HEKMAN LIBRARY HAS NEW ENTRANCE, UNIQUE DESIGN

Technology necessitates change.
On the Calvin College campus, there's no better reminder of that than the Hekman Library. Recent advances in technology have made change necessary in almost every corner of the 35-year-old building.
The most recent changes (planned with the addition of the fifth floor in 1995 but only recently completed) accurately reflect the importance of technology.

Upon entering the building on the east side, the glass doors open to an airy information area and digital research center.

Nine workstations provide access to more than 70 electronic databases. The computers also provide Internet access through a web browser and additional stations allow for E-mail access only.

“We wanted these very front and center,” said Glenn Remelts, Calvin automation librarian. “This is the future of access to information.”

Following down the center of the second floor is a central seating area. A circular ceiling design along with indirect lighting from decorative wood pillars draw attention to the open feeling of the floor.

The microfilm collection is housed on this floor as well.

“We have almost as much information in microfilm collection as we do in paper,” said Remelts. “We have copies of nearly every book, brochure and pamphlet published in America from 1632-1819.”

The government documents have been moved to compact shelving on this same floor.

The Cayvan Music Room, with its new and updated technology making video and audio tapes available both in separate rooms and on headsets, makes its home here.

Access to the new Career Resource Center is also available during all regular library hours.

Bringing much of this technology to the forefront—out from closed-in doors and walls—has caused usage in many areas to skyrocket, said Remelts.

“People studying while listening to music has greatly increased,” said Remelts. “Also the use of the digital research center has increased. Our goal was to bring all of the heavily patron-oriented services right up front. I think we succeeded in doing that.”

The major change recognizable to alumni and frequent library users is the new entrance. The south entrance (from Haemenga Hall) is open only from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The main entrance (facing the FAC) is open during all regular library hours.

Other renovations are still underway in the library with the instructional technology center due to move to the first floor this summer and the history department, which has been temporarily relocated on fourth floor due to the remodeling of the first floor, planning to move to the new floor of Haemenga Hall.

GORMAN NAMED MASTER PLAN ARCHITECT

To the casual observer, the look of Calvin’s campus might have little to do with the school’s mission. For Frank Gorman, however, the two are intimately connected.

“Calvin is not buildings,” he said, “it’s relationships — primarily the relationships between professors and students. But the design of the campus, the feel of the campus, plays an important role in how those relationships develop. Calvin’s twin strengths are its academic excellence and its distinctive Christian approach to education. The questions are how does the campus support those strengths now, what is the future of Calvin in 2010 and how do we create a vision unique to Calvin?”

Gorman has 30 years of experience in architectural and master planning projects. He was formerly college architect for Wheaton College. He also worked briefly with Faye at the office of Perkins and Will in Chicago.

Gorman joined Greiner in 1990 and has been involved in many significant projects, including a 10-building remodel at Grand Valley State University which involves classroom buildings, offices, dining hall, art studios, fieldhouse and more.

Gorman has thought about such issues in the past. But he will ponder such questions with increasing frequency now that he’s earned the post of master plan architect for Calvin. Former master plan architect Bill Fyle has retired after almost 40 years of work crafting the look of the Calvin campus. Now the torch has been passed to Gorman of Grand Rapids-based URS Greiner.

“This is an historic moment for Calvin College,” said second-year school president Dr. Gaylen J. Byker. “For almost four decades Bill Fyle was involved in putting together the jewel of a campus we now call home. He did a marvelous job and we are deeply grateful to him for his vision and dedication. We now look forward to developing such a relationship with Frank Gorman and with URS Greiner. We feel confident that future projects on our campus will continue to be first-class efforts thanks to Frank’s guiding hand.”

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