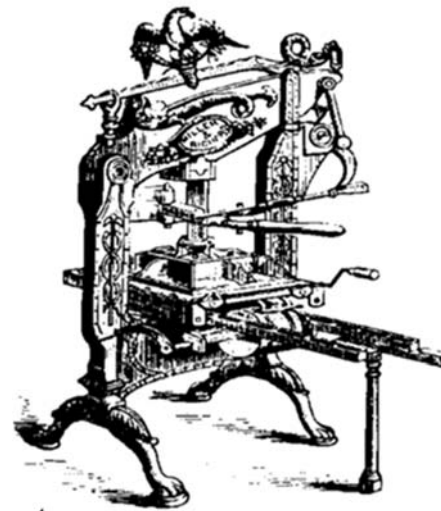


The day will be all about art and your own creativity, to be impressed on paper by you using a historical Columbian Iron Hand Press.

Presented by:

Willy Coenradi, award winning letterpress printer



The Columbian Hand Press
Dendrocalamus Press
Auckland, New Zealand
www.dendrocalamypress.net



Visit: www.prideinprint.co.nz

Enjoy a rare opportunity to have a unique printing experience, printing your own art work on an antique Columbian Iron Hand Press.

A little bit of history about the Columbian Iron Hand Press:

Designed and first built by George Clymer of Philadelphia in 1813 the Columbian is considered to be the most glamorous hand press of all time with its patriotic name, lavish ornamentation and the American eagle serenely balanced on top of the counterpoise lever - all reflecting the great American surge of nationalism after the Revolutionary War nearly 250 years ago.

It was the first successful all-iron press at a time when the united states within the Union were few in number but proud of its united status as a democracy.

The press did not find favour in the US though as it was considered too expensive and heavy and only about 30 were made there. George Clymer left the US for Britain in 1817.

The following description of the Columbian press appeared in 1825 (*Hansards Typograpia*): “If the merits of a machine were to be appreciated wholly by its ornamented appearance, certainly no other press could enter into competition with *'the Columbian'* ”.

“No British made machinery was ever so lavishly embellished. We have a somewhat highly- sounding title to begin with and then which way so-ever our eyes are turned, from head to foot, or foot to head, some extraordinary features present themselves”.

“On each pillar of the staple a caduceus (An ancient Greek or Roman herald’s wand) of the universal messenger, Hermes, alligators and other dragon-like serpents emblemize, on the levers the power of wisdom – then, for the balance of power (we rude barbarians of the old world make mere cast-iron lumps serve to inforce our notion of the balance of power) we see, surmounting the Columbian press, the American Eagle with extended wings, and grasping in his talons Jove’s thunderbolts, combined with the olive branch or Peace and cornucopia of Plenty, all handsomely bronzed and gilt, resisting and bearing down all other power... “

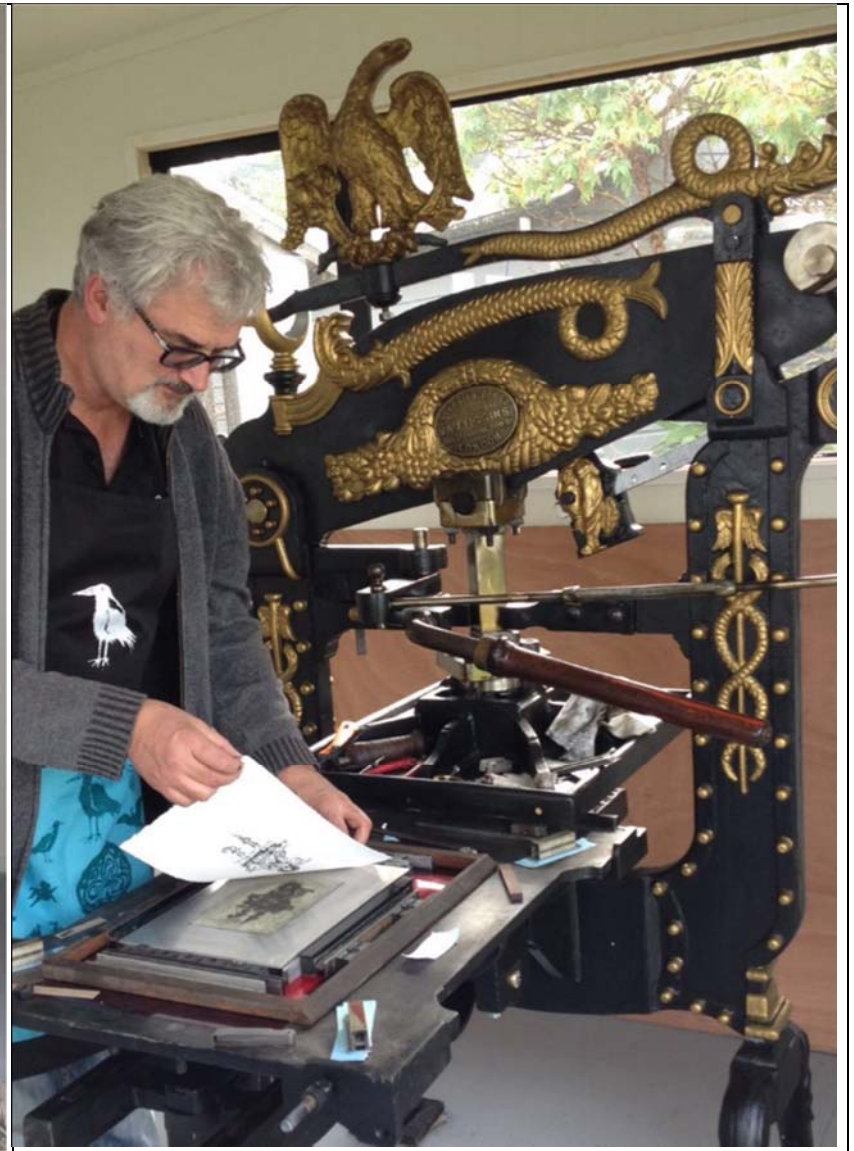
All these facts add up to acclaim the Columbian press as the most outstanding contribution to press manufacture in the world, as no other single machine has dominated for this period of time or generated as much interest as the ornate Columbian.

The Columbian Iron Hand Press you will be working on was made by F&J Figgins of Ray St, Farringdon Road, London in 1880 – serial number 3680. It is one of only two working Columbians in New Zealand we are aware of, the other one being at the University of Otago which is not available for printing by the general public.

According to the latest information there are approximately 425 Columbian Iron Hand Presses left in existence in museums, institutions or private owners and collectors worldwide.

This particular press was recovered in 2016 from Toronto, Canada and was in a very poor condition. It was restored here in Helensville, New Zealand, by Willy Coenradi and Bob Alexander (who generously spent many hours undertaking the engineering work required to repair and make replacement parts for the press).

The press, like many items of that era, was 'made to last' and weighs in at a hefty 900kg or so, and the size of the press is measured by the old English uncut book and paper size standard known as "Royal", i.e. 19" x 24".



The Columbian Iron Hand Press manufactured by V&J Figgins of London in 1880 here at the studio in Helensville.

The Experience Workshop

Programme:

Prepare for the day:

- We are printing with black ink, (which will not wash out of clothes!), although aprons are available we would suggest you wear old clothes.
- Please bring with you a **line drawing measuring 100mm x 150mm or an idea for one.** (This will fit on a standard postcard-size card and will fit on the sheet of linoleum you will be supplied. You will be drawing your subject onto thin white paper, then tracing through carbon paper to transfer your drawing onto the sheet of linoleum, then cutting away the surrounding material to leave your subject drawing which can then to be printed on the Columbian press.)
- It is important to understand that the material you will be cutting away will not take ink and print, instead what you will leave and not cut away will print.
- If you want to print text your drawing must show this in mirror image, i.e. 'wrong way reading' in old printers terms, as opposed to what is written here, which was called 'right way reading'. You can achieve this by turning over the white paper before tracing on to the linoleum.

Example of a suitable line drawing



Parking:

- Parking is available on site.

Programme for the day	
<u>Time</u>	<u>Programme</u>
9:30am	Introductions, Welcome and Housekeeping.
10:00am	Tutorial on lino cutting, then trace your own drawing and carve it onto a provided postcard-size piece of linoleum for printing. Morning tea (provided).
12:00pm	Lunch break (Your own arrangement).
12:30pm	<p>Off to the print shop in Rimmer Road for a brief guided tour of the letterpress equipment collection followed by the history and workings of the Columbian Iron Hand Press and a demonstration on setting up the linocut.</p> <p>Each participant will then be able to print up to 15 copies of their linocut artwork on the Columbian press to take home.</p> <p>Your tutor will print one copy of your artwork on A4 handmade paper for you to take home, ready for framing.</p> <p>We can take an 'action photo' of participants printing on the press and print this on A4 photo paper as a memory of the day before you leave.</p>
Approx. 4:30pm	End of experience workshop!