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Summer Newsletter 2005

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FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

FALL EVENTS

An interesting schedule of events and exhibitions is shaping up for the Fall Semester in Shain Library. We apologize for the missing dates and titles of some of the events but planning is still incomplete and you will be receiving announcements in the mail with complete information before they actually happen. Unless otherwise indicated, all of the events described below will take place in the Charles Chu Asian Art Reading Room in Shain Library.

Liane Hanson, the well-known host of National Public Radio’s Weekend Edition Sunday, will give the Sound Lab Foundation Lecture for 2005. Ms. Hanson will speak on Wednesday, September 21, at 7:30 p.m. in the Ernst Room in the Blaustein Humanities Center. It is the eighth in this endowed annual lecture series that is co-sponsored by the Sound Lab Foundation and the Friends of the Connecticut College Library.

There will be a Veterans’ Day program on November 11. A library exhibition will feature items from the Irwin and the Fregosi Collections of WWII documents and memorabilia in Special Collections.

MEMBERSHIP IN THE FRIENDS OF THE CONNECTICUT COLLEGE LIBRARY

Thank you to all of you who have renewed your membership in the Friends of the Library for 2005. Membership, new or renewed, is welcome at any time of year. The dues from the Friends are used to support the preservation of the collections, to purchase books, to sponsor lectures, exhibitions and receptions, to print the newsletter, and to fund the library scholarship.

During the last semester, money from Friends membership dues made possible a gallery talk by book artist Mary McCarthy and the opening of an exhibition of her work; a lecture on Chinese bronzes by Professor Wangheng Chen of Wuhan University, China; and a slide presentation on historic neighborhoods in New London by New London Landmarks.

If you wish to join at this time, or know of someone who is interested, a check payable to “Connecticut College” may be mailed to the Friends of the Library, Charles E. Shain Library, 270 Mohegan Avenue, New London, CT 06320.

Eighty years ago — give or take a year or two — the fledgling Connecticut College for Women published the first issue of its alumnae magazine. About 300 issues and several names later, the Office of College Relations has mounted a lively and professionally mounted, this picture will hang in the Palmer Room and, along with the books, be used in a library exhibition devoted to Carson that is planned for 2007.

Thanks to Linda Lear’s interest in encouraging the use of primary resources in undergraduate research, the library now houses the Lear/Carson Collection, which is the archive of her research for the biography Rachel Carson: Witness for Nature. Interest in the life and work of Rachel Carson continues to be very strong forty years after the publication of her most famous book, and scholars and admires of Rachel Carson use the Lear/Carson Collection frequently.

SUMMER EXHIBITION

“Got Ink? Celebrating CC: Connecticut College Magazine”

Eighty years ago — give or take a year or two — the fledgling Connecticut College for Women published the first issue of its alumnae magazine. About 300 issues and several names later, the Office of College Relations has mounted a lively display in Shain Library to highlight the history and successes of this popular glossy magazine that now goes out to 26,000 Connecticut College alumns, parents, donors and friends around the world four times a year. The exhibit opened at a Saturday afternoon reception during Reunion Weekend. Organized by College Relations staff members and Nova Seals, college archivist, using material from the College Archives, Got Ink? runs through the end of August. If you are on campus this summer, take a look.

VALUABLE FIRST EDITION OF SILENT SPRING

Linda Lear ’63 recently gave to the library a very special copy of Rachel Carson’s Silent Spring, inscribed by the author to her dear friend and associate Shirley Briggs in 1962. Thirty years later Ms. Briggs in turn gave this book to Linda, Rachel Carson’s biographer, who has generously donated it and three other Carson first editions to Special Collections to become part of the Lear book collection. Carson’s denunciation of the use of chemical pesticides in Silent Spring was a wake-up call to American environmentalists and resulted in the first antipesticide legislation in the United States.

Shirley Briggs, an illustrator, writer and editor who died in 2004 and outlived her friend by forty years, met Carson when they both worked at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the mid-1940s. After Carson’s death in 1964, she helped establish what is now the Rachel Carson Council, an organization that educates the public about the environmental dangers of pesticide and chemical use, and served as its executive director from 1970 to 1992. Also part of the recent Lear gift is a lovely watercolor painting by Briggs of “East Quoddy Head light, obscured by sudden fog” in which two small figures in yellow slickers in the foreground, who are Rachel and her nephew and adopted son Roger, walk toward the headlands. Once it is professionally mounted, this picture will hang in the Palmer Room and, along with the books, be used in a library exhibition devoted to Carson that is planned for 2007.

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Friends of the Connecticut College Library Summer Newsletter
In mid-June, 2005, eighty-nine years after Eugene O'Neill first went to Provincetown, Massachusetts, the Eugene O'Neill Society gathered there together with the Susan Glaspell Society for a six-day conference titled “Where it all began.” In New London, Connecticut, the conference was held at Connecticut College, a place where the townspeople and the visiting artists and writers had established a harmonious climate of mutual respect and economic symbiosis, creating a congenial social and intellectual milieu where his creativity could flourish.

Susan Glaspell, the journalist, novelist and playwright co-founder of the Provincetown Players, later wrote: “Quite a little time ago something happened in this town which reached so far, and in influence lasted so long, as to amaze the people who began it. A group of writers, some of them very young, dissatisfied with what is called literature but large enough to house visiting friends and relatives. It was in Provincetown that his son Shane was born and here that he learned that he had won his first Pulitzer Prize for Beyond the Horizon in 1928. The Provincetown Players soon moved to more permanent quarters on MacDougall Street in Manhattan. O'Neill returned to Provincetown until 1924 but by 1931, when the house collapsed into the sea after a severe winter storm, he had turned the page on this part of his life and moved to another part of the world with his third wife, Carlotta Monterey.

Weathered houses, old-fashioned flower gardens, sea, sun, salt air, sea gulls … Provincetown was in its full summer glory when 110 O'Neillians marked the beginning of a career that would be recognized with four Pulitzers and the Nobel Prize. O'Neill moved to an apartment on the top floor of Francis’s Flats to which he brought his second wife Agnes Boulton as a bride. But O’Neill’s first real home of his own, a wedding present from his father, was the Provincetown Life Saving Station, situated in the dunes on the Atlantic side of the Province Lands. Extensively renovated by bohemian socialite Mabel Dodge and several miles out town along a sandy trail, the Provincetown house was remote enough to appeal to the playwright’s need for solitude but large enough to house visiting friends and relatives. It was in Provincetown that his son Shane was born and here that he learned that he had won his first Pulitzer Prize for Beyond the Horizon in 1928. The Provincetown Players soon moved to more permanent quarters on MacDougall Street in Manhattan. O'Neill returned to Provincetown until 1924 but by 1931, when the house collapsed into the sea after a severe winter storm, he had turned the page on this part of his life and moved to another part of the world with his third wife, Carlotta Monterey.

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