

Humanities Center

316 Roberts Hall • Huntsville, AL 35899 Phone: 256.824.6583 Fax: 256.824.6702

UAH

Humanities Center

The University of Alabama in Huntsville

Fall 2005

Dr. Brian Martine, Director
martineb@uah.edu
256.824.2576

Dr. Johanna Shields, Executive
Director for Special Projects
shields@uah.edu
256.824.2578

Ms. Deborah Nelson, Program Assistant
nelsond@uah.edu
256.824.6583

Steering Committee

Dr. Rolf Goebel (German)
goebelr@uah.edu
256.824.2344

Dr. Lillian Joyce (Art & Art History)
joycel@uah.edu
256.824.2588

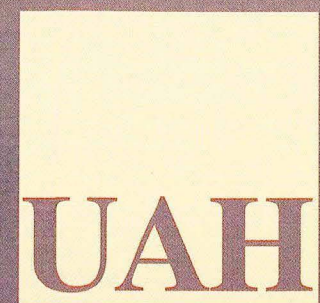
Dr. Rose Norman (English)
normanr@uah.edu
256.824.2373

Dr. Andree Reeves (Political Science)
reevesa@uah.edu
256.824.2397

Dr. John Severn (History)
severnj@uah.edu
256.824.2567

Dr. William Wilkerson (Philosophy)
wilkerw@uah.edu
256.824.2338

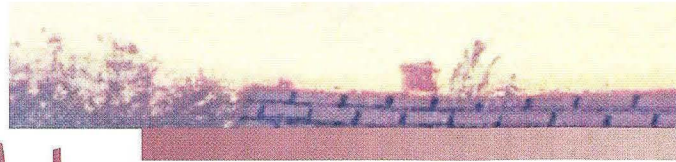
On the cover:
"Fearn Street,
Loughborough"
by Michael Crouse



The University of
Alabama in Huntsville

UAH is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Institution

Humanities Center @ UAH



Sixteen years ago, a group of faculty members from the humanities departments of the College of Liberal Arts decided to seek funds to establish a Center designed to promote humanistic inquiry both within the university and in the wider Huntsville community. Toward that end, a challenge grant was secured from the National Endowment for the Humanities. This grant acted (as it was intended to do) as a focus for the attraction of other funds, both state and private, and within three or four years, the foundation of the current Humanities Center Endowment was laid. In the years since, the original monies (invested and monitored through the UA system's combined endowment fund) have grown and with some later donations form the Center's current endowment. That endowment is divided into three distinct funds the annual incomes from which support the Center's activities. The first of these funds is the Humanities Center Endowment. The earnings from this fund are used annually to support professional travel undertaken by faculty members working in the humanities and related fields, a program of mini-grants designed to support faculty research in the humanities, as well as general public programming in the humanities. The income from the second fund, the Visiting Eminent Scholar Endowment, is used to support visits to the UAH campus by outstanding scholars in the humanities. While here, these scholars are typically attached to one of the humanities departments in the College, teaching one or two courses, sharing their research with colleagues at UAH, and presenting lectures on their work to the general public. Until recently, scholars invited under the aegis of this program all visited for a full semester. Four years ago, we initiated a new program that uses some of the income from this fund to invite eminent scholars for short-term (usually week-long) visits as well. The third fund is the Humanities Center Salmon Library Endowment. The annual income from this fund is used to develop the humanities collections at the Salmon Library based on proposals submitted by UAH faculty members.

In addition to the activities supported by our endowment funds, the Center continues to seek external funding for other programs designed to enhance the study of the humanities at UAH. Several major grants have been secured in recent years making possible new opportunities for students throughout the university. Given restrictions on the use of endowment and grant funding, the Center depends for all operating expenses on the continuing support of the office of the Vice President for Research without which none of the activities mentioned above would be possible.



Prominent Philosopher visits campus

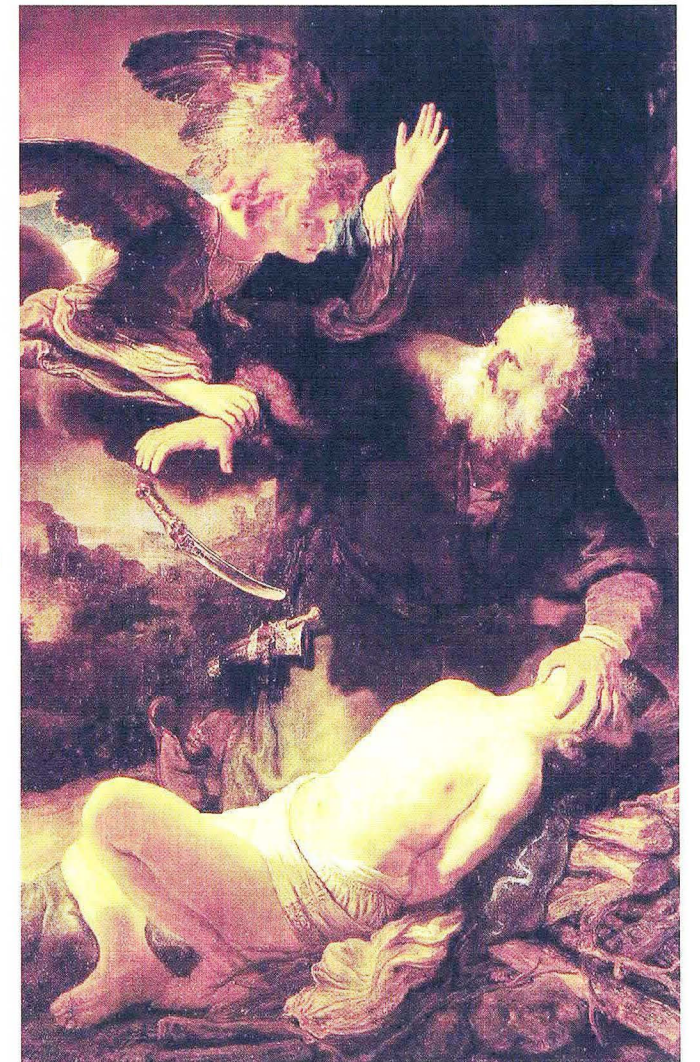
Daniel Conway, Professor of Philosophy at Penn State University and widely published scholar in nineteenth century Continental philosophy, visited UAH for several days during the spring semester. While here, he gave lectures in several philosophy classes, met informally with philosophy students, and spoke to a public audience analyzing Rembrandt's fascination with the biblical story of Abraham and Isaac from a Kierkegaardian point of view.

History Forum

Organized around the theme "Sports and American Culture," the History Forum brought a series of interesting speakers to campus to present a multi-cultural, historical examination of sports as a lens through which to examine American society, politics, and culture.

Annual SEWA Conference held on UAH and A&M campuses

The Southeast World History Association (a regional affiliate of the World History Association) held its sixteenth annual conference at UAH and Alabama A&M in the fall semester. This organization, dedicated to promoting the advancement of teaching and scholarship in global history, gathers southeastern scholars together each year to discuss current research as well as innovative approaches to the teaching of world history.



Society for Ancient Languages welcomes Julia Gaisser

As part of their year end celebration (the Convivium), the students of the Society for Ancient Languages invited Professor Julia Gaisser of Bryn Mawr College as their guest speaker. An expert on Republican and Augustan poetry, her lectures were greatly enjoyed both on campus and at Professor Gerberding's "castle" where the Convivium is held annually.



Public Programs

Each year, the Center sponsors (in whole or part) public programs that enrich an understanding of the humanities. Here are some of the programs we were pleased to help to bring to campus last year.

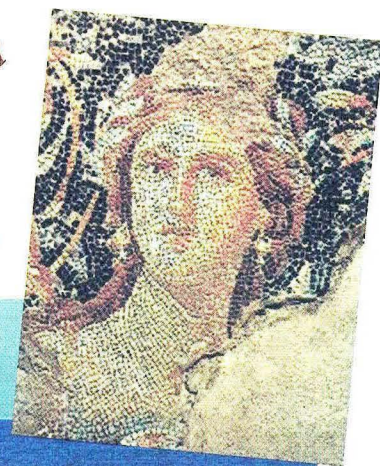


The Core Ensemble

The Center cosponsored (along with the College of Engineering and the Office of Multicultural Affairs) the return of the Core Ensemble, a group of actors and musicians who have created works of great musical and historical interest. They presented an outstanding piece entitled "Harlem Nights," which examined the lives of African-American poets Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, and Claude McKay as seen through the eyes of painter Aaron Douglas. During their visit to the campus, playwright and actor Akin Babatunde also presented a workshop for UAH students interested in theater.

Archaeological Institute of America Series

The North Alabama Society of the Archaeological Institute of America (AIA) brought prominent archaeologists to campus to address the theme "Life in the New Era: the Near East from Alexander to Rome." The lectures addressed the sites of Massada, Qumran, Sepphoris, Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Caesarea and explored diverse and intriguing topics such as Jewish resistance to Rome and the archaeological evidence for the Bible.



Visiting Scholars

UAH bids farewell to Kelly Cherry

Poet and novelist Kelly Cherry visited UAH for a fourth time as a Visiting Eminent Scholar in the fall semester of 2004. As in her previous visits, she contributed greatly to the life of the campus, teaching a course in creative writing, leading a public writing workshop, and presenting public readings of her exquisite poetry. Especially memorable was the evening on which she read her poems from *Welsh Table Talk* (see next page), weaving in stories about the summer on an island off the coast of Wales that had inspired them. She has become very much a part of the intellectual community of the university and Huntsville and we are grateful for her many contributions during the past several years.



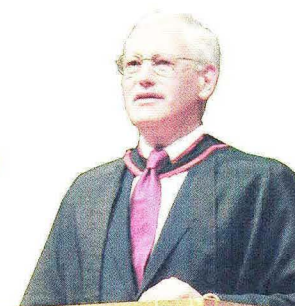
David Weissman enhances Fall Philosophy Curriculum

Philosopher David Weissman, Professor of Philosophy at City College of the City University of New York, visited campus for a week during the fall under the aegis of the short-term visiting scholar program. Well known for his extensive writings and public lectures in systematic philosophy, Professor Weissman added his distinctive voice to philosophical discussion at UAH. While here, he visited a number of classes and participated in a seminar on contemporary systematic philosophy – the reading list for which included his most recent book, *Lost Souls*. At the end of the week, he gave a lecture to a large public audience that ended in a very lively exchange between the philosopher and UAH students.

Professor EDWARD INGRAM returns to campus

The Center is pleased to announce that Professor Edward Ingram has returned this fall as Professor of History and Visiting Eminent Scholar in the Humanities. A leading expert on British Imperialism, he first visited our campus in 2001 as a short-term scholar lecturing to students and public audiences. Impressed by his comprehensive grasp of British imperial history as well as his ability to communicate historical ideas to diverse audiences, the History Department and the Humanities Center invited him to return to UAH as an Eminent Visiting Scholar for the spring semester of 2003. During that visit he taught an undergraduate/graduate seminar on Imperial British History and presented a timely and memorable lecture at the April 14, 2003 International Business Studies Initiative Symposium entitled, "Projecting America Worldwide: Culture, Power, and Trade." Currently a resident of New Zealand with both Canadian and British citizenship, Professor Ingram is a graduate of Oxford University and the London School of Economics. He is the editor (and founder) of *The International History Review* and Professor of Imperial History Emeritus, Simon Fraser University. He has authored a trilogy on British geopolitics, grand strategy, and empire-building in India and the Middle East in the early nineteenth century: *Commitment to Empire: Prophecies of the Great Game in Asia, 1797-1800*, *Britain's Persian Connection, 1798-1828*, and *The Beginning of the Great Game in Asia, 1828-1834*, as well as other works including: *The British Empire as a World Power*, *Empire-Building and Empire-Builders*, and *In Defense of British India: Great Britain in the Middle East, 1774-1842*.

This fall, Professor Ingram will teach an undergraduate/graduate seminar on Imperial Britain and will also present a number of independent lectures on campus for students and public audiences. For more information concerning his schedule, please contact the UAH History Department at 256-824-6310.



Publication of

Welsh Table Talk

In last year's newsletter, we described the project that was about to lead to the publication of a collection of poems by Kelly Cherry and of etchings by Michael Crouse. The finished product exceeded our expectations (which were very high) in every respect. It's hard to imagine a more elegant presentation of the wonderful collection of poems and etchings contributed by Cherry and Crouse. Their work, though certainly of great interest considered separately, seems to take on added meaning and richness when encountered together in this piece of outstanding craftsmanship. Designed and hand bound by the Book Arts Conservatory of Washington, D.C., the chapbook is made entirely of archival materials meant to last for at least 300 years. The leather binding of the book itself and box that contains it is Italian calfskin. The interior of the chapbook is letterpress printed on art paper by the printer of the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. Included in the box is a separate folder containing three more loose (frameable) etchings by Crouse.



Julian and Dorothy Davidson and Sue Kirkpatrick open the first copy.

The project was underwritten through the generous support of a private donor, Mrs. Julian Davidson, (together with some funding from the Humanities Center) and is now available to other College donors. It is currently offered as a gift to supporters who donate \$500 or more to the College of Liberal Arts Dean's Excellence Fund. Interested donors are encouraged to contact either the Dean's Office (256-824-6200) or the Humanities Center Office (256-824-6583) for further information.

Poetry by Kelly Cherry

Ten years ago as I write this, I spent a week on Bardsey Island, off the coast of Wales. Bardsey Island is a National Nature Reserve and "designated Site of Special Scientific Interest." Automobiles are prohibited on the island; there is no electricity; there is no indoor plumbing; and nothing must be left behind that is not organic. I went there with a friend, his ten-year-old daughter, and the daughter's best friend....In *Welsh Table Talk* – some of the poems written on the island, others afterward; some a reflection of fact, others more a reflection of spirit – I tried to convey both the sadness and the playfulness of that week. I tried to capture the simplicity of childhood, and the extravagant imagination of childhood, and place them side by side with a darker, adult story that is semi-submerged, like the island itself.

Learning to Live with Stone

A shore of washed stone
A sky the color of stone
A stone cliff

Stony face, stony heart

There is nothing here,
twisted roots, sea taking the land
back. Sea wrack
and rain.

There is nothing
Here between us but stone.

One must learn to live with stone,
Make it a bed to lie on
A step to climb.

Carve.

Kelly Cherry
Eudora Welty Professor Emerita
The University of Wisconsin

Library Grants

The Humanities Center awarded nine library enhancement grants during the 2004-2005 academic year.

Diana Bell, English:

materials from a series entitled *Studies in Writing and Rhetoric*.

Philip Boucher, History:

The Repertorium Columbian, thirteen volumes of Italian and Spanish primary documents translated into English about Columbus and his world.

Mitch Berbrier, Sociology:

The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements.

Nancy Finley, Women's Studies:

print materials for research on women in several disciplines, including history, literature, communications, sociology and political science.

Lillian Joyce, Art & Art History:

materials on non-western art to supplement a new survey class.

Jerry Mebane, English:

materials on the topic of Literature, Religion, and Warfare.

David Neff, English:

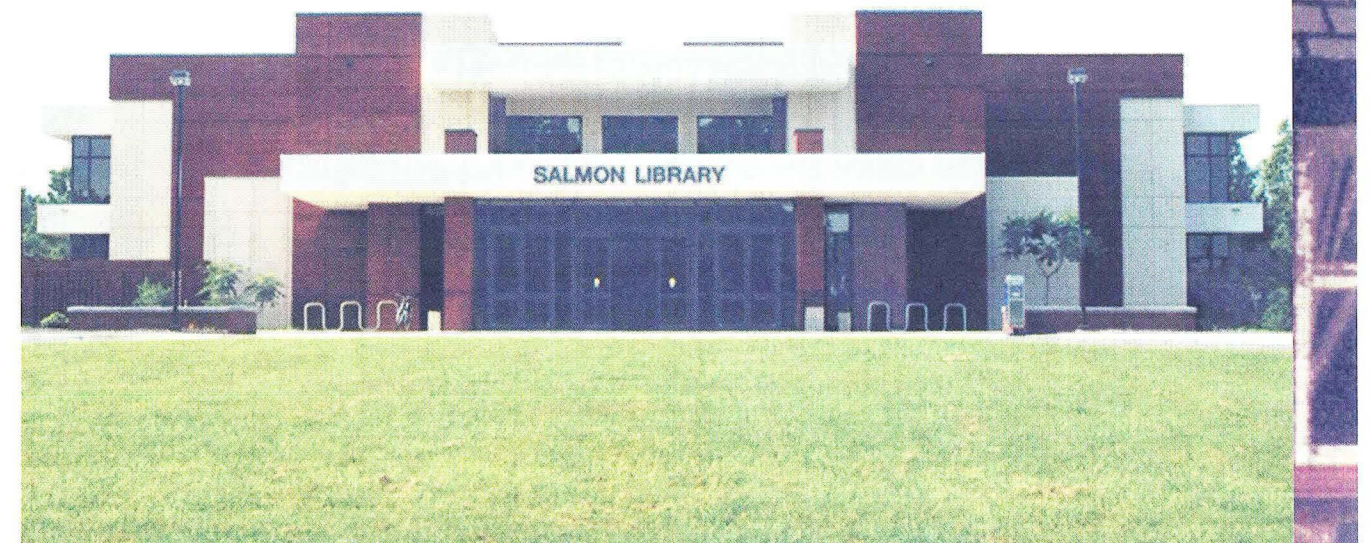
the new standard edition of *Samuel Taylor Coleridge's Poetical Works*.

Sheri Marie Shuck-Hall, History:

materials concerning the process of collecting and preserving historical data to supplement a new class on public history.

Stephen Szilagyi, English:

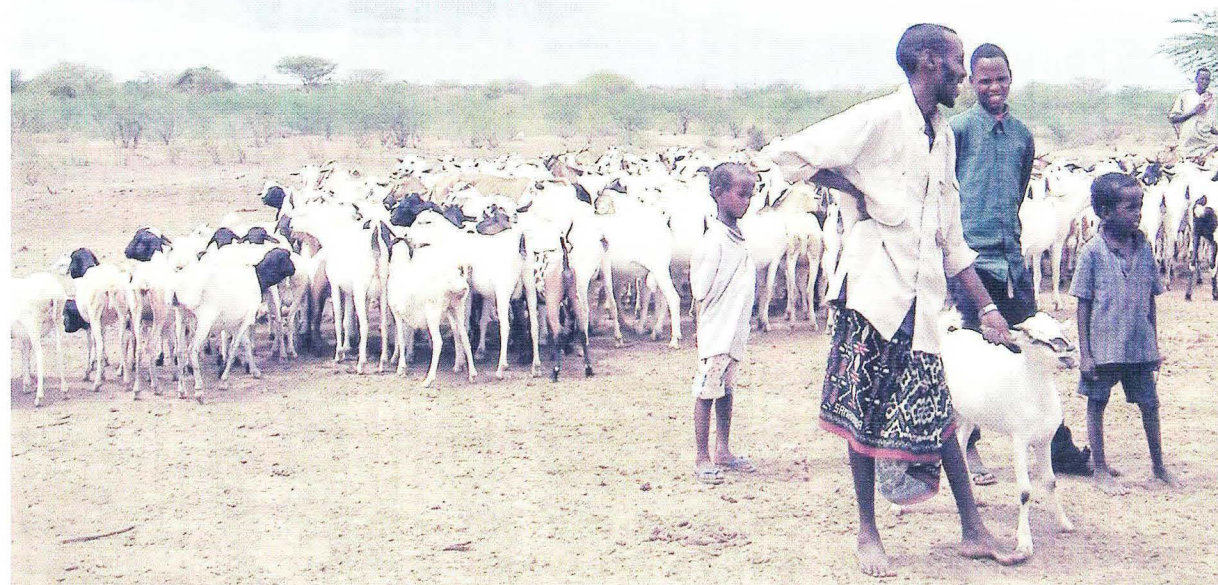
materials on world literature from the ancient to the pre-early modern periods.



The Humanities Center

awarded 3 grants for faculty research in 2005

Richard Marcus



Richard Marcus, Assistant Professor of Political Science, received a grant to fund a trip to Kenya to study water scarcity and different approaches being used to manage water distribution in the Tana River district. Marcus is

interested in examining the effects of water scarcity on "how people live in their environment, the decisions they make, and the diverse heritage, traditions, and history that have led to the current conditions of national life."

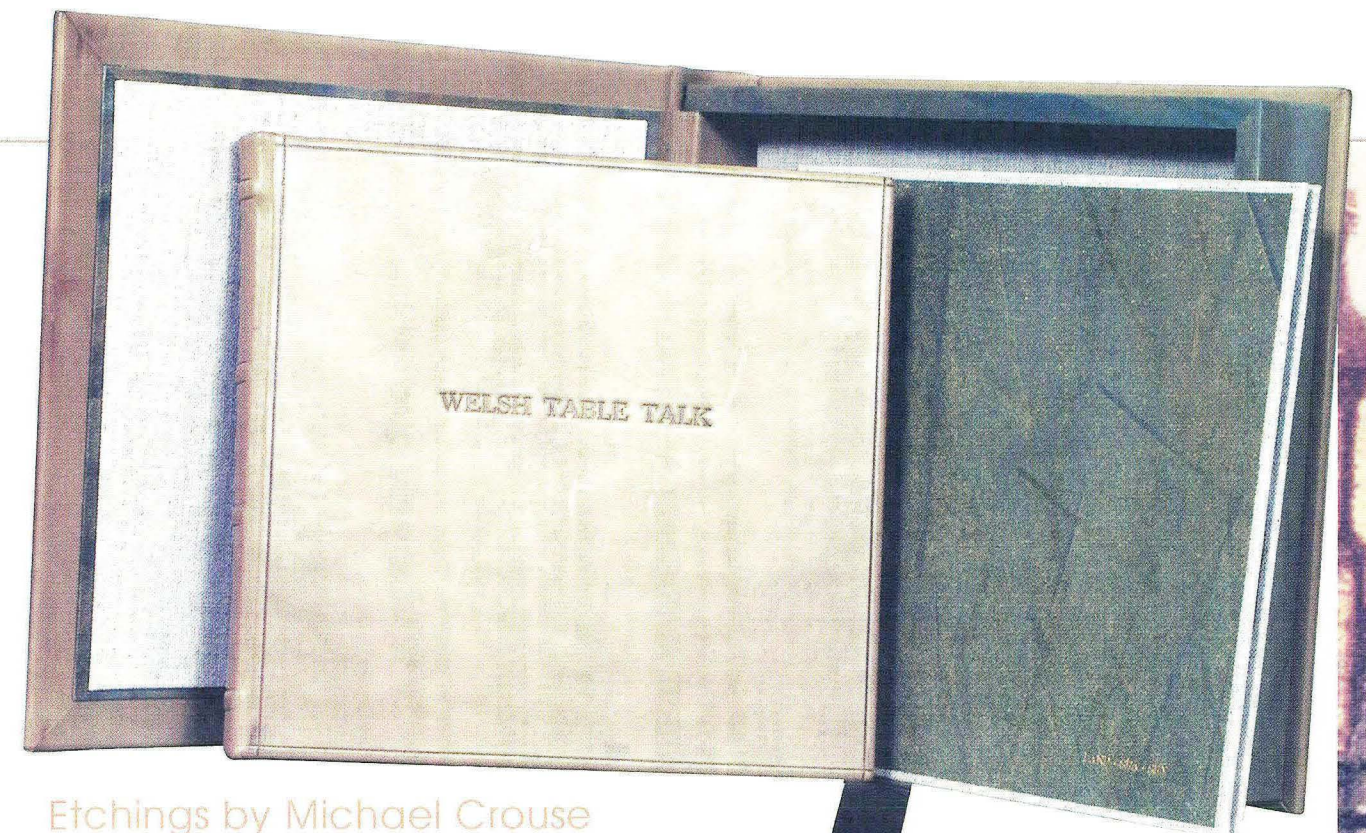


Rolf Goebel

Rolf Goebel, Professor of Foreign Languages and Literature, traveled to Germany to continue his study of urban architecture and its implications. Dresden, a once beautiful city heavily damaged by bombing at the end of WWII, has undertaken the project of reconstruction since reunification. Because this project is still in its early stages, the city presents what Goebel describes as "a unique urban palimpsest" that holds out a very interesting opportunity to continue his "reading of contemporary material culture through the imaginary lens of textual representations."

Julie Early

Julie Early, Associate Professor of English, traveled to London continuing her research for a manuscript nearing completion on London in the Edwardian decade. (Her book is tentatively entitled *Edwardian Urban Geographies: Mapping Crime, Class, and Culture*.) Early proposed to work with resources in the Public Records Office in London that have only recently become available and at the Fawcett Collection on women at the University of London.



Etchings by Michael Crouse

The images for *Welsh Table Talk* were inspired by a sabbatical trip to Wales and the Shetland Islands. These images are line etchings with hand-applied ink washes and were based on sketchbook drawings and photographs created during the month of February, 1997. In developing the etchings for the chapbook, I intentionally chose to retain the hand-drawn integrity of the original sketchbook drawings. After several readings of Kelly Cherry's series of poems, I selected images that I felt would complement the mood and tone of her poems.

"Late Afternoon"
by Michael Crouse
Professor of Art



Opportunities for Study Abroad expand with the growth of the Global Studies cognate

The new Global Studies cognate (an interdisciplinary minor) has been developing apace and will now be further supported by a third grant just secured during Spring Semester 2005 from the Department of Education. Initiated by Dr. Johanna Shields (Executive Director for Special Projects in the Humanities Center) and Dr. Kathy Hawk (Global Studies Program Director and Chair of Political Science), the university was awarded another major grant in support of our efforts to expand international study within the UAH curriculum. The new grant will provide funds to widen the work undertaken with the first two grants, with a special focus on developing opportunities for foreign study for our students. Two new courses, one that included travel to Rome and the other to Mexico, appeared on the summer course list this year, and eight more (to Germany, Italy, Mexico, Russia, and the UK) are in the planning stages for next year. The response from the students involved has been overwhelmingly positive, and we believe that their experiences will continue to add to the life of the university community as a whole. These courses are open to students from all colleges and all fields of study at UAH, offering opportunities to earn credit that can be applied to general education requirements in a variety of degree programs. For more information, contact Dr. Kathy Hawk (824-2315) or Dr. David Johnson (824-6288).

MEXICO - C. Joel Sigh '06

This past May I was privileged to take a class in Mexico along with other students from UAH. I can honestly say that it was an experience that changed my life forever. I had the opportunity to visit a new country, learn about a different culture and language, while taking a class at the same time. I had the chance to experience so much of the Mexican life, culture and people that while I could have taken this class here in the U.S., I could not have learned all that I learned in Mexico.

While I was in Mexico with the group we visited several different sites and cities in the vicinity of Guanajuato. The excursions in and out of the city were very eye-opening and an excellent addition to the classes because I was able to see what life really is like Mexico. I was surprised to see how clean the city of Guanajuato was. Everyday in the morning different people poured water onto the sidewalk in front of their homes or stores and swept until the sidewalk was clean. The family that I stayed

with was very warm, friendly and sincere, introducing me to Mexican life and custom while making life as comfortable as possible.

There were days when we took trips to the market and got a chance to shop where the locals shop. We spent hours just looking, shopping and speaking in Spanish! It was quite a boost to my self confidence in speaking Spanish. I had the chance to experience tastes, sounds, smells, sights and feelings that I had only dreamed of. One thing that made this trip extremely valuable was the fact that all of us students were encouraged to be comfortable and relaxed so that we could just learn. Even though the class only lasted 2 weeks, I learned more from it than I have learned in some of my 15 week courses. I credit this to the fact that the learning in this environment was necessary and fun, and there were no distractions. Taking this class was one of the greatest things to happen to me. I would definitely do it again. (Sigh is pictured below, second from right)



ROME - Erin Thomas A. Dailey '06

Rome has been called the "Eternal City," the "Mother of all Nations," and the "Jerusalem of the West." Her treasures are well known: ancient temples, medieval mosaics, renaissance paintings, and priceless cathedrals. These are alluring reasons that inspire the average tourist, but none of them are, by themselves, sufficient to tempt the historian. The West does not lack beautiful cities. The historian's purpose in visiting Rome runs deeper.

History is not something that can fully be known by studying in the ivory tower. History is, at its foundation, a study of humanity - of people - and to truly know a person one must encounter him, not just read about him. It is true that, one may personally encounter a particular historical figure, for example Cicero, in his writings. But this is an encounter on our terms, and

is therefore incomplete. To go to Rome is to encounter Cicero on his terms: to walk the same streets that he did, to stand in the Forum where he stood, and to gaze upon the ruins of the Republic that he so desperately fought to save. Until one sets down his books for a moment, descends from the ivory tower, and travels to the land where history occurred, his knowledge will never be complete. It will forever be but an abstraction, and not an encounter with reality.

Rome is the greatest storehouse of these encounters. Romulus, Scipio, Caesar, St. Peter, St. Augustine, Michelangelo - their histories are all to be found in Rome, and so many more.

This is the city that built western civilization. The Roman Empire ruled all the lands surrounding the Mediterranean. The Roman Church brought together all the peoples of Europe and forged Christendom. For the historian, this city simply must be visited, must be seen, and must be encountered. (Dailey is pictured in the bottom photo, fourth from right)

