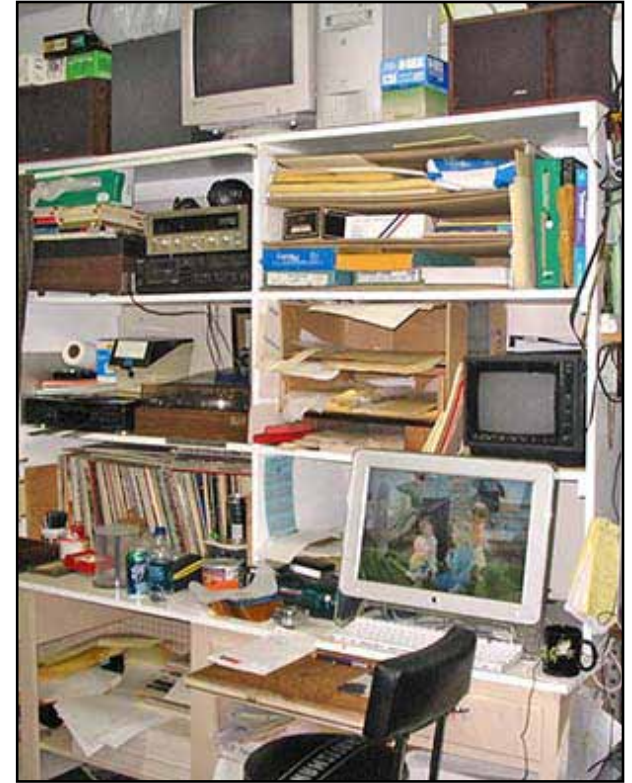
When not in the shop, Bob and his wife, Sharon have an active family life. They have raised six children and now have grandchildren to spoil...20 of them!!!!

He indicated that at some point he hopes to drop the commercial end of his printing business and just concentrate on printing things for himself but for now he's happy with the mix of work.

He confessed that he's no purist when it comes to printing, but he's happy to be a country printer like his grandfather and father. He does like to try new things and experiment with unconventional ideas.

Of his current printing efforts, "For me, this is not work, it's fun!" Bob stated.

BOB'S EMAIL



Bob's "electronic area" of his print shop.



HAMILTON WOOD TYPE AND PRINTING MUSEUM CELEBRATES 10 YEARS

By JEFF PULASKI, #835

At the end of this month, Hamilton Wood Type and Printing Museum in Two Rivers, Wisconsin, will celebrate their first 10 years. With a collection of over 1.5 million pieces of wood type, Hamilton is the only museum dedicated to the preservation, study, production and printing of wood type.

Jim VanLanen, a member of the Two Rivers Historical Society, founded the museum in 1999 and intended it to be a working museum. Some of the collection is under glass, but a majority of the type is available to be inked up in the museum's printing facilities. Over the years, many designers, printers and historians have trekked to Two Rivers to put the type to work once again.

A number of events will mark the celebration: Kartemquin Film's Type Face will be shown at 9 pm on May 29th. On May 30th from 10 am until 6 pm, there will be an Open House at the museum and the Tenth Anniversary Commemorative Poster Show.



Norb Brylski demonstrates the pantograph, a device that cut wood type from plywood patterns.

The show will feature work from letterpress printers from across the country and will continue through Labor Day 2009.

Although the dates have not been confirmed yet, the museum is also planning a weekend printing workshop with Jim Sheraden from Hatch Show Print in Nashville, Tennessee. The cost of the workshop is \$400. More information about all of these events can be found on the museum's [website](#).



In addition to all the wood type, thousands of patterns for making new wood type are in the Hamilton collection.



Just a few of the cases of wood type that make up the Hamilton Wood Type and Printing Museum's collection.



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This month I want to salute a few people who do a lot to make APA successful.

First and foremost, our mailer, Don Tucker. I am sure you all know by now Don, had some heart problems recently. He is doing very well, and still telling his crazy stories. To prove his heart is in the right place, during his illness, he was only worried about getting the bundle out on time. When your bundle comes on time every month, send Don a Thank You note! Don, we are all grateful for your help and your good health!

The next person is a past mailer, past president and a good friend- or at least he keeps telling me that! Ernie Blitzer our Treasure Gems coordinator. Ernie prints the reminders the informative pages and binds and mails Treasure Gems. Thanks Ernie, great job. Please stop telling everyone you know me!

Number One! No not Obi-Wan, but

Mike O'Connor, our secretary treasurer and editor of this journal. Mike emailed me from the Cayman Islands, to let me know that the APA is a sound organization, and he may not be back for a while. Mike, we love the Journal, and all your hard work you do crunching those numbers. The TARP money you asked for was denied- your hard work is our stimulus.

Okay, so how do we know how many pieces you printed this year? Who knows the correspondence over the past 50 years? Who is the all knowing of the APA? David L. Kent, the archivist, that's who! David works behind that big curtain to assure the members are credited properly for their contributions to the bundle. David is like those accountants on the award shows. "And the APA goes to...David Kent." Thanks David.

To my vice- president, Ezma Hanschka, thank you for being there. I know times are a little tough for you—keep your head up—thank you.

When you hear the words, Dynamic Duo, you of course think of Jim Daggs and Pat Leary. Don't you? They are at all the Gooses wearing masks and capes. Well not so—they are the two guys who put together the APA Member Directory. Pat and Jim have been designing, setting, printing the directory for some time now. There is no charge to the APA for their material, labor or

time. Thanks guys, you're the best. By the way, is there any truth to the rumors that the new directory has a centerfold of you two? I hope you used invisible ink.

So when you get to meet these fine folks, give them handshake and a "thank you," they deserve it.

Some other folks working hard for you are the members who will be running the Wayzgoose's this year and the following years. Support them! In fact one of them may be you one day.

