

Ed Geary receives national award from history group

By Larry W. Davis
Progress editor

CASTLE DALE- Family and friends of Edward Geary, author and professor, honored the Emery County native at an awards program sponsored by the Emery County Historical Society Thursday, Nov. 19, at the Museum of the San Rafael.

At the program, Mr. Geary, a native of Huntington, was presented an award by the American Association for State and Local History in honor of his book *Proper Edge of the Sky*. The award was presented by Kent Powell, also an Emery County native who is now with the Utah State Historical Society.

In accepting the award, Mr. Geary noted that he felt a mixture of enjoyment and anxiety. "This is an immense honor, and I'm delighted that the Emery County Historical Society has devoted one of its precious meetings to this honor," he said.

Mr. Geary said that it was while growing up in Emery County that he first began to discover that "time fits in with time and place with place," adding that that discovery became his passion for writing. "That's all I really care to write

about, and it's almost inexhaustible." He said that the things that one writes about are those things that one loves.

Over the years, the author said that he has discovered some of the reality of the world that he knew first, and that he has discovered how many of the great authors have found universal meaning in places they know well. It is that kind of realization that led to his popular books, *Goodbye To Poplarhaven* and *Proper Edge of the Sky*.

"My life's goal," Mr. Geary said, "is to eventually try to understand where I started." He pointed out that everything seems to get involved with everything else, and that being with people who share a common love of history is a great pleasure. "Thanks for all you've done and all you've been," he said in conclusion.

In making the presentation of the award, Mr. Powell said the American Association for State and Local History seeks to recognize accomplishments of historians. Nominees must go through a difficult and long process of review beginning on a state level and then advancing to a regional level. The awards represent the top 100 history projects in the United



Edward Geary accepts a national history award for his book *Proper Edge of the Sky*.



Estella Guymon recalls Edward's youthful experiences in Huntington. Photos by Larry Davis

States. "These awards are not given without merit," Mr. Powell said.

Mr. Powell read from the author's *Proper Edge of the Sky* and noted that the author's words "capture the history in a way that remarkable." He called the book, "local history at its best."

Also speaking at the program was Ed Geary's mother, Estella Guymon, who said that her son grew up an avid reader. In 1979 he read an article in the newspaper about how rural

Utah students were being deprived of a proper education. Mr. Geary responded to the article, and Mrs. Guymon read from the article at the program.

In part, Mr. Geary recalled in the article his experiences in growing up in a small town and going to a rural school. He wrote that the first day of school was like "a fresh start 'n life" and that he didn't feel "deprived" as a student.

Mrs. Guymon also noted that her son loved the stories of his grandfather and grandmother.

"Each time a story was told it was like a whole new experience for him," she said.

He also enjoyed long walks and exploring, she said, noting that he spent much of his youth at places like Rowley Flat, along the canal banks and at Sandberg Hill. As a young writer his stories were published in the *Deseret News Newsette*, a monthly publication featuring the writing of Utah's youth. He also went to a young writers convention in Chicago with his father where

they stayed with a host family. While there they were treated to a World Series game.

According to Mrs. Guymon, her son's writing continued while he studied at BYU. While there he wrote a column in the school newspaper titled "Campus Capers." Later he attended Stanford on a teaching fellowship and, along with other students, created the publication *Dialogue- A Journal of Mormon Thought*. While teaching at BYU, Mr. Geary continued (Continued on Page 5A)

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native is not going to be consid- committee chairman "Al- through land-use decision" Ryan Wilson