

# NAOMI MATHEWS

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mrs. Mathews accompanied her husband, Ambassador Elbert George Mathews, on his State Department Foreign Service assignments in Washington, DC and abroad.

### Background

- Born in Missouri
- Kidder Academy and Junior College
- University of Missouri
- University of California
- George Washington University
- Married Elbert Mathews in 1935

### General Comments

- Reactions to 1972 Directive re role of Foreign Service spouse
- Protocol calls on White House, etc.
- Smallness of Foreign Service in 1935
- Cornelia Bassel, Asst. Chief of Protocol
- Foreign Service travel before air travel
- Employment for qualified wives at post
- Responsibilities of FS wives at post
- “Difficult” senior FS wives
- Life in the Foreign Service
- Mail service in early days
- Absence from families
- European refugees
- Experience gained in early small posts
- Association of American Foreign Service Wives (AAFSW)
- Wives’ conversation at diplomatic functions
- Importance of foreign language facility
- Personal financial costs
- African matriarchies
- Organizational and administrative responsibilities
- Katie Loucheim
- Use of “Social Usage” book

### Posts of Assignment

Vancouver, Canada; 1935-1937

- Pleasant living
- Housing
- Impressions

Sydney, Australia; 1937-1940

- Protocol requirements

Consul General and Mrs. Tom Wilson  
Temporary duty at Adelaide and Brisbane  
Mine sweepers

Washington, DC; 1940

Managua, Nicaragua; 1940-1943

Environment  
Health and sanitation  
Nicaraguans  
Pearl Harbor

Washington, DC; 1943

Wartime housing problems

Kabul, Afghanistan; 1943-1946

Getting to Kabul in wartime  
Convoy  
Kyber Pass  
Minister Cornelius Engert  
Environment  
Dearth of foreign women  
Husband and wife team  
Opening of post  
Local American wives  
Social life  
Bridge  
Local household help  
Foreign language lessons  
British embassy  
Embassy as listening post  
Russian ambassador  
Local population  
Camel caravans  
Kyber Pass  
Royal family  
Afghan women  
Gardens  
Bamian  
Genghis Khan  
Climate  
Wild dogs  
Official dinner parties

Calcutta, India, 1946-1947

Hindu/Muslim riots

Environment  
Compound living  
Security

Washington, DC, 1947-1951  
Hosting wives of South Asia diplomats

Istanbul, Turkey; 1951-1952  
Office and housing  
Visitors  
Fleet visits  
Betty Carp  
Greece/Turkey relations  
Official entertaining  
Local household help  
Environment  
Congressman Manny Sellers  
Personal finances  
Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)  
Phoebe Clary  
Robert College  
Launch "Hiawatha"  
Topkapi  
Hotels

London, England; 1952-1953  
Husband at the Imperial Defense College

Oslo, Norway; 1953-1955  
Clean environment  
Housing  
Local household help  
Ambassador and Mrs. Corris Strong  
NATO  
Red Cross Benefit  
Book reading group  
Relations with locals

Washington, DC; 1955-1959

Monrovia, Liberia; 1959-1962  
Wife of U.S. Ambassador to Liberia  
Housing  
Participation in local charities  
Literacy and blind programs  
President Tubman

VIP visitors  
Social life  
Environment  
Hardships

Washington, DC 1962-1964

Lagos, Nigeria; 1964-1969

Wife of U.S. Ambassador  
Biafra War  
Liberians  
Environment  
Peace Corps  
Meeting staff wives and local friends  
American business community  
Local women's and charitable organizations  
Nigerians  
Embassy Residence  
Women's literary classes  
American School  
Museum  
Thanksgiving  
Art in Embassies Program  
Local household help  
Official entertaining  
USAID  
Volunteer work

Washington, DC; 1969-

Official travel in US  
Foreign Service Georgetown neighbors