Southern Pines, NC—The North Carolina Literary Hall of Fame will induct five of the state's finest writers this Sunday.

Journalist W. J. Cash; novelist Allan Gurganus; poet, novelist, and biographer Robert Morgan; journalist, publisher, and diplomat Walter Hines Page; and playwright and screenwriter Samm-Art Williams will be enshrined at 2 p.m., Sunday, October 17, at a ceremony at the Weymouth Center for the Arts and Humanities in Southern Pines, where the NCLHOF is housed.

The ceremony is free and open to the public.

Wilbur J. Cash was born in Gaffney, SC, in 1900 and moved to Boiling Springs in 1912. After graduating from Wake Forest College in 1922, Cash worked intermittently as a journalist for several newspapers, including the *Charlotte Observer* and *Charlotte News*, and as a freelance writer for magazines such as H. L. Mencken's *American Mercury*. In 1941 he published his masterpiece, *The Mind of the South*, described as "by common consent a classic work of history and social criticism" by George B. Tindall, who wrote Cash's entry in the *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*. Cash died just a few months after *The Mind of the South* appeared.

Allan Gurganus's first novel, *Oldest Living Confederate Widow Tells All*, spent eight months on the *New York Times* best-seller list, has sold more than two million copies and been translated into twelve languages, and was made into a CBS movie starring Diane Lane, Donald Sutherland, and Cecily Tyson. Born in Rocky Mount in 1947, Gurganus studied as a painter and served in the U.S. Navy before turning to writing. His work has appeared in the *New Yorker*, *Harper's*, *O'Henry Prize Stories*

,
Best American Stories
,
The Norton Anthology of Short Fiction
, and
Best New Stories of the South
. His other books include
The Practical Heart
,
Plays Well With Others
, and
White People
, which won the
Los Angeles Times
Book Prize.

Robert Morgan grew up in the Green River valley of western North Carolina, near Hendersonville, on a farm that has been in Morgan's family since the 1700s. He decided to become a writer while studying engineering and applied mathematics at North Carolina State University, transferred to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to receive his degree in English, and later earned a master of fine arts degree from UNC Greensboro. Morgan has published more than twenty-five books of poetry and fiction, in addition to a 2007 biography of Daniel Boone. His novel *Gap Creek* won the 2000 Southern Book Critics Circle Award for Fiction and was an Oprah's Book Club selection. His most recent book is
October Crossing
, a poetry collection.

Walter Hines Page was born in 1855 in what would become Cary. After studying at Trinity College (now Duke University), Randolph-Macon College, and Johns Hopkins University, he began his career in journalism at a small newspaper in St. Joseph, MO; within four years, he had worked for the *New York World* and moved on to found his own newspaper, the *State Chronicle* ,
in Raleigh. In 1885 he turned the
State Chronicle
over to Josephus Daniels and returned to the Northeast, where he worked as an editor of both magazines and books, including the
Atlantic Monthly
and Houghton, Mifflin, and Company. In 1899 he cofounded the publisher Doubleday, Page, and Company (now Doubleday Publishing, an imprint of Random House), where he worked with authors such as Ellen Glasgow and Booker T. Washington. President Woodrow Wilson named Page to be the nation's ambassador to the Court of St. James in London in 1913. Page died in Pinehurst in 1918.

Samm-Art Williams was born in Philadelphia and grew up in Burgaw. After graduating from Morgan State College in Baltimore, he studied with the Freedom Theater's Acting Workshop in Philadelphia under the direction of John Allen and Bob Leslie. As a member of the Negro Ensemble Company, he performed in such plays as *The First Breeze of Summer*, *Eden*, and *N evis Mountain Dew*.
He also wrote many plays, including *Home*, which received a Tony nomination in the category of best Broadway play and toured internationally. He had a lucrative career in television, where he took on roles as an actor, a writer, and executive producer for popular shows such as *Fresh Prince of Bel-Air* and *Martin*. He has been nominated for two Emmy awards.

The NCLHOF was founded in 1996, under the leadership of Poet Laureate Sam Ragan, and is a program of the North Carolina Writers' Network. Since 2008, the Network and the Weymouth Center have collaborated with the North Carolina Center for the Book, the North Carolina Humanities Council, and the North Carolina Collection of the Wilson Library at UNC Chapel Hill to produce the induction ceremony and to promote the NCLHOF and North Carolina's literary heritage.