

# "An Hour to Kill" club has 20+ year history

By Gloria Wright, Past President,  
Friends of the Quisenberry Library

"An Hour to Kill" sounds like the title of one of John Grisham's books, but it is in fact the name of a mystery book club that had its beginnings at the old A. E. Wood Library.

I was told that around 1996 or 1997, when the library was under the direction of Frances Coleman, National Library Week was being celebrated with a series of seminars. One particular seminar, "What Do You Know about Mysteries?," was publicized by the library and promoted by avid library supporter Libby Aydelott. The well-attended seminar was considered a great success. Carol Kirk, who loved mysteries, organized monthly meetings at the library where mystery books were discussed. Both Coleman and Kirk were avid fans of Nevada Barr, who at the time was a Clinton resident and a guest speaker at some of the meetings.

The meetings were open to anyone interested in mysteries. Books were selected and purchased through the library. Discussions centered around character development, whether the book was liked and whether the members recommended it to others. The group met from 6 to 7 p.m., and since another group also met in the room immediately after the mystery gath-

ering, meetings could not last longer than an hour. Hence came the name "An Hour to Kill."

Members came and went, and, as time went on, the meeting room became too crowded. Some of the members, like Nancy Omerza and Janie Fields, volunteered to hold the meetings at their homes. Members brought snacks, and a new tradition was started. At this time, the television show Frazier was popular with the members, and their motto became "home before Frazier."

Membership has changed through the years, but, as member Carole Kelly says, "The club has a life of its own." Presently, eight members convene to kill the hour.

Annette Trotter, who retired from the business world in 1994, joined the club at some point in the beginning. She says she joined because she loves to read, especially mysteries. She remembers Christmas parties at Janie Fields' home attended by members and their spouses. Annette serves as the unofficial organizer, reminding members of the date, time and place of the meetings.

Marilyn Conerly, a retired English teacher, taught reading in upper elementary schools at University City, Missouri, and Panama City, Florida. She also taught at Jackson Acade-

my and Clinton Park Elementary School. She joined the club around 2000 because of her love for reading, especially mysteries. She remembers



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Kim Corbett of the Jackson/Hinds Library System talked mystery books with longtime members of the "Hour to Kill" mystery book club in 2012. Pictured (l to r) are, seated: Geri Graves and Corbett; and standing: Annette Trotter, Marilyn Conerly and Janet Newman.

early meetings with forty to fifty people in attendance. The meetings were publicized at the library with a list of books to be read and discussed. She is called our encyclopedia, because her recall of books and authors is remarkable. She has often attended mystery

reader conventions in Birmingham featuring authors, panel discussions and writing presentations.

Janet Newman is also an original member, a retired English teacher, who moved to Clinton in 1958 from Louisiana. She taught English at People's Junior High School and Clinton High School. She is our historian, telling us of former members and earlier club activities. She also recalls guest speakers like Nevada Barr and others. She was absent from the meetings for a while because of her husband's illness and has been welcomed back.

Carole Kelly was invited to join the club around 2011 by Marilyn Conerly, with whom she has been friends since 1977. She loves books and reading and has a keen interest in all the people around her. She loves the library and is a member of the Friends of the Quisenberry Library, where she serves as chairman of the board's nomination and publicity committees, as well as the official photographer.

Vallie Beth Penn moved to Clinton in 1975 when her husband's work brought them here. Vallie was a member of the Friends of the Library board for several years and remembers the mystery club being very popular during that time. She joined the book club six years ago. Her quiet disposi-

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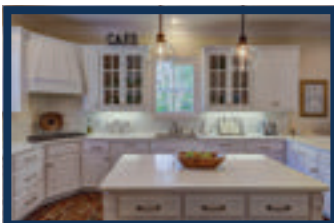
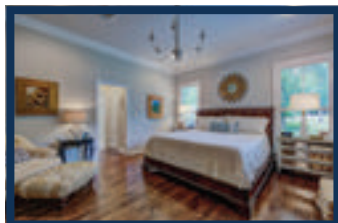
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## Back to Business Mississippi grant program established

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Governor Reeves recently signed SB2772 into law, establishing the Back to Business Mississippi Grant Program. The grants will be used to help businesses in Mississippi with fifty or fewer employees recover from the economic impact of COVID-19, including operating expenses and

salaries.

The Mississippi Development Authority launched a website for the grant program and will open the application process soon. In the meantime, all Mississippi businesses are encouraged to review the eligibility requirements and sign up for email notifications on the Back to Business Mississippi website.



Some of the requirements businesses must meet in order to qualify for a Back to Business Mississippi grant include:

1. The business must be a for-profit corporation, limited liability company, a partnership or a sole proprietorship.
2. The business must be in good standing with the Mississippi Secretary of State, if applicable.
3. The business must have suffered an interruption of business.
4. The business must have filed Mississippi taxes for tax year 2018 or 2019, or, for an eligible business formed on or after January 1, 2020, intend to file Mississippi taxes for tax year 2020, unless exempt under Section 27-7-29, Section 27-13-63 or other applicable provision of law.
5. The business must have customers or employees coming to its physical premises, conduct business on customer premises, or have an owner who is an active participant in the day-to-day operations of the business.

For more information, visit [www.BackToBusinessMS.org](http://www.BackToBusinessMS.org).