



# Chronicle

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JOHN EGERTON, author of the popular bicentennial history, Nashville: The Faces of Two Centuries, will address the Friends of the Library at the 1981 spring program. The meeting will be at 7:30 Wednesday evening, April 8, in Underwood Auditorium on the Vanderbilt campus.

Mr. Egerton has built his career on the power of language, working as a freelance writer in Kentucky, Florida, and (since 1965) Nashville. His lecture to the Friends of the Library will reflect that interest, as it will focus on "Words as an Endangered Species."

Construction on the Law School and the new Owen Graduate School of Management has necessitated the closing of the Law School parking lot. Ample space is still available in the "C" and "D" parking lot between Underwood Auditorium and Kissam Quadrangle, across the street from the Baker Building on Twenty-first Avenue.

Attendance at the spring program is open to all current members of the Friends of the Library. Members are encouraged to attend the lecture and to greet Mr. Egerton at a reception afterward.

*CHRONICLE, the biannual newsletter of the Friends of the Library is produced in the Special Collections Department of VUL and edited by Marice Wolfe.*

THE FRANCIS ROBINSON COLLECTION IN THEATRE, MUSIC, AND DANCE has now arrived fully in the Special Collections Department of the Library. Items from the collection will be on exhibit at the Tennessee Performing Arts Center in April coinciding with the production of Madame Butterfly.

During Robinson's lifetime he donated to Vanderbilt his extensive collections of theatre and dance materials. Upon his death, the music collection, which features operatic materials, memorabilia, and a number of phonograph records, and his personal papers were bequeathed to the University. The Robinson library contains many rare and elegant volumes, association copies, histories of theatre and opera, and works of art. His lifetime association with the performing arts has also brought into the collection such unique ephemera as a gold paperweight from Katharine Cornell, a quilt made of pieces of Caruso's costumes, Richard Strauss' last baton and the damask cushion upon which he rested between rehearsals. The exhibit at TPAC will draw upon materials from the opera collection.

THE 1980 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DINNER, 7 October 1980, brought together a congenial group to share a rewarding evening. Some 170 Friends of the Library gathered at the University Club of Nashville for a cocktail reception, dinner, and an address by author Reynolds Price. Featured at the reception was a Special Collections exhibit of some recent acquisitions, including Puryear Mims' bust of Donald Davidson, on loan from Mary Davidson Bell; a collection of poems on the occasion of Robert Penn Warren's seventy-fifth birthday, including works by Richard Eberhart, Reynolds Price, Rosanna Warren, and Richard Wilbur; and Ridley Wills' own copy #1 of his and Allen Tate's parodic anthology, The Golden Mean.

Ann Wells presided at the dinner meeting, during which the Friends heard a report on the extraordinarily successful membership campaign and voted to accept the Nominating Committee's slate of Officers and Directors (see list on page 3). Mrs. Wells expressed her thanks to those who had helped the Friends to grow so impressively during her two-year tenure and looked forward to the organization's making even greater contributions to the Vanderbilt University Library in the coming years.

The highlight of the evening was an address and reading by Reynolds Price. Mr. Price, a distinguished novelist and poet, opened his remarks by considering the relation between prose and verse. Many authors primarily known for their fiction are moved to write poetry, he suggested, because its density challenges and sharpens the use of language and form. Following these remarks, Mr. Price's reading of his own poems provided a fine example of that lyric beauty which is a hallmark of poetic creation.

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VOEGELI, Dean and Mrs. V. Jacque

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WALKER, Dr. William E.  
WALLER, William, Jr.

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YATES, David R.  
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\* DENOTES LIFE MEMBERS

LIST COMPLETE AS OF 1 MARCH 1981

A TRIBUTE TO ANN WELLS was extended by the Board of Directors at its February meeting. President Rob Roy Purdy noted the many advances made in the Friends program during Mrs. Wells' term. Membership has increased dramatically, the annual events have been consistently superior, and several new programs have been developed to strengthen the partnership between the Friends and the Library. To honor Mrs. Wells' leadership, the Board voted to acquire special editions of the works of Reynolds Price for the Southern History and Literature Collection, a project in which Mrs. Wells has a particular interest. Bookplates for these editions will bear the following inscription:

"Ann Wells' expertise, her foresight, energy, and determination, have moved the Friends steadily toward greater achievement in the establishment and support of quality collections. From wrapping valuable books in a private collection to presiding over the Annual Dinner Meeting, her grace and wit have enriched the Library and the Friends organization. We are grateful."

At present, three volumes of Price's works have been received. "The Dream of a House" is a limited-edition broadside poem signed by the author. Nine Mysteries is a collection of meditative poems ("Four Joyful, Four Sorrowful, One Glorious," according to the subtitle) on New Testament scenes. Especially exciting is the acquisition of "The Annual Heron," a bound copy of the poem which highlighted Price's reading to the Friends at the last Annual Dinner Meeting. These works are distinguished additions to the already-superior holdings of Southern literature at Vanderbilt, and will long recall Price's association with this organization and Mrs. Wells' tireless efforts for the Friends and the University.

THE 1980-81 MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN has been an unparalleled success, according to 1980 Membership Chairman Catherine (Mrs. Starkey) Duncan. Previous records in number of memberships and monetary receipts have been far superceded, as the following table indicates:

	Memberships	Members	Renewal	Receipts
1980-81	620	1,052	80%	\$47,225
Previous high	459	703	73%	\$27,619

We have received more memberships, more new members, more monies in every category, and a higher renewal rate than ever before this year. Building upon the strong foundation laid by previous Friends leaders, Catherine Duncan has worked with dedication to realize the potential resources of the organization. The NEH Challenge Grant, too, has provided the stimulus for a striking generosity on the part of the membership. Many long-standing Friends have increased their gifts, and the Grant and vigorous solicitation effort have called into the membership many new patrons. Heartfelt thanks go to all these leaders and contributors who have so generously and tangibly expressed their Friend-ship to the Vanderbilt University Library.

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES AND A TIMELY REASSESSMENT OF THE PAST make the John Egerton Papers among the most exciting records in the manuscripts collections of the Vanderbilt University Library. Recognizing the potential research value of background materials and drafts of his writing, Egerton arranged in 1976 to deposit his working papers on a regular basis in the Special Collections Department.

Although Egerton has no explicit Vanderbilt connection, he operates from Nashville as a freelance journalist and his topics are frequently of community and academic interest. Titles of some published articles reflect a whimsical turn -- "The Great Hope Watermelon Caper," for instance -- while an impressive number of pieces show Egerton's deep and continuing concern for quality in educational tradition and experiment. Announcing the publication of Visions of Utopia: Nashoba, Rugby, and Ruskin in The Tennessean, Hugh Walker praised Egerton's scholarship and style: "He blends feeling with facts, writes smoothly and professionally. The result is a highly readable book."

Egerton is the author of The Americanization of Dixie and Nashville: The Faces of Two Centuries, and he has completed writing assignments for numerous governmental and private agencies, including the Ford Foundation, the American Association for Higher Education, HEW, the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, and the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education. He has also served as a consultant and special writer for the Southern Regional Council and the Southern Education Foundation, and appeared on "The Today Show" and NET's "The Advocates."

*Friends of the Library*

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY  
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37203

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