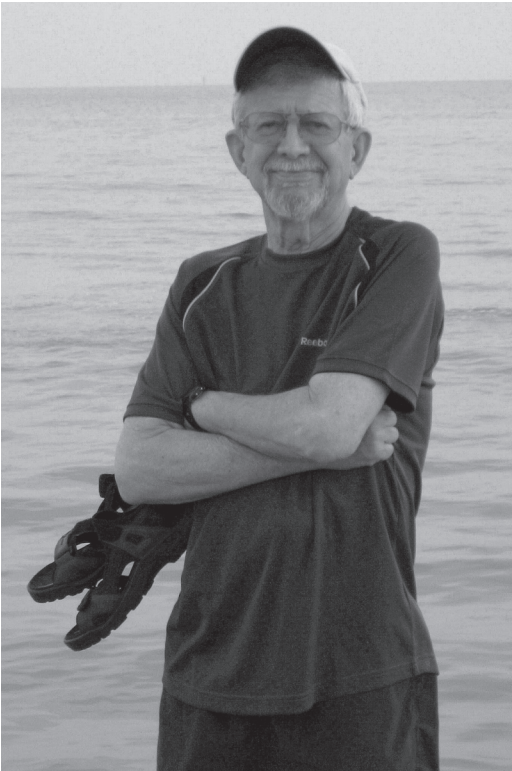


A MEMORIAL CELEBRATION

**ROBERT DANA**

Sunday March 28, 2010 • 1:30 pm  
King Chapel, Cornell College  
Mount Vernon, Iowa



Soon I'll bury my own shadow & slip away like sunlight.

\*

Simplicity's what I'm best at.

\*

In the end,

a small box of a house by the sea.

No electricity.

No running water. Dirt floored.

Prayer,

wind & slapdash from the hereafter.

—Robert Dana  
from "Elegy for a Hometown"  
*The Other* (2008)

**MUSIC**

*Gymnopédie no. 1* by Erik Satie  
Red Cedar Chamber Music

**WELCOME**

Leslie H. Garner Jr.  
Cornell College President

**READING**

"Final Riddle"  
*Some Versions of Silence* (1967)  
read by Tom Lynner, Cornell '66

**WORDS OF REMEMBRANCE**

Dan Kellams, Cornell '58  
Eric Houts, Cornell '76  
Ben Miller, Cornell '86

Hugh Lifson  
Cornell Professor Emeritus

Jan Sellen McGrane  
sister-in-law, Cornell '72

Don Morrill  
fellow writer

Lori Dana  
daughter

**READING**

"Chimes"  
*The Morning of the Red Admirals* (2004)  
read by Rick Campbell  
Director, Anhinga Press

**GOING BACK**

Images and Music

Reception at Cole Library



Robert Dana, former Cornell College English professor and Iowa's Poet Laureate 2004 through 2008, died February 6, 2010, at Mercy Hospice in Iowa City. Dana, known by many friends and students as RP, had taught at Cornell for 40 years when he retired in 1994 as the college's Poet-in-Residence. He also served as a visiting writer at Stockholm University, Beijing University, and several American colleges and universities.

Dana revived and served as Editor-in-Chief for the *North American Review* 1964 through 1968. The first literary magazine in the U.S., the NAR had ceased operation in 1940. Dana also operated the Hillside Press at Cornell, publishing poetry chapbooks.

Dana received his M.A. from The University of Iowa Writers' Workshop in 1954, where he studied with Robert Lowell and John Berryman. Dana won several awards, including two National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships. On the occasion of the Delmore Schwartz Award from New York University to an "insufficiently recognized mature poet," the critic M.L. Rosenthal described Dana this way: "A richly lyrical poet. Very hard on himself and on the Karma of our world, whose work this whole country would recognize itself in, if it ever started to open books of poems."

Dana's works include eleven full-length books of poetry since 1967. His last book of poems was issued posthumously this month – *New & Selected Poems 1955 to 2010* (Anhinga). He also authored three works of literary nonfiction – *Against the Grain: Interviews with Maverick American Publishers* (University of Iowa, 1986 and 2009); *A Community of Writers: Paul Engle & The Iowa Writers' Workshop* (University of Iowa, 1999); and a collection of essays issued posthumously this spring, *Paris on the Flats: Versions of a Literary Life* (University of Tampa).

Robert Patrick Dana was born June 2, 1929, in Boston. Orphaned at age seven, he was a foster child in western Massachusetts through high school. After serving in the South Pacific at the end of World War II, he attended college on the GI Bill, and moved to Iowa after a year at Holyoke Junior College. He received his B.A. from Drake University, where he studied with poet E.L. Mayo and worked at the *Des Moines Register*.

Dana is survived by his wife of 35 years, Peg (Sellen) Dana; three children from his previous marriage, Lori, Arden, and Richard; Peg's parents, siblings, and nephews; and a legion of students, fellow writers and readers. Contributions may be made in his honor to Cornell College, the Pancreatic Action Network, or Iowa City/Mercy Hospice.

## ROBERT DANA

June 2, 1929 – February 6, 2010

### *In Memoriam*

