

The WASHINGTON RARE BOOK GROUP
invites you to join us for a curator-led exhibition tour by

HELENA WRIGHT
on “Picturing Words: The Power of Book Illustration ”

at the National Museum of American History
(Constitution Ave. between 12th and 14th Sts. NW)
on Wednesday, February 11, 2009.

Gather at 11:30 a.m.

Tour at 11:45 a.m.

Lunch at 12:30 p.m.

The purposes and power of visual images in printed books are an endlessly fascinating study, and this exhibition at the Smithsonian Institution Libraries explores them as sources of inspiration, information, and influence. From 13th-century Persian manuscripts, to 16th-century herbals and the earliest printed anatomical illustrations, to 19th-century trade catalogs and children’s ABC books, illustrations reach audiences more directly and effectively than text alone. They can bring words to life and explain complicated ideas at a glance, and even convey non-verbal messages beyond the text. Since printed images themselves are affected by the processes by which they are produced – wood-cut, intaglio, lithography, and photographic reproduction – the exhibition includes a video demonstrating each of the first three of these methods.

Helena Wright, Curator of Graphic Arts at the National Museum of American History, curated the exhibition with her assistant Joan Boudreau, drawing on the wide-ranging collections of the Smithsonian Libraries and the Museum’s Division of Graphic Arts. Helena will lead a talking tour through the exhibition and answer questions from the group.

Since many of us have limited time for such a mid-day event, we will not have a lengthy catered lunch after the tour but rather will adjourn to the cafeteria in the National Museum of American History, where those who are able to stay on can choose their own meal from the soups, salads, hot entrees, and desserts on offer. As a result, we do not need payments in advance, but we do need to know who will be coming to the talk, so please RSVP to Leslie Overstreet by **Friday, Feb.6**, by telephone (202) 633-1176 or e-mail overstreetL@si.edu .

We will meet at 11:30 in the Constitution Ave lobby of the National Museum of American History, located on Constitution Ave. between 12th and 14th Sts. NW. There is parking on the Mall, but it’s often full by mid-day. On the Metro the Museum is about equidistant (one block) from the Smithsonian and Federal Triangle stops on the Orange & Blue lines, and just a little further (three blocks) from the Archives/Navy Memorial stop on the Yellow and Green lines.

We hope to see you on the 11th !!

Leslie Overstreet
President, WRBG