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SHELF LIFE

The world of Mr. Mulliner and loads of pre-owned books

You can find everything *and* the kitchen sink at the Adams Avenue Book Store in Normal Heights: Upstairs, in the space of what was obviously at one time an apartment, a kitchen sink remains, surrounded by bookshelves. The cookbook section. But of course.

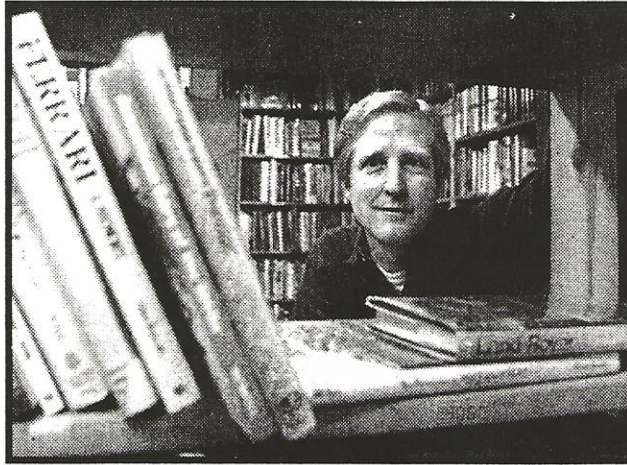
And somewhere on the premises lounges the staid Mr. Mulliner, store owner Brian Lucas' 6-year-old cat (named for a P.G. Wodehouse character), and Webster, a recent feline acquisition.

The cats contribute to the atmosphere of a used- or antiquarian-book store — a place that attracts customers looking for something other than today's best seller.

"I think they're people who may be aware of connections with authors beyond what's being marketed currently," Lucas says. "We get a lot of people who are looking for academic and scholarly and literary books; they're more in touch with what they're reading, how the information eddies from a particular book. Someone might be interested in a Victorian English novel, but they might also be interested in the time period — it goes beyond that particular book."

One of the things Lucas enjoys about his business's

What's hot at Adams Avenue Book Store: "Theology is one of our specialties, so we get a lot of requests for authors like C.S. Lewis and mid- to late-Victorian Scottish novelist and theologian George MacDonald."



JOHN GASTALDO/Union-Tribune

Brian Lucas is owner of Adams Avenue Book Store, 3502 Adams Ave., 281-3330. The store attracts customers looking for something other than today's best seller.

niche is "the camaraderie between bookstore dealers — there's much more of an attempt to connect people to what they're looking for."

But he still comes across the occasional neophyte.

"It's amazing to me," he says, "that there are still people who wander in who were never aware there was such a thing as a used-book store."

— Arthur Salm