

Citation metadata

Author: Basil Stuart-Stubbs
Date: Spring 2004
From: Papers of the Bibliographical Society of Canada (Vol. 42, Issue 1)
Publisher: Bibliographical Society of Canada
Document Type: Book review
Length: 788 words

Main content

Article Preview :

Nicholas A. Basbanes. A Splendor of Letters: The Permanence of Books in an Impermanent World. New York: Harper Collins, 2003. 444 pp.; \$29.95 (US) (hardcover). ISBN 0 06 008287 9.

Nicholas Basbanes tells us that with this volume he has completed a trilogy that he began in 1995 with *A Gentle Madness*; *Bibliophiles, Bibliomanes, and the Eternal Passion for Books* and continued in 2001 with *Patience & Fortitude*; *A Roving Chronicle of Book People, Book Places, and Book Culture*. With 80,000 copies in print, *A Gentle Madness* must be the most popular book about books ever written, and its popularity is deserved, for Basbanes is a gifted story teller and prose stylist possessed of an unflagging curiosity and comprehensive knowledge of books, booksellers, collectors, and libraries. Readers even mildly afflicted with bibliomania have found his books irresistible.

A Splendor of Letters departs from the formula of its two predecessors, which were constructed around tales of legendary collectors, collections, and libraries. The central concern of this latest book is the survival of print itself. The subtitle, *The Permanence of Books in an Impermanent World*, has an optimistic ring to it, and Basbanes does indeed believe that the book...

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Stuart-Stubbs, Basil. "Nicholas A. Basbanes. A Splendor of Letters: the Permanence of Books in an Impermanent World." *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of Canada*, vol. 42, no. 1, 2004, p. 101+. Accessed 7 Nov. 2020.

Gale Document Number: GALE|A117989753

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In *A Splendor of Letters*, Nicholas A. Basbanes continues the lively, richly anecdotal exploration of book people, places, and culture he began in 1995. If you would like to have your order charged in Canadian dollars, please visit [BookOutlet.ca](#). The selection of books is the same! Shop on [BookOutlet.ca](#) Stay on [BookOutlet.com](#). This website uses cookies. Welcome! This website uses cookies to give you the best, most relevant experience. By using our website you consent to all cookies in accordance with our [Privacy Policy](#). I Agree Read

more. COVID-19 Update:[Click here](#) for information about shipping delays. *A Splendor of Letters: The Permanence of Books in an Impermanent World*, HarperCollins (New York, NY), 2003. *Every Book Its Reader: The Power of the Printed Word to Stir the World*, HarperCollins (New York, NY), 2005. Contributor to other periodicals, including the New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Los Angeles Times, and Smithsonian. Contributor of bi-monthly column "Gently Mad" to Fine Books & Collections magazine. Nicholas A. Basbanes had been working as a reporter for many years when the management at the Worcester Sunday Telegram decided to cut costs by eliminating the newspaper's book section, costing Basbanes his long-standing job as book review editor. He was forty-seven years old at the time, married, and had two children.