



Summer 2011

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Friends of Dacus Library

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Friends of Dacus Library Newsletter

Volume 6, Issue 1

Summer 2011

Gragg to Speak, Pettus and McSpadden Become First Life Members

Rod Gragg, award-winning Civil War historian and Director of The Center for Military and Veterans Studies at Coastal Carolina University, will be speaking to the Friends of Dacus Library on October 7, 2011. His presentation will be a part of the annual dinner meeting that will start at 6:00 p.m. in Tuttle Dining Room, McBryde Hall. His topic will be "Up Close and Personal -- The Civil War in the Words of Eyewitnesses"

The author, who also teaches as an adjunct professor at Coastal Carolina, stated that his planned talk "surveys the common experiences of Civil War soldiers and civilians on both sides, using excerpts from letters, diaries, and memoirs."

In addition to his address, Gragg will bring copies of a number of his books, which he will autograph for purchasers at the meeting.

Dr. Jack Weaver, chairman of the Friends group, announced that there will be a brief business meeting at the event. However, he also indicated that two persons associated with Winthrop University and well-known in the local community will be recognized as the first official Life Members of the Friends of Dacus Library.

Louise Pettus, Winthrop alumna, professor emerita of history, and benefactor of the University, will be inducted as the first Life Member of the Friends of Dacus Library for her many contributions to the

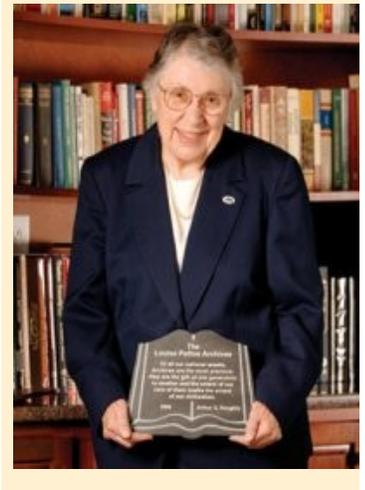
development of the library and especially for her generous support of the Archives and Special Collections, which bear her name. This recognition will join a long list of honors that have come to Miss Pettus over the years.

Miss Pettus taught at Winthrop from 1967 to 1989. For many years she wrote historical columns for the *Charlotte Observer* and the *Lancaster News* and served as editor of the *York County Genealogical and Historical Society Quarterly*.

Kay McSpadden of Rock Hill, an alumna, teacher, and author, will also be recognized as a Life Member at the annual meeting. Like Miss Pettus, she also wrote a column for the *Charlotte Observer*. Mrs. McSpadden has authored *Feeding the Ghosts* (2004) and *Notes from a Classroom* (2008). Her husband Randy is a Presbyterian minister.

Chairman Weaver indicated that the annual meeting is open to all Friends members at no charge. Non-members, however, who wish to attend the dinner portion of the meeting should pay \$15. Those who wish to only attend and hear the speaker should arrive at the meeting by 6:50 p.m. Be advised that any Winthrop students may join the organization for \$10 and attend the dinner.

Tickets for attendance may be acquired by contacting Ronnie W. Faulkner at the Dacus Library: 803-323-2262 or faulknerr@winthrop.edu.



Louise Pettus in 2008

Rod Gragg Below



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Sharyn McCrumb to Speak on Latest Book, Nov. 3, 2011



Sharyn McCrumb

Sharyn McCrumb, an award-winning and New York Times best selling author, will speak about her latest book, *The Ballad of Tom Dooley*, at the Tuttle Dining Room, McBryde Hall, on the campus of Winthrop University on Thursday, November 3 at 6:30 p.m.

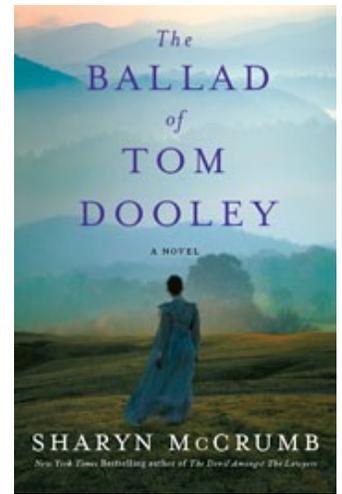
This latest novel is a part of her famous series of Appalachian “Ballad” novels, which are “set in the North Carolina/Tennessee mountains. These books weave together the legends, natural wonders and contemporary issues of Appalachia.” The series includes *If Ever I Return Pretty Peggy-O*, *The Hangman’s Beautiful Daughter*, *She Walks These Hills*, *The Rosewood Casket*, *The Ballad of Frankie Silver*, *The Ghost Riders*, and *The Devil Amongst the Lawyers*.

Most persons are familiar with the folk song made famous by the Kingston Trio in the 1950s, “Hang Down Your Head, Tom Dooley.” This song is based upon a true incident that occurred in the North Carolina mountains in 1866.

Sharyn’s relates the basic elements of the story on her website: “Laura Foster, a simple country girl, was murdered and buried in a shallow grave on a mountain side, and her lover Tom Dula was hanged for the crime. The sensational elements in the case attracted national attention: a man and his beautiful married lover accused of murdering the other woman; the former governor of North Carolina [Zeb Vance] spearheading the defense; and a noble gesture from the prisoner on the eve of his execution, saving the woman he really loved.”

McCrumb’s novel is historical fiction, but as with her earlier “Ballad” books, she

did considerable historical research on her subject, unearthing new information of the case. Hence, she maintains that her new novel, “tells the true story behind the celebrated folk song.”



Current plans are for Sharyn McCrumb to speak on her novel and then take questions from the audience. After that, she will autograph copies of her books. *The Ballad of Tom Dooley* can be purchased after its official publication on September 12 at the Winthrop University Bookstore. However, Miss McCrumb does plan to bring some copies along with others of her novels that are no longer in print. These will be available for purchase at the time of her presentation.

This program is sponsored by the Friends of the Dacus Library and is open to the general public.

**“WHAT HAS MADE LIBRARIES LAST UNTIL NOW, AND I HOPE FOREVER, IS THAT THEY ARE ABOUT US: THE VERY BEST OF US, WHEN WE SHINE IN OUR SHARED GREATNESS” —
DEAN MARK Y. HERRING**



Ida Jane Dacus Library



Business Meeting Items for 10-7-2011 Meeting

The Business Meeting portion of the annual Friends of Dacus Library gathering on October 7 will follow the presentation of Life Memberships. Chairman Jack W. Weaver will preside. The first order of business will be election of officers.

On June 14 the Friends of Dacus Library Board reaffirmed the incumbent officers for re-election, which includes Dr. Jack Weaver as Chairman and Dr. Jane White as Vice-Chairman. This is in accordance with the By-Laws, which permit re-election of officers for service of three consecutive one-year terms. The Board recommends that the membership re-elect these incumbent officers.

At the above Board meeting the members also approved the nomination of two new members to the Friends Advisory Board to serve two year terms. The persons were contacted and agreed to serve starting January of 2012. The candidates approved by the Board are: Ms. Janet Gray and Dr. Marilyn Sarow. The Board recommends that these two persons be elected, replacing Ms. Marla Black and Mrs. Sandra White.

After completion of the officer and board elections, Dr. Ronnie W. Faulkner will make a few comments on the finances and future plans of the Friends of Dacus Library. His remarks will be followed by an overview of happenings at the Dacus Library presented by Dean Mark Y. Herring.

Once the business portion of the meeting is completed, persons are welcomed to remain and have books autographed.

Friend Dorothy M. Medlin Passes



Dorothy Moser Medlin, 79, passed away on Saturday, July 30. She was a founding member of the Friends of the

Dacus Library in 1996 and served on the very first Friends of the Library Board.

She was the daughter of the late N. Lee Medlin and Kate Funderburk Medlin, was born Sept. 21, 1931 in Monroe, NC. She received a B.A. Degree from Winthrop in 1953 and a Ph. D. degree from Tulane University in 1966. After teaching in the public schools, she joined the Modern and Classical Language department at Winthrop, where she was named Distinguished Professor in 1985.

Among her publications are *The Verbal Art of Jean-François Regnard* (1966); a three-volume edition of *Lettres d'André Morellet*, co-edited with Jean-Claude David and Paul LeClerc (1991-1996) and revised in 2010 for the E-Enlightenment collection of 18th century correspondence at Oxford University; *André Morellet (1727-1819) in the Republic of Letters and French Revolution* (1995); *André Morellet: texts and contexts* (2003), both co-edited with Jeffery Merrick; *British-French Exchanges in the Eighteenth Century* (2007) and a critical edition of *Morellet's Mémoires sur le dix-huitième siècle et sur la Révolution*, both co-edited with Kathleen Hardesty Doig

Dr. Medlin specified that Memorial gifts may be made to the Winthrop University's Dacus Library.



Ebrary Logo



The Bookworm, pictured above, is undergoing renovation to become the new home of the Louise Pettus Archives and Special Collections.

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WILL NEVER REPLACE THE PHYSICAL AND EMOTIVE DELIGHT OF A LOVELY FAT PAPERY BOOK.”

—“THE DEATH OF THE BOOK, AGAIN”

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Friends of Dacus Library



Supporting Winthrop's scholarly community since 1996: <http://www.winthrop.edu/dacus/friends>

WINTHROP UNIVERSITY

A Note from the Chair

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Board Members:

Marla Black
Marsha Bollinger
Ronnie Faulkner
Mickey Taylor
Jack Weaver (Chair)
Jane White
Sandra White

Sometimes random thoughts connect with personal events. And thus, while I was thinking about reading and writing, I was informed of the death of a Friend of Dacus. The illness and demise of Dorothy Mason Medlin was noteworthy both for what she had accomplished professionally and for the type of person she became. Like most of this communal organization, she loved books and libraries and seemed to like most of the people she came into contact with. I was privileged to work with her as colleague in literature for the twenty-five years she taught in the department of Modern Foreign Languages and knew her as a popular and effective teacher-scholar. While she grew up in a small town and I came from a small farm, we were both reared in N.C. during the same time period and had similar experiences. In brief, we began life during the age of radio, and learned to use our imaginations from it and the books we read. We also learned to write with pencil, pen and ink, and finally typewriters. During the 50's, I attended an IBM computer workshop and saw no future for me because Fortran language was suited only for mathematics and sciences and I dealt with words, sentences, and paragraphs. I suspect the invention of new software which made language study possible was as traumatic for Dottie as it was for me.

When Dottie and I began teaching, we had many students who had read some of the same books we had, those volumes now designated as the "canon." Some years later, when computers were in full flower, I found myself trying to teach a young man who had difficulty writing. I tried to communicate by alluding to the books students might have been required to read in high school and failed. He proudly confessed that he had read only one book through in his lifetime. I agreed

that Anthony Burgess's *Clockwork Orange* was worth reading, but urged him to explore some other books worth reading, too. He replied that he did not need books; and could learn everything he needed from computers.

His name was not Johnny, though that was the year an article, "Why Johnny Can't Read," was reprinted by *Reader's Digest*. I don't recall fully the article's arguments, but learned that Johnny couldn't read because he didn't read, likely hadn't read, and probably came from a home of non-readers. I quickly drafted a short piece, "Why Johnny Can't Write," and noted some of the same reasons. Not having read, Johnny was also lean in thought, had difficulty expressing ideas due a limited vocabulary, and would not have recognized nuance if it hit him between the eyes. For such, there was little hope of achieving a "style." Professionals know style comes only with blending purpose, information, and practice. Training a reader should start when the child is lap-worthy, and can be read to and encouraged to read.

What one reads is less important than that one reads. Bookish John Milton hoped to produce good citizens by having them "read promiscuously." His *Areopagitica* argued that one could not know the good without experiencing works of lesser quality. Equally bookish T.S. Eliot, James Joyce and this less accomplished writer did more than a little of that kind of reading. All of us also read "the good stuff." But I suspect that I am preaching to the choir in addressing the Friends.

As chair of the executive committee, I am pleased to encourage participation in the programs mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter. Dottie served on this committee and, though we will miss her, we can follow her example in continuing support for the Friends of Dacus.