



The Bibliophile



Fall, 1997

A newsletter for members of the Coe College Library Association

Cyrus and Ann McCalley give \$90,000 Marvin Cone painting to Coe

The Grove, a large, unusual landscape painting by Marvin Cone (Coe '14), has been given to the college by Ann and Cyrus McCalley (Coe '50) of Tucson, Arizona.

"It's been in the family over 50 years and was left to us by Ann's parents," says McCalley. Valued at \$90,000, the painting was one of five originally purchased by Verdi Lenzen and his wife, Bena, who was very fond of Cone's work and was a member of the Marvin Cone Art Club in Cedar Rapids.

"We just felt that the painting should be back at Coe where people who knew Marvin Cone could enjoy it," says McCalley.

"*The Grove* is a significant addition to our collection of Marvin Cone works," says Gallery Curator and Marvin Cone Professor of Art Emeritus Robert Kocher. "This painting emphasizes pure landscape, in contrast to most

of Marvin's works that include buildings and/or people. We are delighted to have it."

With this addition, Coe's Marvin Cone Collection of paintings and drawings now numbers nearly 60 pieces, which are on continuous display in the library's Winnifred Swift Cone Gallery.

The Grove measures 16x40 and brings Coe's collection of Marvin Cone works to nearly 60.



Winnifred Cone dies at 98—concluding an era of art in Cedar Rapids

Winnifred Swift Cone, for whom the entrance galleries of the library are named, died July 8 at the age of 98. She and her artist husband, Marvin, were part of Coe history for nearly 90 years.

After Marvin studied at the college from 1910-1914, he returned to teach French in 1919, and he and Winnifred were married in Winnifred's native Ontario in 1921. From that day on, Coe College was a big part of both their lives.

A champion of her husband all her life, Winnifred also modeled for some of his paintings, specifically—for "Plant with Nude" in the Winnifred Swift Cone Gallery and for "Farmer's Daughter," one of the *Fruits of Iowa* murals by Marvin's lifetime friend Grant Wood, in the library's Perrine Gallery. She also frequently accompanied Marvin on his painting trips in Iowa's countryside, and she opened their home for parties when artists like

John Steuart Curry or Thomas Hart Benton came to Cedar Rapids.

In 1993, when she sold the home on Fifth Avenue S.E. that she and Marvin had shared for nearly 45 years before his death in 1965, Winnifred gave the proceeds to the Coe library to endow a fund for the purchase of books on art and art history. (The first purchase from this fund was the landmark 34-volume *Dictionary of Art*, in 1996.) She and her family also contributed to Coe's Permanent Collection of Art paintings and items from the Cone home which were used in Marvin's paintings—all of which are displayed in the Winnifred Swift Cone Galleries today.

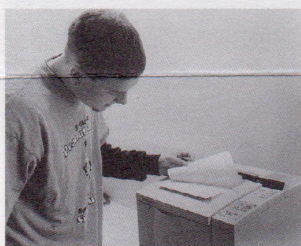
Winnifred established a senior art prize in Marvin's name that is awarded each year. Coe Art Department Chair John Beckelman notes, "She was always very encouraging to art students and young faculty—lending moral support."



Winnifred Cone last visited the Coe library in 1991 for the college's commemoration of Marvin's 100th birthday.

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Three laser printers like this one were purchased with funds raised by the 1997 graduating class.



The new computer workspace for students still has available space for eight additional machines. Students now have access to 50 microcomputers in the library alone.



Browsing books move up front as student computer space expands

It may be a sign of the times. As the coziness of reading books is prized and the practical uses of computers grow, Coe's library has done some rearranging.

The new book browsing area has moved up toward the library's front door, while more space is being allotted for student computer workspace in the lower level. Library security detectors have also been upgraded to include electronic media, as more and more students are checking out videotapes and CDs to use in their residence hall rooms.

Library users can now spot the Gayle S. Whipple Browsing Collection's inviting reading area easily in its place near the entrance. The area has already become a popular spot for students and visitors alike.

Computer Services has brought some of the computers and tables that were formerly in the browsing area downstairs to be part of the expanded student workspace. Four new laser printers—three of which were purchased with a gift from the 1997 graduating class—have been installed in the building, along with a color printer and a color scanner. There are 11 microcomputers in the newest workspace.

"We've lost only two lounge seats (in all of this rearranging), and all of the popular large tables are still in use," says Richard Doyle, director of library and computer services.

"There still is room for expansion in the new student workspace, too. We have eight more carrels wired and ready," he notes. "We hope



Alumni stopped by the Gayle Whipple Browsing Area of the library when they were on campus for Reunion Weekend in June.

In the nine years since the library's renovation, this space has been used for the paper card catalog, then the automated catalog, and later multi-purpose microcomputers that could access the library catalog. Books have now reclaimed it.

to finish off laser printing services for students with two more machines, one in the Hickok Hall lab and the other in Stuart Hall."

Locating the expanded computer workspaces in the library was a logical choice, he explains. "The library is in the geographic center of the campus, halfway between the classrooms and residence halls. What better place could there be to combine print and computer resources for students?"

When the computers in the new workspace are added to those already in the electronic classroom and existing workstations in the library, students now have access to 50 microcomputers in the library alone. "We have 165 student-accessible computer workstations on the network campus-wide, most of which can be used for the Internet, e-mail, and the full range of academic applications," says Doyle.

Papers of Prof. Signi Falk include story of a literary life in academe

Retired Professor of English Signi Falk decided this summer to pass her manuscripts, letters, and journals on to Coe. Just as this newsletter was going on the press, news came of her death at 91 on November 24 in Grinnell, Iowa.

Orphaned at 12, Falk grew up in Mt. Vernon, Iowa, as the foster daughter of Cornell College Professor of English Toppy Tull and his wife, Jewell. Carl Sandburg and many other writers visited the Tulls frequently, and Falk wrote of these experiences in her journals and, following Toppy Tull's death in 1968, published a history of the Tulls and these years.

She received her Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, and taught in Hawaii and New Hampshire before coming to Coe in 1947. During her years on Coe's faculty, Falk wrote two books, *Tennessee Williams* (1962) and *Archibald MacLeish* (1966), released by Twayne Publishers, with the Williams book coming out in a second edition in 1978 after it proved to be one of the best sellers in the United States Authors Series.

Falk traveled the world after her retirement in 1971, served on a White House committee for her active work advocating for the elderly and many social causes in 1981, and in 1990 received the Governor's Volunteer Award.

She corresponded with the many visiting writers she invited to the campus to speak to students. May Sarton was one such writer. "She had made such a good impression at Cornell College when she read there that I decided to invite her to come to Coe," Falk recalls in her papers. "During her lecture the steam pipes (in Sinclair Auditorium) began to knock, and this very tense and highly strung person left the stage and walked the full length of the auditorium, with me following like a whipped dog." Sarton's April, 1963 letter of apology is included in Falk's papers, as well:

How good you were and patient with the old sore bear I have become! I am always appalled at myself when I look back on these occasions and wonder what possesses me and why I cannot be more relaxed and take things



Dr. Signi Falk with her Williams book in 1962.

as they come like a sensible human being! I do hope I have not caused you to be blamed for importing such a bear!

One Sarton letter advises Falk to contact MacLeish, whom Falk admired as "a fine person dedicated to Jeffersonian principles." Another note from Sarton is attached to a letter MacLeish wrote Sarton, in which MacLeish says, "It's a little frightening to know that a book is being done on me by anybody, particularly by a distinguished woman professor...but should she come this way, you may count on my responding as you would wish me to." Sarton forwarded the note to Falk with this postscript: "Thought you might like to know the door is open!"

Coe's Head Technical Services Librarian Randall Roeder, who has been processing Falk's papers, says, "These papers reflect a very well-documented life of a woman growing up in a liberal arts college setting and going on to devote her life to the world of ideas."

New book of student essays explores Coe archival history

Twenty-six essays by advanced composition students of Dr. Robert Marrs recall some intriguing bits of Coe College history.

Using original source materials, as well as secondary accounts, the students went to the college archives to find out for themselves why Coe had no graduating classes of 1889 and 1890, how Clem "Mut" Wilson (Coe '12) became the first Iowan to qualify for the Olympics, and the history behind the legendary Voorhees Hall ghost of Helen.

The students wrote extensive biographical accounts of writing educator and poet Paul Engle (Coe '31), business leader and Coe trustee Thomas M. Sinclair, Professor Charles T. Hickok, and the Murray family for whom Murray Hall is named. Librarian Betty Pritchett, who wrote grant proposals and revised architectural drawings to develop Coe's library from 1921-1940, is described too, as is black student rights activist Shelby Steele (Coe '68), who presented Coe's administration with seven demands in a sit-in protest. Campus newspaper reactions to World War II and to the Vietnam War are summarized, as are the details of the devastating chapel fire of 1947 and the arsonist's confession.

The book is titled *Profiles of a College: An Anthology of Essays on the History of Coe College*.

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McDonald with one of the beautiful art books he loved and often purchased for Coe's library.

Bibliophile Frank E. McDonald Leaves Coe's library a legacy

bib-li-o-phile (bīb-lê-e-fil') noun 1. A lover of books. 2. A collector of books.

Bibliophile Frank McDonald [featured in Spring 1995 *Bibliophile*] died on September 15 in Cedar Rapids at age 68. Although not an alumnus of Coe, he appreciated the fact that Coe's library collection is open to the community, and he read books from the collection continually.

Frank was a remarkable man who truly lived the life of a lover and collector of books. He did not just read books, he dissected their contents, rearranged the ideas, and never forgot what he found between the pages. His recall was phenomenal, and with his undergraduate and graduate training in history, he possessed the ability to incorporate the knowledge he gained into a larger picture.

Over the years, we discussed—and he purchased for the library—books on topics ranging from Frank Lloyd Wright, Impressionism, forestry, and plant ecology to Jewish Studies. His

last special topic was 19th century Russian art. Frank became fascinated with the school of Russian painters called the Wanderers—who they were and the genres they painted. I marveled at his knowledge and enjoyed the times we had together.

Frank would visit me in my office often, and most times he would buy a book or two from a cart of books just received by the library. His preference in purchasing was large books, particularly art. He helped us stretch the book budget, since the average cost of an art book is nearing \$100.

Frank took great pride in seeing his name on a book plate on the frontispiece of a book he purchased. He believed he was collecting for many generations of Coe students and wanted to continue.

A few years ago, Frank began a book endowment on which he made a monthly contribution. That fund now totals \$27,000.

Although I will truly miss his visits and our fascinating conversations, because of his foresight, Frank's book collecting will continue.

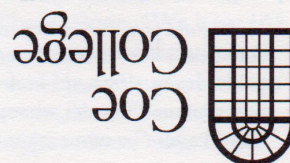
— Richard Doyle
Director of Library and
Computing Services

CCLA members make 1996-97 a banner year

Coe College Library Association memberships brought the book acquisition fund to \$64,177 for the fiscal year ending June 30. The college acknowledges these memberships with grateful thanks, as this kind of support significantly improves Coe's ability to make needed book purchases in a timely manner.

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