



Wednesday, March 3, 2004

MBH Book Club offers a new twist on the classics

By **Dawn Pauli**, contributing writer

Meadow Brook Hall is introducing a book club that literally immerses readers in the setting. Each of the books in the first series, from "The Great Gatsby" to "Rebecca," introduces the world of early 20th century American and English upper class.

The monthly book club will meet in the library of Meadow Brook Hall, the former home of Alfred and Matilda Wilson. Called an "American Castle," the 110-room mansion was built in the 1920s at a cost of about \$4 million.

As readers discuss their thoughts about the books, invaluable furnishings and art, exemplifying the lavish lifestyles of the era, will surround them.

"The book club is another way for participants to experience Meadow Brook Hall and to discuss great novels in the perfect setting," said Shannon O'Berski, marketing manager for Meadow Brook Hall.

Participants can begin reading the first book in the series, "The Great Gatsby" by F. Scott Fitzgerald, during March, and the club will meet in April for discussion. The book club will continue to meet the first Tuesday of each month from 7 to 9 p.m. through August.

Melodie Monahan, an instructor in the English Department at Wayne State University for the past 13 years, will lead the book club. Monahan operates The Inkwell Works, an editing service for individuals and publishers. For the past 14 years, she has facilitated various writing workshops and retreats, many of which focus on memoir and autobiography. She also conducts workshops in her Rochester home, at the Rochester Hills Public Library and elsewhere in the metro Detroit area.

There is no cost to join the book club, and books will be available for purchase at **Meadow Brook Hall** the month before they are discussed. However, reservations are required by calling Jennifer Rock at (248) 370-3140.

The Meadow Brook Hall Book Club will read the following books:

April

"The Great Gatsby" by F. Scott Fitzgerald – a classic tale about ambition and greed set in New York during the Roaring Twenties.

May

"The Age of Innocence" by Edith Wharton – a novel about manners and morals set amid the New York upper crust during the late nineteenth century.

June

"Howard's End" by E.M. Forster – a novel about class, economic status and inheritance and how each of these affects personal relationships.

July

"Mrs. Dalloway" by Virginia Woolf – a story of one day in the life of an English woman, the wife of a member of Parliament.

August

"Rebecca" by Daphne DuMaurier – a gothic tale of a wealthy widower who brings his naïve second wife to his estate

on the Cornish south shore of England where she must confront his marital and criminal past.

For more information about the Meadow Brook Hall Book Club, visit the **Meadow Brook Hall** Web site or call (248-370-3140).

SUMMARY

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