Charleston Conference 2013-Issues in Book and Serial Acquisition

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If you are interested in leading a discussion, acting as a moderator, coordinating a lively lunch, or would like to make sure we have someone to cover some topic you are interested in, you have until July 31, 2013, to let us know. The Conference Directors include — Beth Bernhardt, Principal Director (UNC-Greensboro), Glenda Alvin (Tennessee State University), Audrey Powers (UF Tampa Library), Anthony Watkinson (Consultant), and Corrie Marsh (College of Charleston). You can reach them at: beth.bernhardt@uncg.edu, glenda.alvin@tnstate.edu, audrey.powers@lib.usf.edu, anthony.watkinson@topenworld.com, and kstrauch@comcast.net. Alternatively, you can send ideas to any of the Conference Directors listed above.

A new year has begun, and with it, my return to Against The Grain, following an absence beginning in October. This issue’s column began as “catching up…” — observations collected over the period that didn’t make it into column numbers produced during my absence. It has coalesced, however, into less of a laundry list and more of just a few pointed comments.

My absence was the result of fusion surgery to repair three vertebrae in my lumbar spine. The doctors did a marvelous job, horsing things into alignment, restoring correct spacing, and liberating nerves that had been mashed in the maelstrom of colliding forces. Recovery, while a long, tedious process, has been far better than the projections that had been sitting in the “if I ever manage to get the time” category for seemingly forever. For one, I re-read Churchill’s history of the Second World War. I had read it once before, and that was in my twenties. I got a lot more out of it this time.

An aside: the impact of encountering Churchill’s writing once again was enormous! The man could use the language! Modern form seems laughably crude in comparison, especially after a period of immersion in Churchill’s information-dense, nuanced, meaty prose! And most astonishing of all: Churchill, it seems, managed to write his monumental works on his own. That he could do this and keep up with his email, his tweets, his blog, and his texting is astonishing! (uh....)

I also listened to music, watched some great movies, old and new, and revisited some favorite 1960s television. Basically, I consumed the output of others, in several media, and tried to keep from going mad from inactivity. I wonder where they get the money to develop all this great stuff.

Then, long about six weeks post-op, it became time to start thinking about a gradual, very cautious, very tentative return to activity. As I began to reach outward again, I quickly discovered that even my very light laptop was still far too much to handle. Just the act of lifting it from a bedside table provided an immediate lesson in the limits of portable computing.

Pelikan’s Antidisambiguation — Catching Up...

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