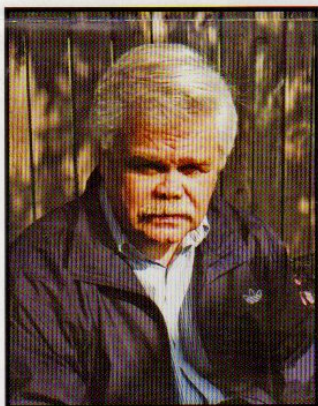


# COE BIBLIOPHILE

Fall 2006

A newsletter for members of the Coe College Library Association

## Coe's 'poet of dark suspense' caps library anniversary celebration with public reading



*Author Ed Gorman read from his works and talked with avid readers at a Sept. 28 library anniversary event in Kesler Hall.*

**A**long with parties and receptions held throughout the past year marking the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Stewart Memorial Library, it seemed fitting "to celebrate the reading palace in the center of campus" with an author reading, said Library Director Rich Doyle as he introduced writer Ed Gorman at a Sept. 28 lecture in Kesler Lecture Hall. Gorman, a 1968 Coe graduate and popular crime fiction writer, read his short story "Prisoners" and answered questions about his life and work during a rare public appearance.

Gorman spent his early career writing television commercials and magazine articles before earning acclaim for his serial mystery novels. Today he is the author of more than 20 published novels, six collections of short stories, and numerous plays. The recipient of the Shamus Award, the Spur Award and the International Fiction Writers Award, Gorman was hailed by "Bloomsbury Review" as "the poet of dark suspense."

The gravel-voiced author lived up to that portrayal as he read a grim, tightly crafted story about a son who engineers his father's arrest and imprisonment in order to protect his younger sister from their

father's sexual advances. Gorman then fielded questions from the audience about the nature of his work and his ties to Coe.

Laconic and self-deprecating, Gorman said he had no choice but to pursue a career as an author. "I realized by age five that there was nothing else I could do except write, and I've always supported myself by writing one way or another. I'm not good at anything else that can earn money." Notwithstanding, he professed a growing dislike for writing the series books that have won him fame and financial security. "It's boring. The lead [character] never dies, and the books don't change all that much. But series are what sell all over the world."

Asked about favorite books and authors, he cited "The Great Gatsby" as one of few works worthy of being called "great American novels" and said he reads Theodore Dreiser's "An American Tragedy" annually. His advice to young writers is to study favorite works by other authors to understand structure, then "just write and write" — ultimately the only way to learn how to do it.

Gorman described Coe as a place of "great memories, great teachers. I never had a bad class, and I'm a rotten student. Talent and intelligence have nothing to do with [my success.]" He used the Coe library "all the time" as a student, said Gorman, who also wrote for the *Courier* during those years.

Gorman and his wife, author Carol Gorman, have remained in Cedar Rapids to be near their adult children, he said. "I am the least social person. I never join anything and I'm unaware of where I am when I write." That being said, Coe was fortunate to lure its home-grown mystery writer out of his burrow for an hour of reading and remembering.

## Henry College Archives prove invaluable during Stuart Hall reconstruction

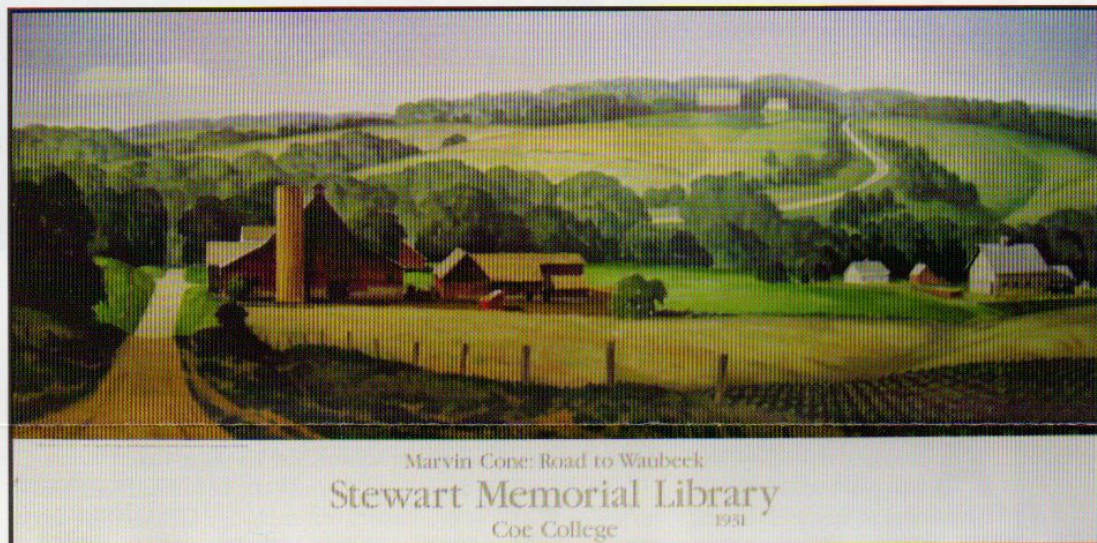
Coe received a grant of nearly \$300,000 from the United States Department of Energy for the recently completed renovation of Stuart Hall. The grant request process required documentation of the history and uses of the building to assure that the current renovation would not in any way harm the building's historic integrity. The college hired a public historian and preservation planner to assist in that research. The resulting report, 60 pages in length, reflected detailed research conducted in the George T. Henry College Archives.

During the reconstruction it was discovered that the north wall of the first floor had suffered significant water damage over the years. Once again, an archives review pinpointed the time frame when the

wall, once above grade, was buried during construction of a tunnel connecting Old Science Hall with the new Science building, now known as Peterson Hall.

When was Old Science Hall renamed Stuart Hall? For years it was believed to be 1977, the year an earlier renovation was completed. The archives revealed that it was two years before, at the 1975 fall meeting of the Board of Trustees. It was named Stuart Hall in recognition of generous gifts from John and R. Douglas Stuart, sons of Robert Stuart who founded the American Cereal Company, which later became Quaker Oats.





*This full-color poster of Marvin Cone's "Road to Waubeek," a painting given to Coe by longtime English Professor Irving Churchill and his wife, Kathryn, is available to Stewart Memorial Library supporters as part of the library's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.*

## Travel "Road to Waubeek" and support your favorite library

A commemorative poster featuring the 1941 Marvin Cone painting "Road to Waubeek" has been created as part of the Stewart Memorial Library 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. The poster is available free to anyone who makes a \$75 gift to the library.

"This handsome landscape was given to Coe by Dr. Irving Churchill and his wife,

Kathryn H. Churchill," says Library Director Rich Doyle. Churchill taught English at Coe from 1937 to 1966 and chaired the Division of Languages and Literature from 1955 to 1966, also serving as dean of the college and as assistant to the president during his Coe career. Kathryn Churchill was head of technical services at the library during part of the 1960s.

"I fell in love with this painting before we knew it would come to Coe," says Doyle. "But the main reason we picked this is that it was owned for years by the Churchills, who dedicated most of their lives to this institution."

To order a copy of the 36 x 18-inch poster, contact Cheri Pettibone, library acquisitions assistant, at (319) 399-8023/8024, 1220 First Avenue NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402.

### *Preservation Grant Project:*

## Bringing Paul Engle to life through his papers

The letters and papers of one of Coe's most notable graduates will become more accessible to the public thanks to a \$1,061 grant awarded to the college by the Linn County Historic Preservation Advisory Committee in support of the Paul Engle Papers Archival Project.

Engle (1908-1991), a 1931 Coe graduate and renowned poet and educator, was the longtime director of the Iowa Writers Workshop and co-founder with his wife, Hualing Nieh Engle, of the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa.

After Engle's death, Nieh Engle gave Coe a collection of his papers including family letters, office files, manuscripts, and correspondence with a wide range of authors. The papers, contained in 22 boxes and comprising 18 linear feet of material, include letters to and/or from notable literary figures such as Robert Frost, Wallace Stegner, Robert Bly, Robert Penn

Warren, Gwendolyn Brooks, John Cheever, Louis Untermeyer, Kurt Vonnegut and others.

"The correspondence with authors is perhaps most valuable and the family letters most interesting," says Technical Services Assistant Jeff Schulte, who is processing the papers along with Coe's Head of Library Technical Services Hongbo Xie and student assistants. Coe's collection of Engle papers was appraised several years ago at a value of \$58,500.

Xie and Schulte are working with a historic preservation consultant who is advising them on how best to organize and catalog materials in the collection. The grant is helping to fund the purchase of archival materials including acid-free folders and durable clamshell boxes for materials storage. While sorting through every piece of paper in the collection, the archives team removes rusty staples and makes photocopies of fragile pages that will be handled

as infrequently as possible after processing.

"Our goal is to make the collection available to the public," says Schulte. "We want it to be useful to people — of course through an appointment with your librarian." Xie adds that the ultimate objective is to make the collection available online. "We will create a Web site with a complete listing and descriptions of items in the collection so researchers can search by author."

Working as time allows, Xie and Schulte hope to complete processing of the papers by the end of next summer. "This is a pioneer project for us to learn how to handle archival materials," says Xie. "We have a much bigger project to think about — the Shirer papers." The library has applied for a larger preservation grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to help fund processing of Coe's voluminous collection of materials from correspondent and author William Shirer '25.



## All the News That's Fit to Print: Now online at Stewart Library

This fall Coe added the archives of one of the most widely known and comprehensive news sources in the world — The New York Times — to the online resources that are available at Stewart Memorial Library.

"More than 3.4 million pages were digitized to create this file," which includes issues of the Times from 1851 to 2003, says Head of Reference Betty Rogers. The library subscribes to current issues of the newspaper and will gradually add post-2003 material to the archive. Articles, advertisements and opinion pieces published during the last 150-plus years are all part of the file, which is searchable, much like Google or other search engines.

"In terms of content and usefulness, this is probably second only in significance to our purchase of the JSTOR journal collection which includes hundreds of journals available digitally," Rogers says, noting that searchable digital files are replacing the more cumbersome microfilm as a preferred research tool.

Access to The New York Times online is restricted to on-campus users including students, faculty members and others who meet with a reference librarian in order to be logged in, explains Rogers.

The breadth of content in the file is truly stunning, she adds. "What we have here is complete New York Times coverage of the Civil War, reviews of Darwin's "Origin of the Species" when it was first published, reviews of Benny Goodman's performance at Carnegie Hall." Even a search for Coe College in the Times yields a few hundred references, from job postings of decades past to an item noting that Coe paid \$2,800 to purchase the study of Grant Wood's "Daughters of Revolution" from the Parke-Bernet Galleries of New York in 1954.

"We're trying to graduate people with inquiring minds and great curiosity," Rogers states. "This is certainly a good way of finding out about all kinds of things."

## Parties, Receptions Mark 75th Anniversary of Coe's 'Palace of Reading and Research'

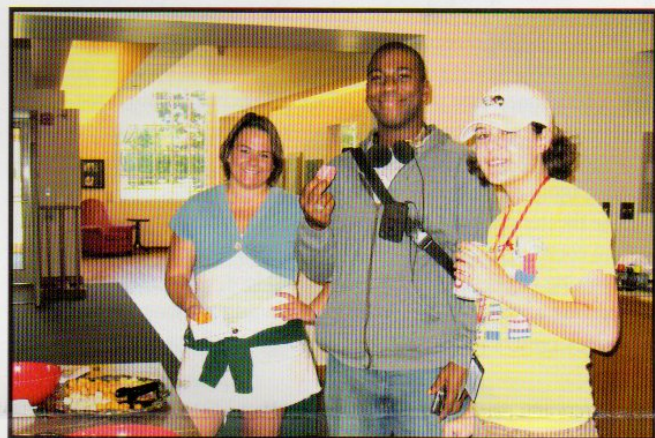
As if to disprove any last suggestion that librarians are stodgy or joyless, the library's ever-gregarious staff hosted a series of events throughout the year to remember and celebrate the library's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, beginning with a luncheon for student workers and staff in February.

The library was more formally feted during Alumni Reunion Weekend at a President's Reception for alumni and friends of the college on June 10 in the Perrine Gallery. On the library's "dedicatory day," Sept. 14, students were invited to partake in a day-long party marking the actual 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the library's formal dedication on Sept. 14, 1931.

A reading and reception featuring author Ed Gorman '68 was held on Thursday, Sept. 28, followed the next day by a campus-wide reception in the library for faculty and staff.



President James Phifer hosted a Perrine Gallery reception in honor of the library's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary during Alumni Reunion Weekend in June.



During the library's dedicatory day anniversary party on Sept. 14, students "blew through" a spread of pastries, chips, sausage, cheese and other goodies, says Library Director Rich Doyle.



Faculty and staff members celebrated the library's anniversary at a campus-wide reception on Sept. 29.



## Renovated AV Theater combines comfort, technology, sets pace for new Stuart classrooms

A desire to ensure that library facilities remain up-to-date, comfortable and aesthetically pleasing was the impetus for an extensive renovation of the library's lower-level AV Theater during the summer months — a project that also laid the groundwork for state-of-the-art electronic classrooms in the newly refurbished Stuart Hall.

Used extensively for film classes and other classes needing video or projection capabilities, as well as for extracurricular events such as movie viewings and worship services, the AV Theater was created in 1988. It was essentially a dark space with bench seating, which, while allowing an occasional, grateful student to take a snooze in the prone position, was generally uncomfortable and not conducive to study and note-taking.

"The goal was to create an electronic classroom with updated equipment that was user-friendly and to make it a better, more comfortable place to study," says Head of Audiovisual Services Stephanie Sueppel.

Stripped to its skeleton, the theater was remodeled with new carpeting, freshly painted walls and 48 theater-style seats with tablet arms. Two walled-up windows were uncovered, and the theater's four hanging spotlights were replaced with both dimmable incandescent and fluorescent in-ceiling lights throughout the room, making the space usable as a regular classroom as well as a film venue.

The variable lighting options work hand-in-hand with the theater's new 3,500-lumen data projector, which makes images projected on the front screen clearly visible even when the room is partially lit. An updated sound system replaced the old studio-style speakers with two smaller, more efficient wall-mounted units.

The theater's control center is a networked workstation with push-button controls for all media used in the room. Along with capabilities for showing or playing DVDs, CDs and videos, it includes inputs for connecting a laptop or the library's new Samsung document camera. The sleek camera with an autofocus zoom lens allows a user to place

an object or sheet of paper on a platform and project it on the screen — "crystal clear," says Library Director Rich Doyle. "It's like an overhead projector, except you don't need transparencies."

New technologies chosen for the AV Theater were subse-

quently incorporated into classrooms in the newly renovated Stuart Hall. Fifteen new classrooms were outfitted with data projectors, screens and multi-purpose workstations with networked computers and the ability to connect a laptop computer or document camera, says Audiovisual Assistant Linda Hummel, who assisted with the project. Five document cameras and eight overhead projectors are available on carts that float among the rooms.

"Stuart was patched together over the years with different equipment and capabilities and different ways of doing things," Hummel explains. "Some people just wouldn't use the equipment because it was confusing. Now the rooms are all uniform, everything is brand new, state-of-the-art and it's much easier to use." Many faculty members who previously asked AV staff members to set up media for them are now comfortable doing it themselves.

"The bottom line," says Doyle, "is to make sure faculty are at ease with the technology. They are the authorities in that space and the equipment must work for them."



*The remodeled AV Theater features remote-free technology and comfy theater-style seats.*



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