Ten good years of growth and change for the library

Our 10th anniversary is approaching. Growth and dazzling change are the watchwords for the first decade of the renovated and expanded Stewart Memorial Library, which was officially rededicated in December, 1988. In that nearly ten years, the building’s inviting design continues to inspire those who enter, the collection has grown to 213,000 volumes, use of the library has almost doubled, and electronic resources have moved in big time.

“I am truly amazed at the staggering improvements we have achieved—all because the Hall Foundation saw fit to support our library building program to get us started and Coe College Library Association members have given their generous ongoing support to build our collection,” says Richard Doyle, director of library and computer services. “The phenomenal use increases tell it all.”

A few highlights:

• Nearly 60,000 new items—ranging from scholarly monographs to a re-release of a monaural classical music piece on compact disc—have been added to the book, periodical, and audiovisual collections in nine and a half years. “Series once beyond our purchasing power have been added, notably the 30-volume Dictionary of Art, and the second edition of The Oxford English Dictionary,” adds Doyle. One fourth of the collection is 10 years old or less.

• The digital library is now campuswide. From 10 word processors in 1988, we have grown to 100 networked microcomputers in the building (and a total of 600 in academic buildings, residence halls, and offices campuswide), each performing a myriad of digital activities. We are on our second-generation library computer system, and many of our reference resources are housed worldwide and delivered right to faculty of...

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“Since the renovation, I think that the library is really the crown jewel of the campus. The library staff are, as they were before, superb—highly competent, personable, approachable, and always willing to go out of their way to help faculty and students.”

—Dr. Allen Fisher, professor of sociology

“Among the many benefits offered the community by the ‘new’ building was the capacity to shelve a collection that would double the number of Coe’s then-current volume count. In considering this joyous challenge, I thought that the creation of the CCLA might provide both motivation and method through which book lovers among Coe alumni and friends could hasten the growth of the soul within the vastly enhanced body of the college library.

“The response from alumni and friends...has been extraordinary! I join all who benefit from access to Coe’s collection in thanking the loyal and generous bibliophiles who constitute the Coe College Library Association. What a great first decade!”

—Dr. John E. Brown, Coe Chancellor

Students are still enjoying the beautiful windows in the second floor reading areas. The library has become a prime meeting place for students.
“The library is so much more pleasant to work in than it used to be. In part, it’s the extra space we have, but I think the light from those wonderful windows looking out on the campus is even more important. I especially like reading or working in the second floor reading room…

“I think the creation of the Perrine Gallery, and especially the large reception room on the second floor, was a stroke of genius. It’s a room we’ve had so many wonderful occasions in… I remember particularly the celebrations of the careers of Stan Watkins and Duane Carr just before their retirement, and Sarah Lindsay’s reading of her poetry with a beaming Charles Lindsay in attendance.”

—Dr. Peter Wickham, professor of chemistry

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fices and student rooms in the residence halls.

• Upgrades to the physical facilities continue, most notably the renovations in the Fisher Music Library and Chemistry Library branches (in Marquis and Peterson Halls), the addition of a whole new department of Computer Services, and the recent installation of the Gayle Whipple Browsing Area.

• Twenty-two new paintings have been added to the permanent collection, including 10 by Conger Metcalf and seven by Marvin Cone. Also on display are three important works lent by the Cone Family Trust: Davis’s Dummy (considered to be one of Marvin’s most important works), Self-Portrait with “Malnutrition,” and the original Grant Wood Malnutrition, a portrait of Marvin painted by his longtime friend and colleague. “Coe is blessed with an incredible art collection that has continued to grow,” says Doyle, “and it’s out on display for library patrons to enjoy every day.”

The Perrine Gallery and the Richter Room have also proved to be important gathering places for the Coe community and Cedar Rapids visitors. The Perrine Gallery is the perfect space for small receptions for faculty, parents, and alumni reunion groups, as well as for such activities as the Coe-Mound View Neighborhood Open House or the Chamber of Commerce Leadership classes. Visiting writers give readings in Perrine almost weekly in the fall and spring. And the Richter Room is busy nearly every day or evening during the academic year with events such as faculty committee meetings, three student Bible study groups, and sorority alumni groups.

Campus Visit Days for prospective students always begin in the library. And touring groups of school children and traveling adults come to see the Coe Permanent Collection of Art displayed throughout the building. When the 1997 Senior Class decided on its gift to the college of three laser printers, the students specified that these printers “be put in the library,” showing the students’ perception of the library as the center for all types of information.

“My parents were really impressed with the library when they came to visit. It’s a really comfortable place to be,” says first-year student Melissa Stifter from Winstead, Minnesota. “If you like a little background noise (when you study), the first floor is great because that’s where the tutors meet with students. And the second floor is nice and quiet for those who like that environment.”

As predicted 10 years ago, the renovated and enlarged library has become the vital center of the academic enterprise on Coe’s campus. “I know I’m biased,” says Doyle, “but this is an outstanding academic library…We have the resources we need for who we are. And we are grateful for it.”
Tri Deltas give Coe Cone's Old Quarry—
a painting with an interesting campus history

Artist Marvin Cone, like most fathers, didn't
want to disappoint his daughter.

When Doris Cone Weeks (Coe '45) was
president of the campus chapter of Delta Delta
Delta sorority during her senior year, she
asked her dad if she could borrow a painting to
hang on the bare walls in the chapter house on
A Avenue NE. Marvin selected Old Quarry,
Stone City, which was hanging in their home,
and told Doris to take it for the house.

By 1970 the Tri Delta alumni chapter was
concerned that the painting was too valuable
to be hanging in the chapter house. They
couldn't afford to insure the painting, which
was valued at $1500 at the time, so they loaned
it to the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art. During
the 27 years it was there, it was exhibited three
times but was otherwise in storage.

Last fall, as Coe's Delta Eta chapter of Tri
Delta sorority prepared for its 85th anniver-
sary, Old Quarry was retrieved from the
Museum of Art. At the gala anniversary ban-
quett in Cedar Rapids Crowne Plaza Five
Seasons Hotel on October 11, the painting
was unveiled and officially given to the col-
lege, with President James Phifer accepting on
Coe's behalf.

Robert Kocher, emeritus professor of art
and gallery curator, says the painting was done
during the time of the Stone City Art
Colony's existence, 1932 and 1933. "Coe also
owns River Farm, Roadside Farm, and Road to
Washoe that were from the same period,
when Cone and Grant Wood had the artists'
 colony," notes Kocher. "Old Quarry is a valu-
able piece, which will expand Coe's Cone
collection on permanent display in the
Winnifred Cone Gallery."

Doris Cone Weeks, reached by phone in
her home in Ottawa, Ontario, said that she is
"very pleased that the painting is back at Coe
College."

New books by '60s alumni among titles
added to Alumni-Faculty Collection

New books by 1960s Coe alumni Ed Gorman
'68, Dan Guenther '66, and Dr. Jane Slaughter
'63—plus a book in which Dr. Shelby Steele
'68 is a contributor—are among the new vol-
umes added to the special collection in the
library's archives room.

Among Gorman's four most recently added
 suspense novels is Black River Falls (1996),
which has been optioned by ABC for an up-
coming TV movie. Guenther's first book of
poetry about the high country of Colorado,
High Country Solitudes (1997), has proven to be
so popular that it is already into its second
printing. And Slaughter, who is an associate
professor of history and director of the Feminist
Research Institute at the University of
New Mexico, describes a little-known part of
World War II history in Women and the Italian

Steele, whose book Content of Our Character
received considerable critical acclaim a few
years ago, is a contributor to Stan Faryna's
Black And Right: The Bold New Voice of Black
Conservatives in America (1997).

Two new books by The Rev. Dr. Charlie
Shedd (Coe '57), How to Make People Really
Feel Loved: And Other Life-Giving Observations
(1996) and What Children Tell Me About Angels
(1995), are sure to give you a positive spin on
life in general. They are Shedd's 43rd and
44th books, written from a lifetime of bring-
ing a message of love and laughter to church
congregations and general audiences.

The complete list of new acquisitions for the
Alumni-Faculty Collection follows:

Boland, Jan Dockendorf and John Dowdall. Giuliani,
Hummel, et al, a Potpourri of 19th-Century Salon Music
[Bolan, instructor in Music (Flute), 1977-78; Dowdall,
instructor in Music (Guitar), 1978-79]

Buchan, Vivian. Mempesiapan dan menyakikan
presentasi secara sukses. Jakarta, Indonesia: Arkan, 1997,
c1995. [Buchan, Coe '33]

Falk, Signe Lenea. The Vogue of the Courtesan Play,

"Coe's library has an aesthetic
attraction that makes it
distinctive from any of 100 or
so college and university
libraries I've seen, man and
boy. I'm referring not only to
the gallery on either side of
the main entrance, with its
matchless collection of Marvin
Cone's paintings, and the
Conger Metcalfe galleries
flanking the entrance to the
Perrine Gallery, but to the
scores of other works of art
hung throughout the main and
second floors. From almost
any perspective on these floors,
you can look up and see a
beautiful—or at least an
interesting—painting or
drawing..."

—Dr. Charles Cannon,
Howard Hall Professor of
English Emeritus
Artists' Metcalf dies in Boston

Conger Metcalf, whose 48 paintings are permanently displayed in two Coe library galleries, died February 18 at his Beacon Hill home in Boston. A native of Cedar Rapids who studied with Grant Wood and Marvin Cone at the Stone City Art Colony, as well as with Alexandre Iacovleff and Karl Zerbe in Boston, Metcalf was 83.

He graduated from Coe College in 1936 as a music major in piano. Soon afterward, he chose art for his career and moved to Boston, where he painted and taught art at Boston University’s School of Fine and Applied Art. A 50-year retrospective exhibit of his work was shown at the Boston Athenaeum and in Coe’s Sinclair Galleries.

Coe’s collection of his work reveals the distinctive colors and superbly drawn figures that come alive in his paintings. Utilizing a difficult technique few others have mastered, Metcalf painted in muted oils on clay-coated paper. As Kathryn Schultz of the Cambridge Art Association wrote of him in 1995, “Profound technical skill has been the foundation of Conger’s paintings throughout his long and wondrous career.”

Even though he lived in Boston for over 50 years, Metcalf always considered Cedar Rapids his home, according to his close friend Marguerite Gurekian of Boston.

“Conger truly loved the two galleries housing his work,” says Richard Doyle, director of library and computer services. “Each visit to Cedar Rapids required a review of his art hanging in the library. He was a severe critic of his work and a loving admirer of his models. He always had a story ready to tell about one of the individuals he painted.”

Alumni-Faculty Collection—continued from page 3


Shedd, Charles W. How To Make People Really Feel Loved: And Other Life-Giving Observations. Ann Arbor, MI: Vine Books, 1996. [Shedd, Coe ’37]


