

Overdue book returned to library in Washington state, 65 years late

(Reuters) - An overdue copy of "Gone with the Wind" has been returned to a high school library in Washington state, 65 years past its due date, and the grateful school said on Tuesday it was waiving late fees that at 2 cents a day added up to about \$475.

The long-overdue book was checked out of the library of a high school in the city of Spokane in 1949, and seemingly disappeared until it was found in Maine by a resident who offered to send it back to the school.

"We're delighted to have the book back, but we wonder where it has been," Lori Wyborney, principal of John R. Rogers High School, said of the 1946 reprint of "Gone With the Wind," which she estimates to be worth about \$350.

Wyborney got wind of the long-overdue library book in October, after Maine resident Wayne Hachey found it in his father's cellar, with library paperwork still in the cover.

"Not sure how the book ended up on the East Coast," Hachey wrote in a letter addressed to the school. "I'd be willing to ship the book back if this is the same school."

Wyborney wrote back, promising to waive late fees. When the book arrived, school officials tried to sleuth out how it had traveled across the country. A slip inside the cover said it was checked out on Jan. 4, 1949, to Betty Mandershied, whose name is listed in the school's 1949 yearbook.

The school has two newer copies of the Civil War epic in its library, and several students have expressed interest in reading the novel since the older edition was returned, Wyborney said.

By Courtney Sherwood