

TOM ROBBINS



Tibetan Peach Pie

A True Account of an Imaginative Life



Robbins' latest book is his unofficial memoirs and his childhood in the Northern Neck.

Author returns home to debut new book

Robbins shared adventures growing up in Warsaw

By Cort Olsen

It was a packed house in the auditorium of Rappahannock Community College for Warsaw's "prodigal son" Tom Robbins as he debuted his eleventh book "Tibetan Peach Pie," Robbins' unofficial memoirs.

In the corner of the room, Dan Reams, library coordinator for Rappahannock Community College, had set up a shrine for Robbins with his new book and several previous pieces like "Villa Incognito" and "B is for Beer."

Several people in the audience sat with copies of Robbins book waiting to be signed, including two women with jars of Dukes mayonnaise, which Robbins revealed in his interview with Reams, is his favorite spread to put on tomato sandwiches with Wonder Bread.

To start off the event, Dr. William Washington, member of the Warsaw Town Council, issued Robbins a proclamation where he declared October 16 to be Tom Robbins Day.

Once the proclamation was issued and the applause finally ceased, Robbins began to read sections of his book pertaining to his childhood in Warsaw.

The first story began with Robbins describing the few pleasures in Warsaw that brought him out of his boredom, one of which being when the circus came to town.

Robbins read about a time when he attended the circus to see "the world's smallest man." This led to an embarrassing situation, for the circus, when a family of African American little people showed up to the circus, and they were actually smaller than the supposed "world's smallest man."

As it is October, Robbins felt it was timely to skip to the section of the book, where he described his experiences on Halloween in the Northern Neck.

This story involved Robbins and his friends going out on
SEE ROBBINS, page A3

Robbins

continued from page A1

Halloween night to start some trouble while avoiding the Commonwealth Attorney Willy Jones."

Robbins described heading out to the outskirts of town, where the urban buildings turned into rural cornfields, and how he and his friends wound up at a white farm house owned by a single school teacher and her brother.

He explained in great detail how he found some black walnuts on the ground and Robbins and his friends began to pelt the house with the nuts, until one managed to break a window.

The final two stories Robbins read were about a crisis of faith Robbins had as a child and his experiences with a local reverend and a prayer to this day he continues to use in the hopes that one day it will work again. "Good Lord if it is in

thy power, send me that knocking off shower," Robbins read.

Robbins ended his talk, with a small Q and A from the audience.

One member of the audience asked about Robbins' book "Still Life with Woodpecker," concerning the love affair of an environmentalist prin-

cess and an outlaw. She asked about the message in the book and if there is any hope for the planet and its survival.

Robbins described the Garden of Eden in the Bible and how Adam and Eve were cast out of Eden and two angels were put in front of the gates to
SEE ROBBINS, page A6

Robbins

continued from page A3

keep them from returning.

"Buddhism has a very similar story to Christianity, but in Buddhism the angels have names, Fear and Desire," said Robbins. "I believe fear and desire, or greed, keeps us from living in paradise."

What was most evident from Robbins' book talk, was how many people he connected with either through his books or when he lived in Warsaw.

Francis Bell Carter was the last person in the Q and A section. She did not have a question, but wanted to give him an envelope with pictures in it.

Robbins opened the envelope and looked at the pictures. Although he did not recognize the moment, Carter revealed her name to him and said she had taken the pictures.

"Francis Bell," Robbins exclaimed. "You always rang my bell," Robbins joked as the crowd burst into laughter ending the event.

Robbins ended the event with a signing for the many people in the auditorium and in the common area where the event was being streamed into via webcam.

Wednesday, November 4, 2015



Homegrown author Robbins honored

October 16, proclaimed by the Warsaw Town Council as "Tommy Robbins Day," featured a reading by the noted author of passages from his 11th and latest book, "Tibetan Peach Pie," an autobiography which highlights his youth in the Warsaw/Northern Neck area. This event, sponsored by the Rappahannock Community College/Richmond County Public Library, was Robbins's first public appearance in Warsaw since he graduated from high school in 1949. To mark the occasion, council member Dr. William Washington presented him with a framed copy of the proclamation.

Approximately 130 people came to RCC for the reading on the 16th, followed by a question-and-answer period and book signing during which Robbins conversed with his admirers, posed for photos, and autographed books and jars of mayonnaise. An enthusiastic mayonnaise fan, Robbins has said that for his last meal he would like a red-ripe tomato, with mayonnaise, on Wonder Bread. As a tribute to this preference, library staff members arranged a table at Robbins's elbow that held all three of his favorites.

On October 17, Robbins addressed a luncheon given by the Friends of the RCC/Richmond County Library at St. John's Church in Warsaw. FOL members were delighted to hear him speak on a different subject: "Language Is Not the Frosting, It's the Cake." Although most of the audience members on both occasions were Warsaw residents, some came from as far away as Richmond, northern Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. Two special attendees were Robbins's wife, Alexa, and his eldest son, Rip. Also, two of Robbins's classmates from the former Warsaw (now Rappahannock) High School—Frances Bell Carter and Barbara English Walker—were present at both programs.

Robbins's October 16 speech was webcast live over the Internet. A video recording is now in production, and will be posted on the college's website as soon as it becomes available.