

Media contact:

Mary Robinson at mrobin17@yahoo.com, 478-719-7597

William Rawlings at rawlings@pascuamanagment.com, 478-552-1125

***The Mile High Club*, William Rawlings' latest thriller, is set in fictional Walkerville, rural Georgia and Atlanta**

In Books and Talks, Georgia Writer Celebrates Sense of Place and Heritage of Small Towns

February 2010 -- For Georgia writer William Rawlings, the best home one could ask for is a small Southern town. At the recent Savannah Book Festival, this bestselling writer of Southern thrillers embraced his roots. "The land I live on has been in my family for generations. Just across the pasture is a big hole where they once boiled cane juice to make syrup. The barns at the top of the hill still have tack for mules and horses hanging on the wall," he told his audience. Rawlings, born and raised in Sandersville, Georgia, still lives there as a sixth generation resident of Washington County.

Rawlings continued, "According to the US Census, one of every six Americans moves each year. On average, a person moves 11.7 times during his or her lifetime. In small towns the rate of change is far, far slower so there is much more continuity. The tales you hear in the barber shop may be decades old. A small town's heritage, sense of community, ease of access and its visceral connection to history and home are priceless; there is no place I would rather live than in Sandersville. My experiences there fill the pages I write."

The author's connection to Southern small towns is evident in the well-crafted page-turners of Rawlings's Matt Rutherford series. In *The Rutherford Cipher*, protagonist Matt returns to Walkerville, Georgia from California to rediscover his heritage and search for the lost Confederate Gold. The next novel, *Crossword*, has Matt embroiled in a quest for survival as he searches for the cause of one murder which will result in his own death if he fails to solve the puzzle.

The Mile High Club, Rawlings' latest thriller released in December, begins when the naked body of a beautiful young woman is found deep in the midst of pristine Georgia timberlands. In a fast-moving tale of corporate greed, cutting-edge research in biofuels, private jets and small-town politics, plus the

mysterious death of a seeming innocent woman, Matt is drawn deeper into a web of deception that eventually threatens his very existence.

Columnist Dick Yarbrough loved *The Mile High Club*: “*The Mile High Club* has it all. There is a plot with more twists and turns than a rural highway in Georgia. The characters are well-defined and believable, both the good guys and the not-so-good guys. I am worn out trying to help the book’s protagonist, Matt Rutherford, make it through to the end in one piece. Not an easy job. Williams Rawlings has turned out a masterpiece and I can’t wait for his next effort. This is an “A-Plus” thriller.”

When asked how he crafts his tales, Rawlings states, “One of life’s greatest pageants is the continuity of life in small Southern towns. Characters wander in and out, plying their intrigues and playing their roles, both major and minor. There’s hardly a need for fiction, as the truth is oftentimes more bizarre. What more inspiration could a writer ask for?”

In addition to his books, Rawlings is a physician with a Master’s Degree in Epidemiology, receiving his education at Emory, Tulane and Johns Hopkins. He is an active supporter of Mercer University School of Medicine, a historian frequently published in *Georgia Backroads* and other magazines, a world traveler, an accomplished photographer, and a member of International Thriller Writers. He is, in short, someone who embraces a wide breadth and depth of knowledge. He is frequently in demand as a speaker throughout the South on a range of topics from the mechanics of writing and marketing books to Georgia history to the Peruvian wildlife. Since 2003, his novels have received rave reviews from countless readers and notable writers including Ferrol Sams, Cassandra King, Steve Berry, Nancy Grace and others. Each tale is exquisitely crafted, a riveting page-turner which collectively have turned this Sandersville physician into one of Georgia's favorite writers.

For more information or to order books, please go to www.williamrawlings.com.

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