

In conclusion, printing with the handpress can be a completely satisfying craft—even an art—for both professionals and hobbyists when knowledge and desire yield a product of high quality.⁷

A question of conservation

Possibly one of the most valuable things we have learned at Hawk Press during the production of *The Death of Captain Cook*, is simply this, that, fine printing with the handpress in New Zealand is possible. We have suitable equipment, some suitable types (not many), we have access to overseas handmade papers and there are hand-binders who can execute designs to the level of the rest of the production. Another 'contextual' matter is the increasing interest in papermaking by hand throughout New Zealand at present. Although this activity is largely confined to printmaking purposes, I feel it is only a matter of time before someone can be persuaded to take on the challenge of making paper suitable for printing. It is also true that we seriously lack a decent variety of bookbinding cloths, but a certain amount of Kiwi ingenuity can I believe come up with appropriate alternatives, short of importing special stocks.

However, the most important problem for any handpress printer in this country is the ever-diminishing availability of letterpress equipment, in particular, type. Handset type is broadly of two kinds: Founder's or foundry type which is manufactured by a type-founder, is relatively hard, and will accept considerable use over a very long period, and Monotype which is not cast at a foundry, but on machines which printers can acquire and on which they can do their own type-casting. The difficulty with the monotype caster is that its furnace cannot take enough heat for sufficient levels of copper and antimony in the type's composition to make it hard enough for a decent life. For fine printing, Lewis Allen suggests that a single quantity of monotype should be used only for two books at 150 copies each, and then be scrapped. All monotype available in New Zealand is relatively soft, and with careful use I have found that two years is about the life of a fount if it is being used in book work. No founder's type is cast in New Zealand. Additionally, the number of business firms who supply monotype to the trade in New Zealand has shrunk horribly in the last 10 to 15 years—I know of only two definitely, one in Christchurch and one in Auckland, though there may be one or two others. There are a few firms who cast their own monotype, but who don't supply the trade.

When it comes to printing presses, it has to be acknowledged that some actions by printing firms have been unhappy to say the least. Presses have been destroyed to inhibit 'competition'; some have been dumped (like the Albion I heard of in Palmerston North a few