

Ian explained that he would be showing us examples of modern novelty books then tracing their production back in time to the origins of each particular style. We were shown many examples, differing greatly in the complexity of their individual construction.

John Locke 1632-1704 was the first person to recognise that no real literature existed specifically for children. The only examples were of 'horn books' which were small flat disks illustrating perhaps the alphabet or Lord's Prayer. Written on (precious) paper, the face was protected by a finely processed film of melted horn. He devised flash cards aimed at making learning more fun and we were shown ornate examples produced circa late 18thC/early 19thC, some of bone or ivory, others of card.

England was not the only country to develop reading material at this time, the French and Dutch very rapidly produced almost identical products, as did the Americans. The quality of continental European printing was superior to ours so that although the design and story would be English, the printing was done abroad.

Initially stories would be based on religious themes and classical stories and plays. The books had flaps on the illustrations allowing pictures to be altered as they were lifted or replaced. ...usually 4 flaps per illustration but later 6 flaps were introduced that gave a multiplicity of options.

George Dean 1822-1891 was a specialist in the production of novelty book that often poked fun at adults and authority...something children the world over love to do, eg a gentleman riding his fine horse as it passes a young lad. Lift the flap to reveal the lad has whipped the horse, which bolts and unseats its rider.

Dean's scenic 3D peep-show books were popular from mid 19thC...a concertina of 6-8 pictures held together by paper hinges. Held horizontally in both hands allowing the user to view a 3D picture through a small aperture in the top card as the remaining pictures dropped downwards.

Ian brought many examples and we saw views of The Champs Elysees, The

Great Exhibition, a fox hunt, theatre performances and many others beautiful examples.

Other styles of books included 'tumbling tablets', slot books, and hole books (a face on the back page showing right through, with a progression in the picture as each page is turned).

Doll dressing books with either a transferable head that slotted into different bodies, or later paper clothing to attach over a basic body-form, were popular throughout the 19thC. Even malleable faces were produced so that expressions could be altered.

Moving pictures were made possible with tabs to pull, and early pop-up 3D pictures came at the end of the century, firstly developing in complexity but later simplified to make production more economical.

The production of novelty books has continued into the 21stC, some even claiming to be new innovations, but Ian was able to show samples of similar designs produced 100, 200 and even 250 years ago.

He is working towards producing a book on the subject but (disappointingly) can't give a date when this will happen!

Ian was thanked for an absolutely fascinating and beautifully illustrated talk.

#### Future Meetings:

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| 23 March | The new South Yorkshire Heritage List – Sarah Cattell from South Yorkshire Archaeology Service.                                   |
| 13 April | AGM followed by a Review\Future of Trolley History Group, looking back over the last 14 years and considering the group's future. |

