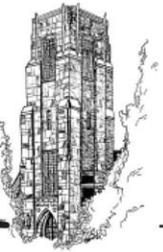


BELLTOWER



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Notes from the Archives: "Seeing the End from the Beginning"

By Kyle Breneman, Reference Librarian

Geneva College owes its location in Beaver Falls to a small utopian Christian community from the 19th century.

In 1804, George Rapp came to America from Germany, bringing with him almost 800 members of his separatist religious community, known as the Harmony Society. After building short-lived settlements in Harmony, Pennsylvania (Butler Co.), then in New Harmony, Indiana (Posey Co.), the Society finally settled in Beaver County, Pennsylvania, beginning the town of Economy (now called Ambridge) in 1824.

Even though the Harmony Society was at the fringes of American religious life, practicing celibacy, embracing a mystical version of Christianity, and believing that Christ's return was imminent, they quickly established themselves as frugal people and industrious workers. They adopted the newly-invented power of steam engines to drive their textile industry, becoming known for their wool, cotton, and silk. They created a self-sufficient community and sold their surplus goods to surrounding townsfolk.

It seems strange that such a self-contained, utopian community of celibate separatists would take any interest in Geneva College, but God in his providence was paving the way for an unlikely partnership between the two. Gradually the practice of celibacy took its toll on the Harmony Society and, as the original members aged, the society turned away from manufacturing to investing. In 1859, the Harmony Society bought the bulk of the land that would become Beaver Falls. The Society resurveyed this land, expanded their holdings in 1866, and began the task of building the town.

Meanwhile, in Northwood, Ohio, Geneva College was eking out a difficult existence. Geneva was founded in Northwood in 1848 and had sustained financial difficulty over the years, being sold at sheriff sale in 1862. But the College was redeemed in 1864 and, amidst increasing enrollment in the 1870s, President George sought to stabilize the school's financial position by securing an endowment that would provide income independent of tuition.

During President George's search for an endowment, it became clear that although the Northwood community wanted to retain the College, their financial commitment to Geneva was outstripped by the promised pledges of other communities that sought to attract the College. Ultimately, a committee convened by the Synod sought invitations

from communities. Four potential locations, including Northwood, Ohio; Bellefontaine, Ohio; Morning Sun, Iowa, and Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, were proposed to the Synod. In the words of President M.M. Pearce:

Dr. George spoke on behalf of Beaver Falls. He told them that the Harmony Society would give ten acres for the college grounds, and he would raise \$20,000. Now Dr. George did not have that amount, nor did he know how he was going to get it, but he made the offer on faith. He had managed to be the last speaker, and although he did not have the \$20,000, he made the promise. And he went out and got it.

The Harmony Society was eager to donate land to Geneva because of the prestige the College would bring to what was essentially their town. The move also pleased the Synod, which wanted Geneva located closer to large groups of Reformed Presbyterians. So God in his providence worked through the Harmony Society, and Dr. George to establish Geneva's future.

But God was not yet finished providing for Geneva. Before the move to Beaver Falls was complete, Geneva received \$20,000 to complete construction of Old Main. According to a member of the committee tasked with the move, "We are free to say that such an undertaking would not have been entered upon if we had been able to see the end from the beginning." Carson, 21.

In 2011, as we look to the future it is encouraging to see how God has provided for Geneva in the past. People like Dr. George stepped out in faith to act, even though they could not "see the end from the beginning."

David M. Carson, *Pro Christo et Patria: A History of Geneva College* (Virginia Beach: Donning Co. Publishers, 1997).



("Moon over Old Main" E. Coughlin (1966) from McCartney Library)

National Poetry Month in April!

This Time Is Mine

by Kimberly Allen, '10

A stone labyrinth
Old, withered, broken plaster, window eyes
Overwhelmed with knowledge
Surrounded in thought

Books full of adventure, romance, critique
Power with old paper aroma
dusty plastic covers

It is Book's home
this labyrinth

Stories
in Rainbow glass
The ones you've failed to learn
Stories don't have to come from books

What would people say about being inside the labyrinth?
They might talk about Uncle Clarence
towering over them as they duplicate pieces of their lives
It was Uncle Clarence that screamed like a banshee
when the machine failed

They could tell you about the love notes
The ones they found, or wished they hadn't
They could tell you about sitting by windows
and watched their friends make lightning in the grass
or the paper cuts

How do they feel in this labyrinth?
I know what I feel
As long as I'm in this maze, I feel
This time is mine

Chimes Volume 81, issue 1 (2009-10),
reprinted by permission of the author.

Through April, McCartney Library celebrated *National Poetry Month* by displaying a "Poem-a-Day" throughout the Library, and holding a "Poem-a-Day" contest.

The contest was conceived and run by Bernadette McKean, the Library's Reference Librarian. Bernadette notes that "Faculty, staff, and students have been very receptive to the Poem-a-Day display and quickly found ways to participate.

For example, Dr. Terry Thomas, from the Bible Department, delivered poems for the display that were written by his students for an assignment. Kay Mills, from the Chemistry Department, submitted an original poem. Library staff and two students, Josh Andre and Gregory Williams, suggested several of their favorite poems to be displayed daily."

For the contest, Bernadette developed a high-tech way to enter the contest by using QR Codes (Quick Response), which are a type of smart "barcodes" readable

by QR barcode reader apps and camera smart phones. The QR code consists of a black and white design arranged in a square pattern (see photo below) and can hold more information than a regular barcode. When the two-dimensional code is scanned into a phone, users are directed to a "Poem-a-Day" contest entry form, which can be filled out immediately on their phone and submitted.

Each day during the month of April, a new poem was displayed on the reference desk. After a poem left the display it was placed in a unique spot within the Library for further display for the remainder of the month. Displaying the poems throughout the library allowed visitors additional opportunities to enjoy the poetry selections and another chance to enter the contest.

On Reading Day, random entrants were chosen to win one of six exciting prizes. The Poem-a-Day contest prizes consist of a new book of poetry, a new **Go Green** mug, a copy of *Paradise Lost Windows: A Story in Lead and Light* by Shirley J. Kilpatrick and M. Howard Mattsson-Boze, a McCartney Library mouse pad, a Crux Jubilant plaque, and a McCartney Library glass mug.

Bernadette initiated several successful contests throughout the 2010-2011 academic term to promote reading. *National Poetry Month* worked as a way to highlight literature appreciation to the College community while integrating the Library's innovative on-line services and technologies.



LOOKING FOR A CHALLENGE? TRY THE
LIBRARY'S GEOCACHE!

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