



WILKES COLLEGE CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
FRUITION OF A DREAM

INTO THE UNKNOWN YEARS

In years yet unknown, thousands of persons will enjoy the beauty of this building and will join with one another in the artistic performances that will be offered here. Only those of us who have long hoped for such a building can fully savor the gratitude that we feel for those quiet friends who have made this building a reality.

For two decades we dreamed of a Fine Arts Center, but for most of these two decades the dreams and plans seemed fruitless. Then friends who shared this dream gave funds with which to construct this Center . . . and a dream was realized.

The faith and confidence of the donors will be a perpetual challenge to those who use the building. Somehow, in some way, we must encourage and release the creative talents and interests of students so that they will lead fuller lives, dream greater dreams, and play a greater part in the drama of life that stretches into the unknown years.

THE DEDICATION

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

CHARLES B. WALLER, *Chairman, Board of Trustees*

REVEREND LANE D. KILBURN, C. S. C., *President, King's College*

EUGENE S. FARLEY, *President, Wilkes College*

PAUL GREEN, *Playwright, former Professor of Philosophy
and member of the Department of Dramatic Arts
at the University of North Carolina*

ALFRED AIROLA, *President, Cue and Curtain*

ALFRED S. GROH, *Director of Wilkes College Theater*

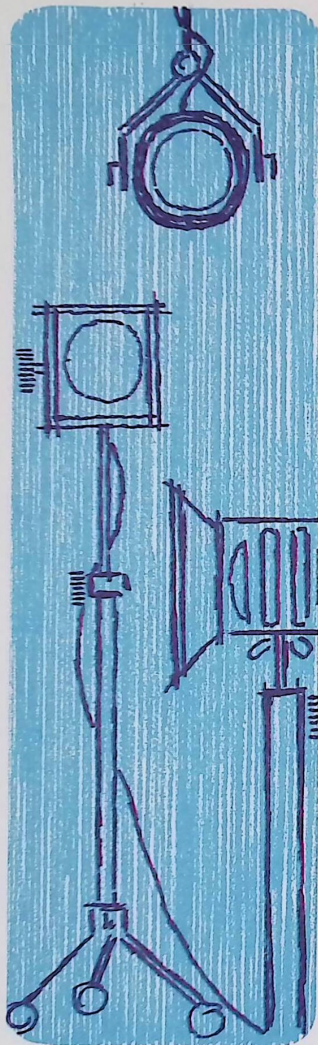
ANNETTE EVANS, *Trustee*

DR. ABRAHAM D. BARRAS, *Rabbi, Temple Israel*

DR. JULE AYERS, *Pastor, First Presbyterian Church*

DONALD OENSLAGER, *New York Stage Designer*

REVEREND ALOYSIUS GALVIN, S. J., *President, University of Scranton*



WELCOME *Charles B. Waller*

"It is with a great deal of pride and pleasure that we welcome you to this Dedication of the Center for the Performing Arts.

"About one hundred years ago there stood on this plot the railroad station which was the terminus of the road at that time. Later it became the property of the Conyngham family, and eventually came into the possession of the Wyoming Valley Society for Arts and Sciences, the brain child of Mr. Gilbert McClintock. In planning for the future of this site, Mr. McClintock was joined by Mr. F. M. Kirby and Mr. George F. Baker, the New York financier.

"This property was acquired by the Wyoming Valley Society for Arts and Sciences in the mid nineteen-twenties, and plans for its use were put into eclipse by the depression of 1929. The deaths of Mr. Kirby and Mr. Baker in the early 1940's seemed to finish these early plans.

"The lot lay unoccupied from about 1925, when the Conyngham houses were torn down, until this building was erected. In the 1940's Mr. McClintock decided that there was no longer any prospect of constructing a museum. He therefore called a meeting of the Society for Arts and Sciences, and requested the conveyance of this property to Wilkes College.

"So you see that this project had its inception with the Wyoming Valley Society for Arts and Sciences. It culminated in this beautiful Center for the Performing Arts when anonymous friends of Wilkes College provided funds which changed a long-time dream into a beautiful and useful building."



SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CENTER *Eugene S. Farley*

"We are grateful to you for joining us in the dedication of this new Center for the Performing Arts. We hope that you will share our conviction that it is a beautiful building, that it is practical, and that it will enable us to create a better balance in our curriculum and in our extra-curricular activities.

"During the past eight years we have developed a fine science complex which includes the undergraduate center, the graduate center, and the research center. While these science facilities were being erected, it must sometimes have seemed that we were emphasizing the sciences at the expense of the arts. This was true for a time but the completion of this Center permits us to establish a better balance, and we now look forward to a period in which the performing arts will receive appropriate attention.

"We hope that the availability of this building will encourage our students to develop interests that are independent of their academic work but which will be creative in their influence. We dare to hope that much-needed qualities of the spirit will be nurtured through a program that combines discipline in the sciences, the humanities, and the social studies with creativity in the performing arts. We anticipate that creative effort will cultivate artistic and spiritual resources which will give meaning and direction to our material growth.

"Although the friends who have given this building wish to remain anonymous, I wish to express the warm gratitude of trustees, faculty, and students for this building and for all of the opportunities that it will open to students and faculty. My own gratitude I can never adequately express, for the completion of this Center marks another milestone in the development of the College. In the decades ahead it will enable the College to better serve both our students and our community."



DRAMATIZING OUR AMERICAN HERITAGE *Paul Green*

"FROM THIS BUILDING WILL GROW STRENGTH AND CREATIVE POWER. AND I HOPE THAT OUT OF THIS WILL GROW AN IDEA OF CREATING HERE, IN THESE QUIET HILLS, A SPECTACULAR STORY OF THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE BUILT THIS PLACE AND MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO BE HERE."

"Last night I walked out and listened.

"The great enemy of the outdoor drama is the airplane. We are right now busy building across from Mount Vernon a great amphitheater and the thing that worries the life out of me is the airplanes. But they say they can whip that. But here, last night, I noticed how quiet it was and I thought of the tremendous history here. I thought I could hear the Welsh singing, and the Germans chanting their hymns, and the Irish and the Italians, all that interwoven humanity that has made you people and has made this hour possible.

"And I can see a scene of horrifying power, of twelve men trapped underneath this very City, eight miles from here, dying. What a scene that is. And I suppose as far as I know, their bodies are there beneath this earth today.

"And yet, with such material at hand, what do we produce in the great institutions like this that we are building all over this country. We find, again and again, a production of 'Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf', of 'Rhinoceros', or something that you copy out of Hollywood; while here you are sitting right on the most dramatic material possible. So why not try to tell that story.

"Last night as I walked I thought about the people here and reproduced this thought in verse . . .

*Long, long ago, and not so long,
the dreamers walked this land here,
up and down this valley,
this Wyoming Valley.*

*The strong of arm, the fond of heart,
the valiant and the daring.*

*Gay was their laugh and free,
their footfalls light and gay,
their faces lifted toward the dawn,
their foreheads to the sunlight breaking.
Warm was the hand clasp,
friendly their voices,
gentle their kindly look and fellowship commingling.*

*Yet, darkness and weakness too and pain to follow,
and grief for the sorrowing ones the same
borned and bedded, and twisted here,
ringed by the nightmare choking a wilderness,
and joined with a burning lash of wrath
and fire of passions tempest raging.*

*Their faded forms around us still —
I could feel them last night in walking here,
up and down this river —
their faded forms around us still,
the touch of their vanished hands is in the air,
their accents murmur in the falling gloom
in tremulous syllables of sound.*

*O, ye, who live and breathe the sun,
remember us the dead,
fail not your trust,*

*for if ye fail, so we have failed,
and all we hoped in you and struggled for
dies with us in the grave.*

*The scythe drops down,
the hammer nerveless falls,
the plough and shovel wait unused and still,
the weeds take them,
the roots thread their sightless sockets through,
and hands will shake to hands, to human hands,
dissolve in dust, and the fierce and clamorous strength that
used them once,
that ditched and dug and planted with them here,
is gone forever in the tomb.*

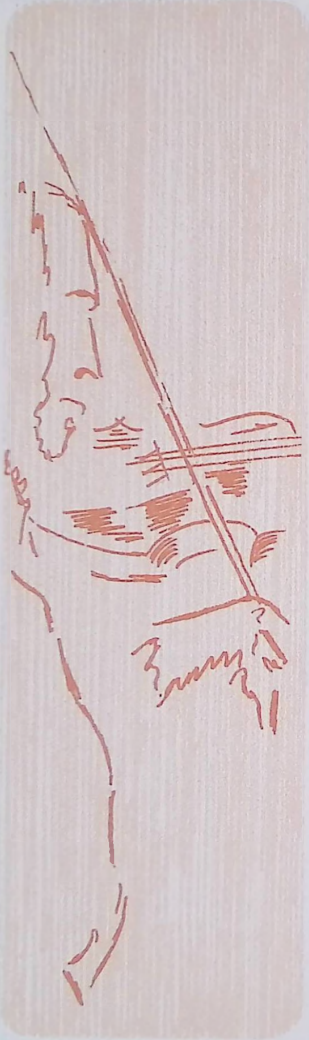
*And mute lie the lips in dust that sang their song.
What then?
Shall their dreaming all be lost and their purpose all to naught?
The head of agony upon the pillar turned for nothingness?
Nay, cry out the roll call of their prideful names.
Wake with the reveille of the trumpets sound,
the deeds of these that lie forgotten and foregone.*

*For all our walking is the path they trod,
their imaged hopes the goals we seek,
their begging tongues the prayers we plead,
our gestures still the same strong-fingered hands,
plucking the bouquet, forging the steel,
building and shaping and creating in their stead.*

*This is a creative place, this is a shrine,
and out of it may come this creativity.
So, thus the dead do live in us again
and we the living honorably may die."*







PRESENTATION TO LEIGH ALLEN *By Annette Evans*

"Many of the words I was going to say have already been said. My brief remarks begin — 'Man Dreams!'

"He had a dream when he came here from Connecticut with his background of town meetings and free speech and green places and towering elm trees.

"And in the spring of 1940 some trustees of this College had a dream for an arts center. It got as far as blueprints but the thing that was lacking was the money.

"And later on another design was drawn up — a more elaborate one. And gradually as through the years the funds accumulated, also the atomic age accumulated. And we found it necessary to build a science hall, and again a research center, and again a wing to the science hall, and again and again. And then finally a small group of anonymous donors gave the College a Center for the Performing Arts.

"And this time the plans were actually ready. But we didn't build. The settling in the Valley made it impossible to use this land for a year. And again it was put off. And then at last it came to be.

"Man, according to Maxwell Anderson, who is one of our great playwrights, has come a long way from the salt water or the Garden of Eden in the millions of years that lie behind him. And he has a long way to go in the millions of years that lie ahead. And what he becomes depends upon what he dreams and desires. And the theater and all its allied arts have the power to turn what man dreams into what he will become. For the theater was born on the streets of Athens and it was reborn in the Christian Church. And the Christian Church will see the mysteries again.

"In this building you see a beauty which has nothing to do with the brick and the glass and the stone of which the building is built. And it is due entirely to the gift, the free gift of the talents of a friend of Wilkes. And I would like to give that person a certificate of recognition which states . . .

"To Leigh Allen in recognition of the generous use of his rare talents and the unlimited gift of his time in planning and designing the interior of the Center for the Performing Arts of Wilkes College. The trustees of Wilkes and the committee in charge of the Arts Building place here, in script, their deep appreciation and grateful thanks knowing that in design and texture and light, this building will be for the community and for countless students to come, a thing of beauty and a joy forever."

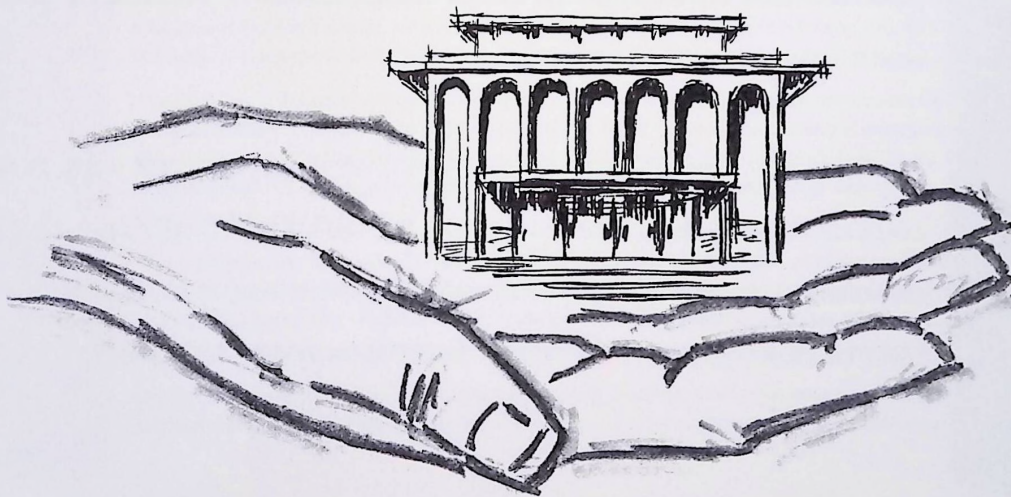
TO LEIGH ALLEN IN APPRECIATION By ALFRED S. GROH

*Build me a house
And let it stand
A house of virtue
In the land.*

*Build me a place
And let it hold
The days of my life
As they unfold.*

*Let it keep
From this time hence
Some images
Of magnificence.*

*Let there be
When we are gone
A source of strength
To build upon.*



IN APPRECIATION *Alfred Airola*

"I SPEAK TO YOU TODAY FOR ALL THE STUDENTS OF WILKES COLLEGE. EACH OF US WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR THIS ADDITION TO OUR CAMPUS. YET, WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR MUCH MORE. WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR FORESIGHT, WITHOUT WHICH NOTHING CAN EVER BE UNDERTAKEN. WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR COURAGE, WITHOUT WHICH IDEAS REMAIN NOTHING BUT BLUEPRINTS. WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT, WITHOUT WHICH THIS PROGRAM WOULD NEVER HAVE REACHED COMPLETION.

"FINALLY, AND PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANTLY, WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR LEADERSHIP, LEADERSHIP WHICH WILL INSPIRE US TO USE THIS BUILDING TO ITS GREATEST CAPABILITIES, AND LEADERSHIP WHICH WILL INSPIRE US TO UTILIZE OUR TALENT TO THE LIMIT OF OUR POTENTIAL. THANK YOU ONCE AGAIN FOR THIS MAGNIFICENT BUILDING."



THE NEW SIGNIFICANCE OF COLLEGE THEATER *Donald Oenslager*

"Professional theater has been beset by unfortunate change and decline over the past forty years. During the 1924-25 season, for example, 228 productions were brought forth; last season we witnessed only 63.

"Now there are definite reasons for this decline, among them a lack of plays being written by contemporary authors, almost prohibitive increase in costs of production, the power of unions, and the tearing down of theaters to make room for parking lots. So we have our reasons, none of which makes the situation any easier to bear for those who have lived with theater the better part of their lives.

"These four decades of decline have resulted in the theater of today being a very routine, unimaginative place—standardized, and full of Broadway know-how. The theater has forgotten its audience to the point whereby, over the past few years, there has occurred a noticeable decentralization and a flight of intellectual theater to the university and civic stage.

"As one who has lived through the period, I can testify that during these past forty years professional theater has decreased in both quantity and quality of production, whereas educational theater has developed admirably in both respects. Practically every college and university in the country today has its own theater, which plays an important role in education. I would even go as far as to say the theater itself is education, and that the educational theater building, such as the Wilkes College Center for the Performing Arts, has become a status symbol of the cultural attainment of the educational institution.

"However, as is the case with most areas of development, some colleges and universities have gone a bit overboard. Many of them have built massive structures for purposes of elaborate programming, facilities which will surely prove too large and too complicated for students to work. I wonder also if the elaborate programming will not require of these institutions a primary commitment to box-office material. This is not educational theater as it should be.

"Every college and university should be able to indulge in experimental productions, wherein the students can do the work themselves rather than stand in the wings to observe the creative endeavor of the faculty. It is within this area that I would be lavish in my praise of Wilkes College theater, which has always sought to encourage the full participation of students not only in acting, but in every phase of theater production.

"As I contemplate this policy of student involvement in conjunction with your beautifully intimate and practical Center for the Performing Arts, it is rather easy to visualize success and satisfaction for many years to come."



Thus was dedicated the Wilkes College Center for the Performing Arts.
This beautiful building stands not only as a cultural facility to serve
both college and community, but as a vivid example of the fact
that the longer one hopes . . . the longer one dreams . . .
the greater the satisfaction when that desire becomes . . .

. . . A LIVING REALITY

