



FRIENDS

OF THE MATHEWS MEMORIAL LIBRARY

October 2009

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Friends of the Mathews Memorial Library

**General Membership Meeting, Tuesday, October 20, at 10 AM in
the John Warren Cooke Room of the Library**

Please join us for a presentation by

**Mr. Werlie Hendrix
Rare and Antiquarian Book Adventurer**

How to Value Your Old Books

Mr. Hendrix, a resident of Mathews County, has dealt in old and rare books for a number of years. He will cover several topics, including

- How Do I Estimate a Book's Worth?
- Are All Old Books Rare?
- How Can I identify a First Edition?
- What is Provenance and how valuable is it?
- What Kind of Books are Usually not Rare?
- What Characteristics Make Books More Valuable – or Less?
- How Can I Tell Whether Autographs are Printed or Actually Signed by the Author?
- Where can I best sell my old books that have substantial value?
- A Few Words of Wisdom Regarding the Rare Book World.

www.friendsofmathewslibrary.org

Fellow Friends of the Mathews Library,

Fall is here and the leaves are, well, falling. In one sense we go into a slower mode from our busy summer pace. That refers to the Orrell Building used book schedule. Instead of opening every weekend, we are open generally on the first Saturday of each month. Sales during the summer can only be described as torrid! We took in a good amount of proceeds to support our library, and a lot of people went away happy with some good, very inexpensive reading. And again, thanks to those of you who donated so many books to support the effort.

Our general membership meeting, scheduled for Tuesday, October 20, at 10 AM in the John Warren Cooke Room of the library should be a very good one. We have a speaker with a very interesting, useful, and pertinent topic. Mr. Werlie Hendrix, a “Rare and Antiquarian Book Adventurer” as he puts it, will give us pointers on how to value your old books. The full description of the talk is elsewhere in this newsletter, so you can look at it for the details. In addition, refreshments will be provided. Please join us for this interesting presentation.

The executive committee has been looking into the serious problem of cramped space in the main library building. Our very active library has outgrown its space. There is a need for at least the following: 1) expansion of the ever busier youth (teenage) area; 2) work space for the library staff who are shoehorned into areas in the library that were intended to be for storage; and 3) space for classes of various kinds that the library offers. We attempted to purchase the adjacent “electronics” building that is between the library and old Sibley’s store. So far, we have not been successful, but the executive committee is continuing to address the issue. We’ll keep you posted.

I hope you enjoy the falling leaves and the beautiful colors that come with the Fall.

*Neil Webre
President*

FROM THE LIBRARY

Honoring the User Experience

There were a number of reasons I could have used for skipping the library directors’ meeting in Richmond last week - several staff members were out, three programs were scheduled for the conference room and reports needed to be written. They were all good reasons but then I was reminded that the staff is experienced and flexible and can easily manage in my absence so I elected to attend.

A compelling reason to be present at the meeting was the status of State Aid to public libraries. Although we learned from the State Librarian that the Library of Virginia must absorb a 15% cut in general funding, a minimal cut of 5% is required to be applied to State funding for public libraries. It is believed that this is due, in part, to the recognition of the key role being played by libraries in today’s economic climate.

As it turned out, the most serendipitous portion of the meeting was not information about the budget but a presentation made by a consultant, Joan Frye Williams, on “Revitalizing the User Experience in the Library.” We pride ourselves on knowing why people come to the library and responding to their interests and needs. Listening to Ms. Williams, I began to think about just how much we focus on the patron and whether we might sometimes be handicapped by our professional knowledge. Do we make people feel welcome and comfortable? Is a visit to the library likely to give the patron an opportunity to show how smart they are or does it require

questions and assistance? Offering help can take many forms and connecting patrons with a good experience is based on minimal assistance not oversight. “Is there anything I can help you with” will almost always be more acceptable than “Let me know if you don’t find what you want.” Do we sometimes forget that a “presumption of innocence” will build better relationships than a recital of our loan policy. It is important to support a core library principle that it is more about getting the person back and less about getting stuff back.

Access to information in the library is linked to systems of organization – the most common being the Dewey Decimal System. This, in effect, is the library filter for finding material and is both efficient and effective from the perspective of library staff members but how about patrons – does it help or intimidate? Librarians like searching – everybody else likes finding. Libraries no longer have sole ownership of information which is available from a multiple of sources, but we do own reading. We need to be evangelical about reading and not pretend our business is something else.

The staff of the Mathews Memorial Library is dedicated to providing the best in library service. We pledge to honor our relationship with each patron and, further, to look for ways to set up the library like we think you’d like it. If our prism needs updating, please share your concerns.

Bette Dillehay, Library Director

Did you know the Library has been determined to be eligible to serve as a passport application facility and is in the process of making arrangements for this?
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ORRELL BUILDING FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY BOOK STORE

Open the first Saturday of each month,
Oct. 3, Nov. 7, and Dec. 5
Watch for the Street Sign for
UNSCHEDULED OPENINGS

Books! Books! Books! Boy have we sold books. Hundreds of books are sold – and all for the benefit of our Library. Well, that’s the good news.

The bad news is that the shelves are no longer jammed full. They are being emptied faster than new donations arrive. We have room for anything you wish to donate now. Do you have piles of books here and there? Maybe you don’t want or need all those books. Well, we do. All good books are guaranteed gentle handling and careful selection by potential new keepers. (Good is defined as clean, no mildew, no water damage, etc.)

Donations of used books are welcome any time at the main library desk, the book drop at the Orrell Building or during a sale day. If we get a large collection, we might be able to open the bookstore on an unscheduled weekend. Watch for our sign on Main Street.

Patrons of the book store may see some slight increase in price for some books. We are trying to balance fair book value for the benefit of the library and fair book value for our loyal patrons. This has happened because of the high quality books that have been donated, but cannot be used by the library. Many are in new condition with no writing or names. Also we have received some books with some collectible value. Thank you for donating your treasures. We take good care of all the books, and make

them available for a new second home, while getting good value for the library. All proceeds benefit the library.

Some books in the back room will be re-donated this coming fall to make room for more recent donations. The books are older, mostly outdated (i.e. financial advice of ten years ago), of limited interest, and perhaps a little dusty. We are going to rename this back room as the "Rare Book Room". The back room books will continue to sell for ONLY one dollar a bag until sometime next year.

Christmas is coming, only three months away. We have many books in new condition that would make nice gifts. Gift certificates are also available. They don't weigh very much and come with mailing envelopes. Yes, you do have to visit the Orrell building when we are open to buy the gift certificates.

Jane & David Abbott

BRICK WALKWAY & PATIO

In case you missed reading or hearing about the new contribution amount for the 8" x 8" brick, it is now \$150. That is a nice drop from the previous contribution of \$225. The more popular 4" x 8" inscription remains at a bargain \$100. With either one you will receive an acknowledgement certificate, which is attractive and suitable for presentation or framing. And, gift certificates for use at our Orrell Building Book Store valued at \$10 for the 4" x 8" brick and \$15 for the 8"x8" brick are an extra bonus for your contribution, which of course is always tax free for the donor. Adding an inscribed brick at the Library is a nice way to honor or commemorate a friend or family member.

www.friendsofmathewslibrary.org

We are averaging one brick a month and can very easily handle many more. Forms are available at the Library, at the Orrell Book Store and on-line at

www.friendsofmathewslibrary.org

Roger Gamble

MEMBERSHIP

Thank you to Beverly Gayle, who has changed to Life membership. New Life members also include Therese Creel and Mary Chapman. New annual members are Donna Sperry, Nancy Miller, and Marilyn Owens. We appreciate the support you have shown us and our efforts to help provide funds for our library. Thanks to our Membership Chair, Millie Montgomery, for keeping us up-to-date on our membership list.

GETTING TO BOOKS, MUSIC, INFORMATION, ETC. – THE DIGITAL HIGHWAY.

The September 24th issue of the Gazette Journal's lead article reported on actions taken by the Mathews Board of Supervisors to clear away the regulatory underbrush that formerly stood in the way of installing wireless towers to allow subscribers in Mathews easy, fast, and reliable Internet access. Many of Mathews citizens are hobbled by access through very slow telephone connections. You can get speedier connections through cell phone providers, but it is expensive and the coverage is spotty. Alternatively, you can install a satellite connection using a dish like the ones used for satellite TV. Again, they're expensive and not all that fast.

The Board's idea was to try to attract providers who would provide faster

connections, charge less and cover the whole county. It is an admirable example of government clearing the way for a badly needed service that can then be provided by private vendors. Let us hope that the Board's moves attract them.

Mathews doesn't have many jobs to offer. A fair number of jobs these days can be done remotely. I'm a prime example. With my (cell phone provider) Internet connection, I can have a disk that appears to be on my computer, but is really at our offices in White Plains, NY. I can connect to any of the computers in the office there and the screen appears on my computer in Cobbs Creek. It is exactly as if I were sitting in front of the computer in White Plains. Things like that make me able to live in Mathews and do any work I would formerly have had to be in White Plains to do.

In some cases, it can bring jobs to Mathews residents instead of residents having to commute to jobs. One can live in Mathews and still play in the fast lanes around the U. S., and for that matter, around the world.

Our library carries a marvelous collection of databases covering all sorts of useful topics. With high-speed Internet access, there is no need to even leave home to get the information you want. Suppose, for instance, that you are gardening and want information on colorful borders. You'd go to the MML web site – www.mathewslibrary.org – and on the left under Resources, click "Library Databases." Scroll down through the list of databases and find the "Gardening, Landscape, and Horticulture Collection." Enter it, and search for "colorful borders" and several articles appear from among those in the more than 80 journals in the database – *Flower & Garden Magazine*, *Sunset*, *House & Garden*, etc.

Need to repair your old clunker Ford 1986 Ranger? No problem. Choose the *Chilton.com* database and follow instructions. You'll arrive at the right pages of the right manual. Need legal forms? Choose the *LegalForms* database and find the form you need. Want to read the LA Times to see what catastrophe is afflicting la-la land today? Choose at the top *Find It Virginia*. Once in, click the *Publications* tab, the *L* section, and there find the *LA Times* and its articles.

Neil Webre

CAREER CONNECT CENTER

Mathews Memorial Library has joined with the Bay Consortium Workforce Investment Board, Inc. to become an Access Point for job related resources. Through this partnership, the library is able to offer resume, interview, and other job-skills workshops. In addition, C³ provides assistance in applying for unemployment benefits online and online job searches. The Center is staffed Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

PARENT RESOURCE CENTER (PRC)

Wednesday, September 2, marked the official opening of the PRC at Mathews Memorial Library. This Center has become a place to meet, receive information, and exchange information for parents with special needs children. This is another instance where the library was able to fill a void in the community and also serve as a model for other communities.

Friends of the
Mathews Memorial Library
P.O. Box 127
Mathews, VA 23109-0127



BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MATHEWS, VA
PERMIT NO. 20

Date: _____

I Want to Open/Renew My Membership.

Remittance is enclosed to:

- Open My Lifetime Membership @ \$50 person
- Open My Annual Membership @ \$5 person
- Renew My Annual Membership @ \$5 person

I want to Support Library Special Projects.

- Enclosed is my gift of \$_____.

Mr/Mrs/Ms _____

Name

Telephone

Address

E-mail Address

Post Office

State

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*Contributions to the Friends of the Mathews Memorial Library
are tax deductible. Make checks payable to
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