



Printing Etchings:

*How a printmaker does it on
a Mini Halfwood Press*

By Bill Ritchie

An original *Insect* etching. This MiniBook online shows you how it was made.

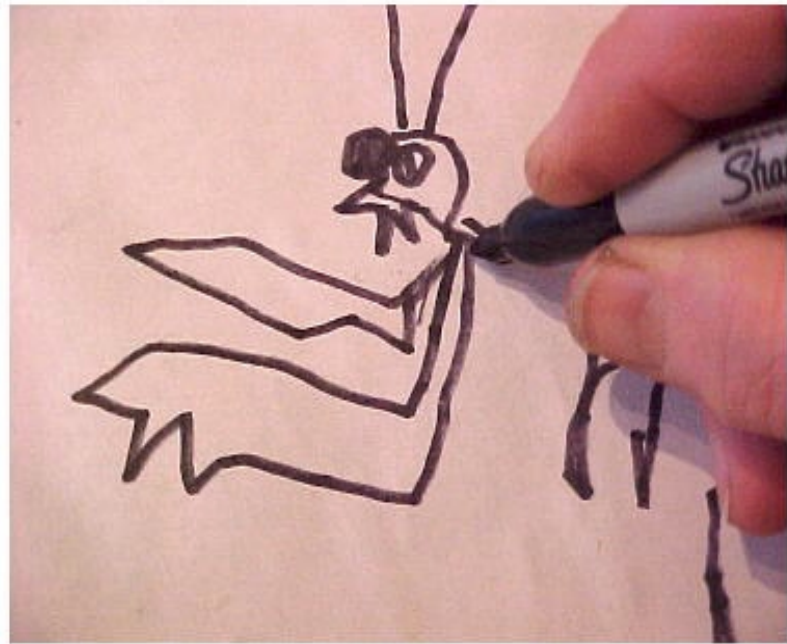


An etching of a drawing as Grandpa Bill imagined a praying mantis.

How scientists need artists and printers

Etching used to be the way science book pictures were made.

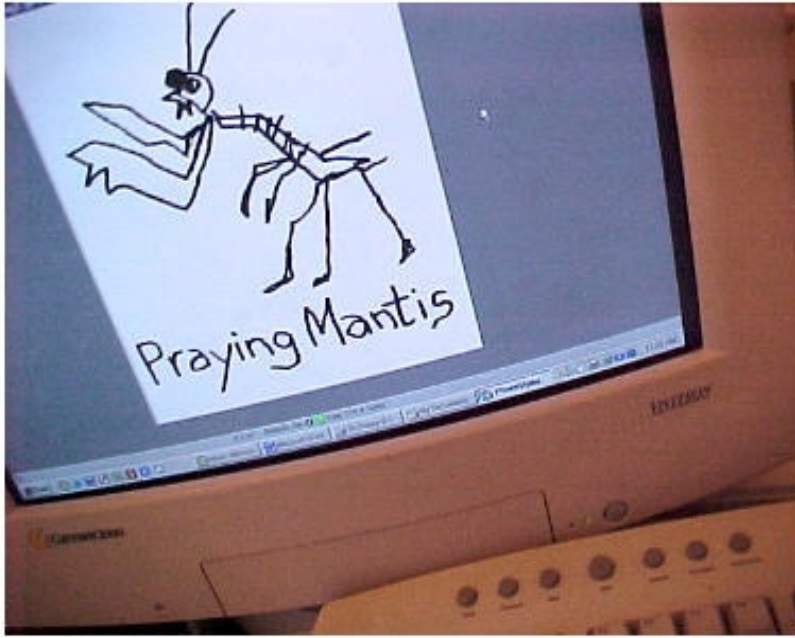
These are some steps to make and print an etchings of imaginary insects.



Imagining an insect

Grandpa Bill, the artist, imagined himself as a kid, drew a praying mantis, then he scanned his kid art on a computer.

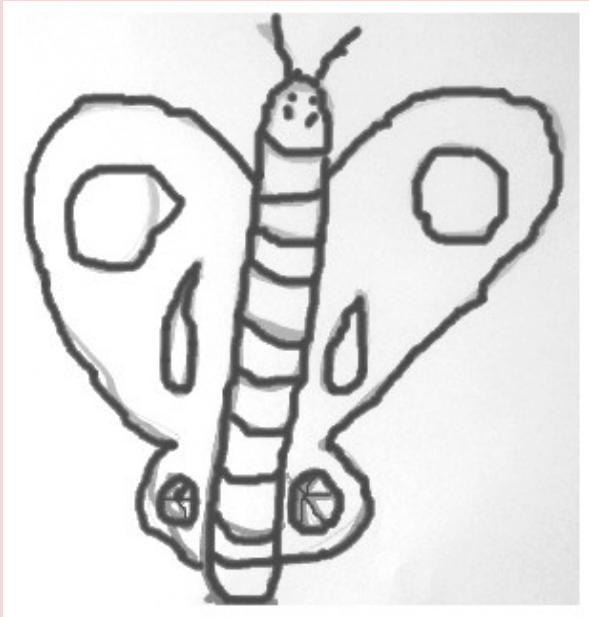
He planned to make an etching for children in Ms. Jenks' Meridian Park 2nd grade.



A digitized drawing

Artists sometimes use computers to change their drawings to digital prints.

Here's how Grandpa Bill's imaginary praying mantis looked on his computer.



Camera snapshot by email

Matilda's mother sent a picture of her kid's drawing of an imaginary butterfly to Grandpa, attached to an email.

Now Grandpa Bill had both insect drawings on his computer.



Preparing the art

Grandpa printed both artworks on special blue paper for iron-on printmaking.



Special for etching

Four insects at once were ironed on to a copper plate. Grandpa has a special blue paper for this.



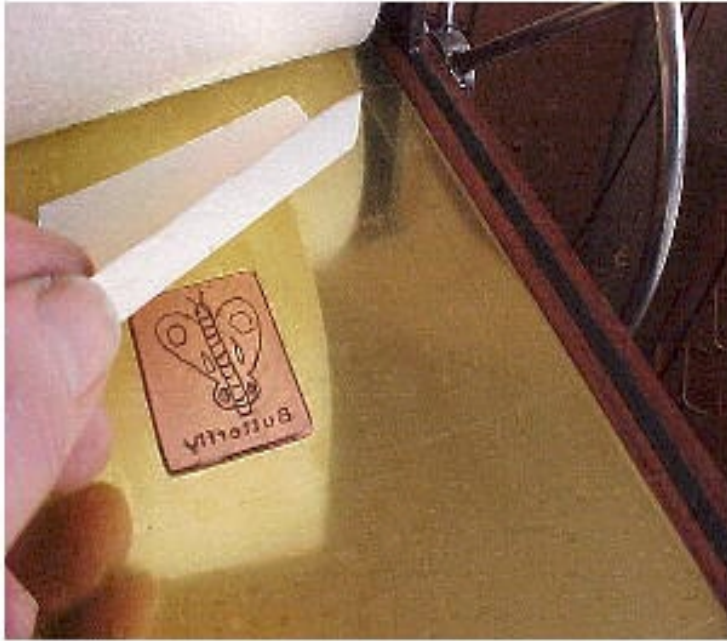
Etching the copper

A chemical called ferric chloride eats away the copper where the lines are to print.

Plates are inked

The plate is cleaned and cut into four pieces. Grandpa rubbed printing ink on each plate then he wiped them smooth.





Printing the etching

Paper soaked in water is soft.
The plate is on the press with the
paper.

Grandpa turns the press wheel
until all the ink is printed.



Pulling the proof

The print is called a “proof” because it proves that everything was done right.

The print takes a long time to dry



The MiniBook in paper accompanied Bill's demonstration at Meridian Park School on Friday, March 31, 2006.

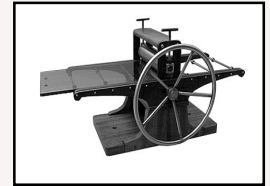
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The Mini
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