

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

SHERRY MATTHEWS, AUTHOR

WE WERE NOT ORPHANS: Stories from the Waco State Home, (University of Texas Press February 2011) is Matthews' first book. She is currently working on others, including a family memoir. She was born in Los Angeles, California, during World War II, and grew up on her great-uncle and aunt's farm in East Texas. Matthews first became aware of the Waco State Home at age three, when, after a series of family tragedies, her three older brothers were taken there to live. Half a century later, she attended a reunion of the Waco State Home with her only surviving brother and decided to publish a book of alumni stories as a gift to the ex-students' association.

Matthews is the founder and owner of Sherry Matthews Advocacy Marketing, a public service marketing firm with offices in Austin, Texas, and Washington, D.C. Matthews opened her company in 1983 with a roster of real estate clients, and it was named "Hot Shop of the Southwest" its first year in business.

In 1989, Matthews took her first trip to Big Bend National Park in West Texas and decided that it was time to get serious about what she wanted to do with her life. She returned home, resigned all of her clients the next day, and announced her decision to pursue public service marketing. A few days later, a small Austin-based natural foods grocery with six stores hired her firm to help brand the grocery and take it public. Her guerrilla-styled "issues campaign" not only branded Whole Foods Market but it branded her own agency as well for its aggressive, innovative approach to marketing on behalf of good causes.

Matthews has been winning the nation's top awards ever since, competing against some of the world's leading ad agencies. Innovative but results-focused public service campaigns have been the hallmark of her agency's work.

Matthews attended Baylor University and graduated cum laude from Memphis University in 1968 with a BA in journalism and classics. After

college, she worked for a literary magazine before moving to Austin in 1969 and taking her first job in advertising as the assistant marketing director of a major homebuilding company. In 1973, she joined the staff of GSD&M, was named vice president, and left ten years later to start her own company at the urging of one of her clients.

In addition to her personal writing and overseeing her company (with the help of nearly sixty fabulous employees), Matthews has managed to find time for global travel and pro bono public service work for such organizations as Orangutan Foundation International and the Miracle Foundation.

Her fondest memories of travel include being chased by the silver-backed gorilla in Rwanda, a male orangutan in Borneo, a Komodo dragon in Indonesia, a Blue-Footed Booby in the Galapagos, and a stone-age tribe in the highlands of Papua New Guinea. She plans to write a book about the joys of solo travel when she can find the time.

Matthews lives in the hill country near Austin with her fluffy little Havanese Oso, herds of deer, and a wild coyote.