

## A Rare Manuscript Rebound



Photo by Robert Kozloff

Ann Lindsey, Head of Conservation, reconstructs the binding of the 16th-century John Adam Service Book (in photos above, below and on the reverse).

**M**OST CONSERVATORS NEVER HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY to reconstruct a 16th-century Byzantine binding from scratch. For Ann Lindsey, Head of Conservation at the University of Chicago Library, that opportunity came in February, in connection with a major project to digitize all 68 New Testament manuscripts in the Edgar J. Goodspeed Manuscript Collection.

The role of the Conservation program at the Library is to maintain collections over time, ensuring that they can be used by current scholars and future generations. Most of the manuscripts in the Goodspeed Collection, which date from the 5th to the 19th centuries, have required only minor

treatments, if any, to be handled safely during the digitization process. But the John Adam Service Book, which was originally handwritten in Greek in the 15th to 16th century and later rebound in the 1850s, was received by the Library with a missing spine covering. Any further handling of the manuscript by scholars would have damaged its original pages. To facilitate both digitization and further use of the book by scholars, Lindsey disbound and rebound the book.

Most European books from the 15th and 16th centuries were bound in the Western style, sewn from start to finish on top of cords, with each stitch going through all of the book's pages. In contrast, to construct Byzantine bindings, bookbinders cut a notch in the back section of each page. They then

sewed the first section of pages to a wooden board, the second section to the first section, the third section to the second, and so on, tucking the thread into notches and securing it with link stitches.

A handful of linen threads are all that remain of the John Adam Service Book's original binding—but their length, notches, and material provided the evidence Lindsey needed that the original binding had been Byzantine. She therefore constructed the new binding in the Byzantine style, using quarter sawn hardwood front and back boards, decorative grooves, and a goat skin covering.

Lindsey greatly enjoyed the woodworking and leatherworking that the project required, but the stitching was her favorite part. "The sewing is the process where you start putting it back together," she said. "It's the heart of the book—and its literal backbone. It's what makes a book work well."

*Learn more about the rebinding of the John Adam Service Book and the digitization of the Goodspeed Manuscript Collection online at [bit.ly/1H4zhdt](http://bit.ly/1H4zhdt). Digitized manuscripts are available at [goodspeed.lib.uchicago.edu](http://goodspeed.lib.uchicago.edu).*

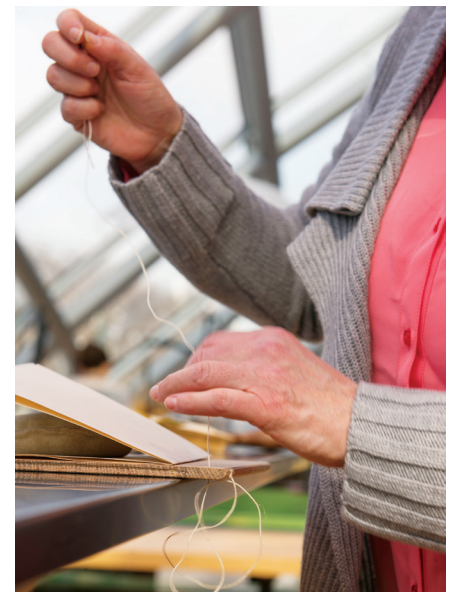


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# For Current and Future Generations

## *The Library Society Fund for Conservation*

THE CONSERVATION OF OUR EXTRAORDINARY COLLECTIONS is of vital concern to the Library and an important part of our work for the University and broader scholarly community. Whether an item we hold is a 5th-century papyrus fragment, a 16th-century illuminated manuscript, or a 21st-century zine or artist's book, it is the Library's role to conserve it for use by current and future generations.

Doing so requires extensive training in the art and science of conservation. As our feature story demonstrates, a conservator needs to know how paper, ink, and bindings have been created across centuries and continents in order to determine the best way of protecting or repairing an item that has been damaged. Conservators must also know what environmental conditions are best for preserving our collections and how to respond when emergencies occur. In addition to her master's degree in library science, our head of conservation, Ann

Lindsey, has a certificate of advanced study in conservation from the University of Texas and gained experience at the Huntington Library and the University of California, Berkeley, before she came to Chicago to lead our Library's conservation efforts. Her staff has also obtained the specialized training needed to conduct their work.

As a result of the continuing efforts of our conservators and other preservation staff, Library collections are available for scholarly research, can be studied by students, and can be

digitized and discovered online. In the coming years, they will work on projects ranging from the repair of some of the Library's 470,000 maps to the treatment of books from the Western Codex Manuscript Collection that are deteriorating due to factors as varied as acidic materials, heavy patron use, and iron gall ink degradation.

Under Ann's expert guidance, the Joe and Rika Mansueto Library's Conservation Laboratory has been equipped with state-of-the-art equipment. But the Library's collections are vast, and conservation projects such as these are completed by staff as funding permits. The Library Society Fund for Conservation helps us to undertake such work. Many generous donors from the Library Society have contributed to this endowed fund over the years, understanding the importance of preserving our rich collections.

Please consider a gift to the Library Society Fund for Conservation so that we may continue to preserve our collections for the scholars of today and tomorrow. For more information or to make a gift, please contact Melanie Levy at [mrlevy@uchicago.edu](mailto:mrlevy@uchicago.edu) or 773.702.7695.

Thank you for your consideration and support. I hope to see you soon at the Library.

Yours,



Brenda L. Johnson  
*Library Director and University Librarian*

For more information about the Library Society, visit [lib.uchicago.edu/e/alumnifriends](http://lib.uchicago.edu/e/alumnifriends)

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## Library Society Welcomes New Chairman

IN JANUARY 2015, Michael Thompson was named the new Library Society Chairman, succeeding Stephen M. Stigler, Ernest DeWitt Burton Distinguished Service Professor, Department of Statistics and the College, and Member, Committee on Conceptual and Historical Studies of Science. The Library Society is grateful to Professor Stigler for his service and heartily welcomes Michael in his new role as chairman.

Michael is actively involved with the University of Chicago Library. He began serving on the Library Visiting Committee in 2013 and has been a member of the Library Society since 2006. Michael has been an avid book collector for more than 40 years and recently joined the Board of Trustees of the Newberry Library. He is a past president of the Caxton Club of Chicago, the current Vice President of the Fellowship of American Bibliographic Societies, serves on the council of the Bibliographic Society of America, and is a member of the American Printing History Association and the Grolier Club.

Michael is the proprietor of Boreas Fine Art, a purveyor of rare books and fine art. Previously, he spent many years working as an attorney, specializing in domestic and international transactional work, and was Executive Vice President and General Counsel of SBC International Development Corporation.