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Friends of the Connecticut College Library

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Winter Newsletter 2001

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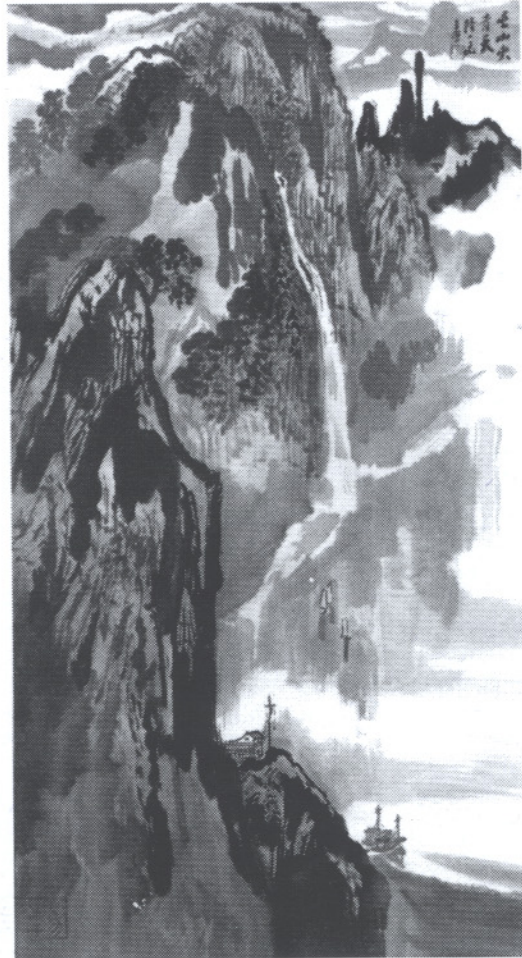
Friends of the Connecticut College Library *Winter Newsletter*

CHU ROOM to open on December 14

During the fall semester one corner of the main floor of Shain Library has been closed to the public. This is the site of the future Charles Chu Asian Art Reading Room, described in an earlier issue of the *Newsletter*, and now enclosed temporarily behind a demising wall to contain the dirt, dust and noise of the construction area, with two glass windows provided to satisfy the curious. Periodically the sound of drilling and hammering emanates from behind the wall. The space was stripped down to the bare bones of concrete, metal and structural supports and looked much the way it must have been when the library was under construction 26 years ago.

Slowly but surely the new room is taking shape behind the wall, adding architectural woodwork, lighting and suspended acrylic panels, bamboo flooring, slate flooring, woven carpet, wood doors, glass walls, cabinetry, and shades as well as the thousand and one details of painting, hardware, signage and audio visual system for lectures and events. Once the main work is complete seven tall, free-standing display cabinets built off-site will be brought in and set up to house the changing exhibitions of scrolls from the paintings and calligraphy examples in the Chu-Griffis Art Collection. Books dealing with Asian art will line the shelves of the alcove at the back of the reading room. The final touches of comfort and elegance will be provided by a large blue Chinese carpet in the book alcove and by tables, chairs and lamps throughout for readers.

An official opening to acknowledge the generous gift of Heidi and John Niblack is scheduled for Friday, Dec. 14, and then the room will be available for use by the college community and visitors.



The Wu Gorge by Lu Yi-fei (1931-), Chu-Griffis Art Collection



A couple of NEW ACQUISITIONS

BASKIN BROADSIDE PURCHASED IN HONOR OF CONNIE DOWELL

Special Collections' wonderful collection of the work of the late artist and book designer Leonard Baskin was shown in Shain Library in the first exhibition of the year 2000, "Leonard Baskin and the Gehenna Press", curated by Charles Price. We have just acquired another fine specimen from the early days of the Gehenna Press, a broadside printed in 1955 to mark the centennial of the publication of *Leaves of Grass*. Measuring 19 x 19 inches and printed in red and black, the broadside features a full-length portrait of the poet from a wood-engraving by Baskin alongside Whitman's "A Poem, as Consequent, Etc.", written by Whitman to celebrate the publication of his book. One of 250 copies, the broadside is signed by Baskin and has the distinction of being the only Gehenna Press production that year. In 1955 Leonard Baskin and his wife Esther moved their press to Northampton, Massachusetts and began their affiliation with pressman Richard Warren. The broadside was purchased with funds given by Lucy Marsh Haskell '19 Professor Emeritus of Government Marion Doro in honor of Connie Vinita Dowell, who was the Vice President for Information Services and Librarian of the College from 1993 to 1999.

PENNYROYAL PRESS *The Wizard of Oz*

Early in 2001 the library purchased another splendid example of the work of the Pennyroyal Press. This is *L. Frank Baum's The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, designed and illustrated by Barry Moser and published by Barry Moser in 1985. It is Copy III of V "Patron's Copies," issued with an original pencil drawing by Moser facing the half-title page depicting "The arrival of the King of the Winged Monkeys." The edition came with a portfolio of all of the engravings in the book, each signed by Moser. *The Wizard of Oz* was purchased with money from the Palmer Memorial Room Fund and will be featured in a exhibition in Shain Library in early 2002. It joins the growing collection of books by Barry Moser in Special Collections, which includes *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1982), *Lewis Carroll's Through the Looking-glass and What Alice Found There* (1982), and *The Holy Bible: Containing All the Books of the Old and New Testaments* (1999).



The Friends of the
Connecticut College Library

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Illustrations from
*L. Frank Baum's The
Wonderful Wizard of Oz*,
designed and illustrated
by Barry Moser



FOURTH Sound Lab Foundation Lecture

This year's Sound Lab Foundation Lecture was delivered by John Lienhard, the well-known author and voice of "The Engines of Our Ingenuity", a nationally-broadcast radio program originating at the University of Houston and carried locally by Public Radio station WSHU. To create the episodes of his program, Dr. Lienhard, an engineer and teacher, uses the record of history to explore the ways that art, technology and ideas have shaped human culture. The September 20 evening lecture was very well attended by Dr. Lienhard's many fans in southeastern Connecticut and afterward he signed copies of his book, *The Engines of Our Ingenuity: An Engineer Looks at Technology and Culture*, published by Oxford University Press in 2000. The title of his lecture was "Books, Computers, and Information: The Recreation of Reality."

The Sound Lab Foundation was formed several years ago by a group of retired engineers and scientists who worked on submarine design and research at the former Naval Undersea Warfare Center in New London. The "Sound Lab" flourished for about 40 years until its remaining functions were moved to Newport, Rhode Island but its former employees created a foundation to honor its legacy with an annual lecture on a topic of social, scientific, or cultural interest to the campus community and the residents of southeastern Connecticut. The income from an endowment is administered by Special Collections and is used to fund the annual lecture. Each year a Selection Committee composed of members of the Sound Lab Foundation and the Special Collections Librarian meet to choose a speaker for the coming September, which coincides with the annual reunion of alumni of the Sound Lab.

Over the years speakers have covered a broad range of topics. In the first lecture in 1998, G. Pascal Zachary, the author of *Endless Frontier: Vannevar Bush, Engineer*

of the American Century spoke about the development of the Internet and information overload. The following year Stephen E. Flynn, U.S. Coast Guard Commander and Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, spoke presciently about the need for increased security in the United States in his lecture "Drugs, Thugs and Terrorists: Can Civil Society Survive a World of Open Borders?" The series changed course in 2000 when artist Barry Moser, designer

of the acclaimed Pennyroyal Caxton Press *Holy Bible*, gave a slide lecture tracing the development of his own career as a wood engraver and designer of books. In his lecture, Dr. Lienhard asked the members of the large audience in the Ernst Common Room to stretch their minds around the concept that information itself is literally replacing both power and material goods as we create the new realities of the twenty-first century.

TOURING Eugene O'Neill's New London

Most people in New London know that the Monte Cristo Cottage is on Pequot Avenue, and that it was the setting for *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, an autobiographical play about his dysfunctional family by New London's most famous former resident. But do they know where and what the Second Story Club was? Or that the young Eugene O'Neill used to leave the Public Library of New London loaded down with stacks of books to fuel his restless imagination?

The answer to these and other questions about the relationship between Nobel Prize-winning playwright Eugene O'Neill and the city where he spent many years of his childhood and youth can be found in *Touring Eugene O'Neill's New London*. The twenty-eight page guidebook to places associated with Eugene O'Neill in New London and Waterford was created by Robert A. Richter, manager of arts programming at Connecticut College, as part of the millennial celebration *Eugene O'Neill's New London: The Influence of Time & Place*. Liberally illustrated with maps of the city and with photographs and postcard images, many of which are borrowed from the Sheaffer-O'Neill Collection, the booklet provides a wealth of information about O'Neill and about New

London in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Touring Eugene O'Neill's New London may be read online in the "library" section of eOneill.com, the electronic Eugene O'Neill archive maintained by Harley Hammerman at www.eoneill.com. For a free copy of the booklet itself, contact Laurie Deredita at 439-2654 or visit Special Collections to pick one up.

A&E BIOGRAPHY OF EUGENE O'NEILL

One of the glories of the Sheaffer-O'Neill Collection is its photographs of Eugene O'Neill and his friends and associates. During the summer a researcher for a film company commissioned to produce an A&E Biography program about O'Neill spent several days looking through the hundreds of photographs, playbills and other material in the collection. Many of the images from the college's collection will be used in the program, scheduled to be shown on television in 2002, around St. Patrick's Day.

SPRING SEMESTER EVENTS sponsored by the Friends of the Library

SHAIN LIBRARY EXHIBITION: *The Wizard of Oz*

Professor Emeritus of Art History Charles T. Price will curate an exhibition that highlights editions of the *Wizard of Oz* in the library's Special Collections. One of the treasures of the Gildersleeve Collection of Children's Literature is the first issue of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* by L. Frank Baum with pictures by W.W. Denslow. Also featured will be *L. Frank Baum's The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* illustrated by Barry Moser and published by the Pennyroyal Press, described elsewhere in this issue of the newsletter. The exhibition will run from January, 2002 through March 8.

SLIDE LECTURE

BY ABIGAIL VAN SLYCK:

"Reading the Library: Interpreting the Architecture of Carnegie Libraries"

Wednesday, February 20, 4 p.m., Charles Chu Asian Art Reading Room.

Dayton Associate Professor of Art History Abigail Van Slyck, teaches in the Architectural Studies program at Connecticut College. She is the author of *Free to all: Carnegie libraries & American culture, 1890-1920*, published in 1995 by the University of Chicago Press. The Carnegie libraries, which were funded with Carnegie Foundation money, played an important role in the development of the public library as a public institution in the United States in the early 20th century.

ARTISTS' BOOKS ROUNDTABLE AND EXHIBITION

Friday, March 29, 2002, Charles Chu Asian Art Reading Room. Details to be announced.

In 1998, Shain Library sponsored an exhibition of artists' books, "Out of the Center: Artists' Books from the Center for Book Arts" accompanied by a lecture and roundtable discussion. In March, 2002 we will repeat the success of the 1998 roundtable with an afternoon of

talks by several book artists, including Robin Price of Middletown, Connecticut and Esther K. Smith and Dikko Faust of Purgatory Pie Press in New York City. Artists' books are books made by artists. Their form varies widely from objects that are in fact what everyone would recognize as a traditional "book" to objects that scarcely resemble books at all. Special Collections has been collecting examples of this fascinating artistic genre, which will be exhibited from March 29 to the end of the spring semester in the exhibit cases in Shain Library.

YOUR MEMBERSHIP invited for 2002

As another year begins, we invite you to renew your membership in the Friends of the Connecticut College Library. Founded in 1945, the Friends of the Library is an informal group of individuals who share an interest in the programs of the library and the well being of the college. To those who have recently renewed, we sincerely thank you. We welcome new members at any time, and urge readers to let us know of anyone in our area who would enjoy a formal association with one of the New London area's major cultural resources.

Membership contributions are the primary source of financial support for Special Collections. They enable us to acquire rare books or other materials and are used to pay any costs associated with public exhibitions, which are the most important way our holdings may be seen by the campus and regional community. Member support enables the library to offer public lectures, provides a scholarship award to a graduating senior or alumnus attending a graduate program in library or archival studies, and underwrites the cost of this newsletter.

Special Collections is located in the Palmer Room on the second floor of Shain Library. This attractive reading room, which houses the personal libraries of George S. Palmer and his brother Elisha Loomis Palmer and other collections, is normally open weekdays from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. and members of the Friends are invited to visit when they come to the library. If you are visiting the library specifically to use the Special Collections, it is advisable to make an appointment with Laurie Deredita by calling 439-2654.

Your 2002 membership, new or renewed, may now be sent in with the enclosed card and envelope. Membership has many benefits including borrowing privileges at Shain Library and Greer Music Library for those who contribute at the \$50 level and above, invitations to all Friends events and a subscription to the *Newsletter*.

Laurie M. Deredita

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