

**SUFFOLK COUNTY VANDERBILT MUSUEM
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Minutes

A regular meeting of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Board of Trustees was held on **August 19, 2004** in the Lobby of the Planetarium, Centerport, New York.

The following were in attendance:

Dr. Steven Gittelman – President
Michael Broxmeyer – 1st Vice President
Deborah A. Gray – 2nd Vice President
Carl Luecke – Treasurer
Marjorie Kossoy Fuhrmann – Secretary
Bertram E. Seides – Trustee
Dr. William Rogers – Trustee
J. Lance Mallamo – Executive Director
Legislator Cameron Alden – 10th Legislative District
Maryann Zakshevsky – Staff
Mitch Spivak – Staff
Bill Dieck – Staff
Janet Clemens – Intern
Leslie Tannen – Todd Shapiro and Associates
Ann Marie Pastore – Stenographer

Excused Absence:

Susan LeBow
William Macchione
Dr. Pecorale

(Dr. Gittelman called the meeting to order at 8:05 p.m.)

DR. GITTELMAN:

This is a regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum. Do we have a list of guests in attendance?

MS. PASTORE:

Yes.

DR. GITTELMAN:

I notice we're honored to have Legislator Cameron Alden in attendance. Thank you for joining us. Are there any questions or comments from any of the guests who are in attendance? Is there anything we can do to answer anything you have in mind? I think we've gone about 50 meetings in a row without being asked a question.

I apologize. I have not recovered from my vacation. I am partially deaf. I can't hear out of my left ear, and I have partial hearing out of my right. If I don't hear you, yell at me.

Public Relations Report, Leslie Tannen.

MS. FUHRMANN:

Excuse me, Steve.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Yes.

MS. FUHRMANN:

We usually do the minutes first.

DR. GITTELMAN:

You've got a good point. Approval of the minutes, Marge.

MS. FUHRMANN:

I move that we approve the minutes as written with one comment. The comment is that Deborah Gray should have been an excused absence, as she had called Lance and said that she was ill and would not be attending the meeting.

MR. MALLAMO:

Yes, that's correct.

MS. FUHRMANN:

That was not listed, and Lance does recall that he forgot to mention it to our stenographer.

DR. GITTELMAN:

On that point, I received a call today from Susan LeBow from her doctor's office informing me that she is only allowed one position and that's reclining. She is still suffering from her hip surgery, and she sounded awful. She was calling me from her physician's office. She asked if I wanted to talk to him, she would have put him on, but I said it was not necessary. She has apparently had a relapse.

Those are the only excused absences that I'm aware of. Does anyone know of anyone else?

MR. MALLAMO:

Yes, I did hear from Bill Macchione.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Is he ill?

MR. MALLAMO:

Yes, he is ill.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Okay.

MS. FUHRMANN:

I move that the minutes be accepted.

DR. GITTELMAN:

We have a motion to accept the minutes.

MS. GRAY:

Second.

DR. GITTELMAN:

All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **Motion carries unanimously. (Vote: 7/0/0/8
Absent: Dr. Pecorale, Ms. LeBow & Mr. Macchione. Five vacant positions.)**

Public Relations Report, Leslie Tannen.

MS. TANNEN:

I'm very pleased to be here tonight to share four very wonderful videos with you for an equally wonderful program.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Four videos?

MS. TANNEN:

Yes, but they're short and sweet.

MR. MALLAMO:

While he's setting up, I'll just say that this is the program that we designed as part of a camp program for kids this summer to celebrate the Vanderbilt Cup Centennial. The kids were absolutely thrilled. They had a wonderful time. It was a great learning experience for them. They learned how to use a compass and went all over the property for a treasure hunt, made props and actually played a life-sized version of the cup board game. We look forward to seeing this. I haven't seen the films, but I was there when they were taking them and it looked like a good show.

VIDEO PRESENTATION 8:09 P.M. – 8:11 P.M.:

News 12

7/20/04

Vanderbilt Cup Camp

LEGISLATOR ALDEN:

Do we have the original cup?

DR. GITTELMAN:

No, it's in the –

LEGISLATOR ALDEN:

Henry Austin Clark, Jr., had it, right?

MR. MALLAMO:

He may have had it at one point, but right now it's out at the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan.

DR. GITTELMAN:

It is owned by the Smithsonian. It would be great to have it for a little while. Do you want to continue?

MS. TANNEN:

Yes.

VIDEO PRESENTATION (continued) 8:13 P.M. – 8:20 P.M.:

7/28/04	WABC	Vanderbilt Cup Camp
7/28/04	LI News Tonight	Vanderbilt Cup Camp
7/28/04	NY55	Vanderbilt Cup Camp

MR. MALLAMO:

Is that it?

MS. TANNEN:

I don't know about you, but it makes me wish I was a kid again to be part of that camp.

MR. MALLAMO:

Yes, I wanted to join them; I have to confess. Our educators really got into this. One even had her husband bring his antique car the first day of the program, and each child got his picture taken in the antique car behind the wheel. It was really quite exciting for them.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Leslie, anything else?

MS. TANNEN:

I just wanted to mention a few things. Please mark your calendars for Thursday, September 30, at eleven o'clock. We're going to be having a press conference at the Garden City Hotel. It would be wonderful if the board could be there to participate. You should have in front of you a list of scheduled events, which, by the way, is still a work in progress. Some of these events are locked in; some of them aren't. As I get more information, I will continue to update the list and do the revised version of the list.

I would also like you all to please mark your calendars, if you could, for Monday, August 23, again at eleven o'clock. We're going to be having a photo op with Suffolk County Executive Steve Levy. Again, if you could be there to participate, it would be wonderful.

MS. FUHRMANN:

What time?

MS. TANNEN:

Eleven o'clock, Monday, August 23. This will be in the north parking lot of the Dennison Building. I believe Lance is making arrangements to have Mr. Vanderbilt's car brought over.

MR. MALLAMO:

Yes.

MS. TANNEN:

We're in the process of having conversations and negotiating to get a substantial amount of free ads from Newsday, but again, I don't have more specific information because the process has begun, but it hasn't ended yet. So, again, as I get more information on that, I will update you.

This is something that came up in conversation in the Development Committee meeting, but I would like to share it with everybody. We're looking forward to having a full-page ad in the Long Island Business News, and that will probably be within the next week or so. Does that sound accurate?

MR. MALLAMO:

Yes.

MR. BROXMEYER:

Leslie, I think that was running for two weeks. Is that right?

MS. TANNEN:

I was under the impression it was one, but it could be two. I'll check on that.

MR. MALLAMO:

I thought it was two, too. I will confirm that with Todd. Todd is sponsoring that advertisement.

MS. TANNEN:

That's basically it for the moment, unless there are any questions.

MR. MALLAMO:

I'd like to thank Todd Shapiro and Associates as well for working with us to develop raffle prizes for this event.

MS. TANNEN:

That's another ongoing project.

MR. MALLAMO:

That's another ongoing thing. They have secured a number of them to date. I just got two additional ones tonight.

MS. TANNEN:

And there will be more coming.

MR. MALLAMO:

That's great. Thank you.

MS. TANNEN:

One more thing, if you don't mind me adding something. As you can see, the package tonight is rather substantial. That's because there are so many, many wonderful activities and events going on here all summer long. We're trying to focus on the events and activities that are occurring to celebrate the 100th anniversary. As the summer continues and goes into the fall, that will be picking up momentum. You can see that by the events that are listed on this draft list of events.

The last thing is something that we had a lot of fun with. Steve Gittelman participated in this, and it landed in Newsday in A.J. Carter's business column. This had to do with Steve's trip to the Galapagos Islands. I don't know if he's had the opportunity to share that with the entire group or not. Again, he shared it with us at the Development Meeting as well as some very lovely photos.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Okay, is that my queue?

MS. TANNEN:

Yes.

DR. GITTELMAN:

It was fabulous. Unfortunately –

MR. MALLAMO:

It cost you your hearing.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Yes, it cost me my hearing, but it was fabulous. The authorities there were extremely cooperative. They were very interested in finding the graffiti. When we found the graffiti we were blown away because first of all, the graffiti has been altered.

I will show you what I have. I will pass this around. I can't tell you how much this meant to me. You guys are stuck listening. It was unbelievable. This is the graffiti. I don't know if you can see it, but this is the graffiti on Tower Island. Tower Island was visited by Mr. Vanderbilt in 1926. When he went out there, he went with one lady, a married couple and a single man. He fell in love with the married lady. He carved this graffiti, and you can see that although it's very faint, if you pass it around, I was able to get right up to it. In fact, I had no trouble locating it. I was actually able to take a rubbing. It's not perfect because the graffiti is no longer perfect.

What's happened is, the flag that was at the bottom and the flagpole are eroded and gone because of El Nino in 1982. The level of the sand reaching the rock was raised about five feet. Whereas this was about five to seven feet up in the air, it's now at high tide level, so the flag is gone. The flagpole is gone.

The most interesting thing is that the date has been changed. The original date was 1926. That's his famous trip to the Galapagos. I have been going crazy trying to figure out when he got back there in 1928. It was a hidden trip. He did not write a log for it. He didn't let anybody know about it. He took his new wife out there in 1928, the lady that was married, Rose Marie Warburton, and they went out and did a trip with no other guests. They collected specimens, and the way I found it was that it was part of the bulletin of the specimens that have been

collected by the museum. The scientists apparently were instructed not to say anything about it. But in there was a map of the 1926 and 1928 trips. When they named species, they named it Rosamund Lancaster Vanderbilt or Rosamundi because she was on the two expeditions, and she was the wife of the commodore. The scientists let slip in their descriptions that there was a separate trip and it did occur in the early part of 1928. We never knew it, but it was their sneak attempt to go back and have an anniversary. You can just imagine how customs received all this. "What do you have in there, sir?"

MR. LUECKE:

Steve, are you saying that they went back to change the date?

DR. GITTELMAN:

They went back and changed the date themselves. This graffiti took on great importance to them. Willie goes through a whole description as to how he saw the graffiti in Cocos Island and how it immortalized the buccaneers and the whalers that were there. He wanted to immortalize their relationship.

When I pulled up to this one, I was absolutely horrified because there was so much graffiti that I couldn't imagine how I was ever going to find it. I was standing on the shore, I just looked up, and there it was. It took me three seconds to find it. You can see that it read ARA 1926, the center part of the nine has eroded out. Then they went back, and they put ditto 28. They went back on their private honeymoon and they added the dates. They didn't make any public record of this. There was no press. There was no book, nothing, but they did go back and they did it. This graffiti is in superb shape. I will pass around a picture of that.

I have been writing continuously. I did send us some mail. The one thing that was humorous is this is called Post Office Bay. It's a big barrel. The whalers used to come by and put their mail in it. Then what happened was this one whaler that was going back to England would pick up the mail and take it, and then bring back the new mail and put it back into the barrel. Tradition is, you go ahead and you put your mail in the barrel, and you're not allowed to use the post office to mail it. You have to deliver it in person. I didn't have any paper, so if somebody comes up with a dirty sock that's addressed to the museum, that's what it is.

MS. GRAY:

You want to see if it comes back?

DR. GITTELMAN:

I'm hoping that it makes it back to the museum. So anyway, my sock was addressed to the museum. I have the matching sock. If anybody wishes to see if it's legit, just let me know, and I'll bring out the left sock or the other sock.

Just so you can get an idea of what I saw – one thing I do want to point out to you is that I managed to get myself booked on a ship that was as close to identical to Willie's yacht as I could. Willie's yacht was about 213 feet and about 30 some odd feet in width. I managed to find one 210 feet and about the same width. There were eleven of us on it. We went around the islands. We went to every island that Willie went to on both of his trips, even the trip that I have finally covered last night. This is the boat, and these are just photographs of what you see when you are there. I will tell you that it is a stark, barren place, but the wildlife is unbelievable. If you're interested, here are some photographs. Here is a photograph of the 28.

MR. SEIDES:

Steve, you said there was other graffiti. Was there a lot of graffiti?

DR. GITTELMAN:

Tower Island is a remote island. It's very hard to get to. You go in there, and there was some graffiti. In Tagus Cove I would say it was eight or seven stories high, solid graffiti. Every layer of volcanic rock had graffiti on it. If it was graffitiable, it had been graffitied.

MR. SEIDES:

Was it chiseled in or painted?

DR. GITTELMAN:

Painted. Ours is the only one that's chiseled that I can see. It was not on our tour route so we had to get permission from the folks at Darwin Station to let us off of our route. They gave it to us readily, and they did send somebody out scouting for the Tower Island stuff beforehand. I had GPS and everything all set to go when I got there.

I'm deep in writing the story, and I must tell you that every day I find something else. I've learned a tremendous amount about our Willie. Don't get me started or I'll talk about it all night. That's my report on the trip to the Galapagos. I can't hear because I breathed in too much water, got it in my eardrums and then brilliantly got on an airplane. Hopefully it will get better. Otherwise, I guess we don't have some kind of workmen's comp that applies to this, do we? I recommend the trip to everybody. It was fabulous.

Development Committee, Michael.

MR. BROXMEYER:

The Development Committee has been meeting pretty much biweekly at this point. We do have to set up a meeting for this coming week, so maybe we could do that afterwards. The discussions have been around the gala event on September 30 at the Garden City Hotel. Discussions have revolved around trying to get ticket sales increased from previous years and what hook we could use to sell more tickets if we are going to have the performance – we have a few pieces from the performance on the Vanderbilt Cup at the event and an exhibit as well. I think we're researching possibly a few other ideas.

In addition to selling tickets, we also have a raffle, as Leslie mentioned, four of the top prizes are 50/50. Then there are other gifts to be given out as well. Marge, do you want to discuss that for a few minutes?

MS. FUHRMANN:

I'm still looking for raffle prizes. If any of the Trustees can offer anything, we would be more than happy to take them. I want to thank Todd Shapiro and Associates for the raffle prizes that they have brought in tonight. They have brought in some very nice gift certificates. We expect that there will be more forthcoming. These raffle prizes that are not part of the 50/50 will be gathered into baskets as we did last year and will be displayed at the Garden City Hotel. Hopefully this will generate some ticket sales the night of the event.

MR. BROXMEYER:

Thank you. The invitations to the event we should have in next week. The invitation will be

mailed to everyone they were mailed to last year. I believe at the last meeting every board member was given a list assigned to them, a list that they have developed from the past. I don't know if anyone has gotten them back to Lance yet with revisions or additions for new contacts.

MR. MALLAMO:

We e-mailed them again today or mailed them to those Trustees that aren't here. If you have any additions, we're really going to be ready to go. We have the envelopes here now. We are putting the labels on them over the next couple of days. We should have the invitations Monday afternoon, and then they will go in the mail. If anyone could either get the names to us or if you'd like us to give you invitations directly to prepare them yourself and send them out, if you want to do personal notes, we can do that, too. We can give you the stamped invitations, then you just pop them in the mail directly or we will do it. Just let us know.

As Marjorie said, the raffle prizes, if anyone is going out to dinner Friday night and as you pay your check, if you ask the manager if they'd be willing to give a gift certificate, that often works. We've even had employees go to the nail salon and get gift certificates there. There are a lot of opportunities there that we can up the gift baskets a lot, if we put our shoulders to the wheel.

MR. BROXMEYER:

That's really been the focus of the Development Committee. Hopefully we can sell a lot of tickets. The Garden City Hotel has graciously donated their nightclub to us free of charge. Any tickets we sell is just pretty much going to be pure profit.

MR. MALLAMO:

Michael, let's just also note that every Trustee should have in their packet a bunch of raffle tickets. These tickets are numbered. What you don't sell, please keep track of so we know what tickets went where. They are three for \$25.

MR. BROXMEYER:

How many books did you give every member?

MR. MALLAMO:

I believe there are 100 tickets. They are three for \$25, so if you sell 33 that will do it. Thirty-three friends – if you need more, let us know.

MR. BROXMEYER:

Usually with 50/50 the top prize sells pretty well. It's a good way to sell raffle tickets. I think that's pretty much it. Any questions?

DR. GITTELMAN:

Dinosaur Committee, Lance.

MR. MALLAMO:

Yes, I'm happy to report that the Dinosaur Building is open. The improvements were made. DPW has inspected it and affirmed the building. The heat and air conditioning has been installed and is working properly, so we will be open year round with that building. We were advertising in our new educational brochure two new dinosaur programs, or two revised dinosaur programs than what we had in the past. We have a lot of interest in that.

We have had a very good response to it. Over the past several weeks that it has been open, we have had way over 1,000 people go through it. We have an advertisement coming out shortly in

the Long Island Parent and Child Magazine with a great picture of the museum with a dinosaur in front of it, so we are excited to see that in print. It should also help generate people coming. We're back on track with the Dinosaur Building.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Education and Exhibits.

MS. FUHRMANN:

We have some exciting news. Stephanie has been chosen as one of 20 people in the United States to attend a curatorial workshop at the Smithsonian during the first week of October. It's a one-week workshop on curators of diverse collections. She was selected because she's a highly motivated curator.

David Schwenderman has completed his examination of the whale shark and will be submitting his taxidermy report soon. He had a positive attitude toward trying to restore it. Until that can begin, he has suggested that the whale shark be tented in PVC and plastic to maintain its environment.

The County work has begun on the pipe work in the area of the dioramas. This is part of the capital project. The first reports on the Save America's Heritage Grant will be submitted to Washington, DC, shortly.

The lighting project in the marine museum is completed. The quetzals are back in the bird room. We have two, a male and a female after eight years of being in storage. The bird vitrines have been refurbished and cleaned.

Greeter guides have been done by the three summer interns, which were done on their own initiatives. Since the greeter guides did them for the greeters, Stephanie did one for the Hall of Fishes and another one for the Stoll Wing. The ship model room is completed and will be reopening this weekend. The car exhibit is being constructed now and it will include a film on a loop with a narration by Howard Kroploick. He's a volunteer at the museum, and he's donated the film to the museum collection after the exhibit.

Everyone has received a LIMA handout on the next meeting. I'm going to pass this around. The Indy-500 Program for 2004 includes a four-page article on our event of the 100th anniversary of the Vanderbilt Cup and what we're doing about it. Everyone can look at that, if they wish. I'm going to be making an accession request, and I'm going to tell you about it.

MR. MALLAMO:

Marjorie, before you go on, can I just make one correction? The lighting in the marine museum, the wiring in the walls has been completed. The wiring in the cases, the funding for that was appropriated by the Legislature last week.

MS. FUHRMANN:

Well, the current project is completed and going on to the next phase.

MR. MALLAMO:

Yes, the next phase will do the same technique that we developed for the cases in the Memorial Wing and will now be implemented in that building once the County Executive signs that resolution.

MS. FUHRMANN:

Before I go to the accession, we'd like to thank Lorraine Vernola for her donation of seven stock certificates for the New York Central Rail Road of varying shares. She was on vacation, she found them in an antique store, bought them, and donated them to the museum. Lorraine is an employee of our museum. She is actually in charge of the planetarium.

Let me tell you about this accession. Florence could not be here tonight. Therefore, we do not have the piece to be accessioned here. She will bring it next month. However, it is a very important piece. We were hoping that the Trustees would accession it tonight without seeing it.

What this is is a monograph of 60 plates, and I'll just read you the description, "On August 11, the museum received a donation of a monograph of William K. Vanderbilt, I's home at 660 Fifth Avenue designed by Richard Morris Hunt in 1879. The mansion was razed in 1925, but the statute of Richard Morris Hunt once located at that site is now at the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum over the entrance to the old laundry room. This monograph was published in 1925 by John Vredenburgh Van Pelt. The photographs include areas of William K. Vanderbilt, II's home at 666 Fifth Avenue located adjacent to his father's home at 660 Fifth Avenue. We have in our file a collection of three volumes on the home of William Henry Vanderbilt from 1884 that includes engravings of his living quarters and stables. With this information we have in our collection on Eagle's Nest Estate, I feel this reference will be a valuable addition to the materials we have on the Vanderbilts." This is from Florence to Lance on why we should accession this monograph.

This is a new source of information for us. Currently we only have a very small black and white photo of William K. Vanderbilt's home, and it's a very tiny photograph. It's a photocopy out of a book from the library. This monograph, the photograph stands about this tall. It's a huge thing. You will all see it next month. Unfortunately, as I said, Florence could not be here so she did not leave it with me.

I'm looking for a second to access this monograph of 60 plates.

DR. GITTELMAN:

I have a motion. Do I have a second?

MS. GRAY:

Second.

MS. FUHRMANN:

Thank you.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Any questions? I have a question. Condition?

MS. FUHRMANN:

It has some foxing on it, but other than that, they are in marvelous condition. The story is that this woman who lives in Patchogue had them in her home and just walked into the museum here on the 11th and said, "Can you tell me anything about these?" Florence just said her jaw dropped. The plates are in such beautiful condition.

DR. GITTELMAN:

When you say plates, what do you mean?

MR. MALLAMO:

They're photographs.

MS. FUHRMANN:

Photographic plates.

MR. MALLAMO:

It's in a portfolio format. They are large matted photographs. The foxing is on the mat board, not the photographs.

MS. FUHRMANN:

No, the photographs are beautiful.

MR. MALLAMO:

The photographs are in excellent condition.

MS. FUHRMANN:

There is a history of the architect, the home and history of the area in the beginning of the monograph. The photographs themselves show no wear, no foxing, no molding or mildew, nothing.

MR. MALLAMO:

And they show the home as it was immediately upon construction before it was furnished. It appears as if –

MS. FUHRMANN:

Very, very close-up photographs with all the wood detailing and carvings, absolutely fabulous.

MR. MALLAMO:

-- Of each room and then details of mantels and coffered ceilings from the first floor right through to the third floor. It's quite a – I saw it today for the first time myself and my jaw dropped. I found the picture in the book. Before that time, we had no photograph of his father's home. I looked for it for some time. When I finally found it in the reference department of the Smithtown Library, a book that was out of print, I couldn't even take it out of the library. The only way I could get that photocopy was to do it right there in the building. It was actually mis-marked in that book. They had Willie K., II's home as the father's, but we were able to figure it out. This would be a wonderful resource for the museum for research purposes and would also make a fabulous exhibit.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Any further questions?

MR. LUECKE:

Yes, is there any advantage to the Vanderbilt to access it now and not when we can see it?

MS. FUHRMANN:

Well, it's a significant piece of history for the Vanderbilt, and it really shouldn't be here without being accessioned. That's how significant it is. That's why I brought it up tonight as opposed to leaving it for next month when Florence can actually be here with it. I have seen it. Lance has seen it.

MS. GRAY:

And I saw it.

MS. FUHRMANN:

Deborah saw it.

MS. GRAY:

Yes, I saw it when we were meeting earlier. I think that they were a little concerned about leaving it out of their hands and letting us see it this evening because of the value. It's in very good condition.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Typically we should not accession items that we do not see because the board in essence is taking on a responsibility for an item. It's just a question of typical museum protocol that you don't – you almost always require hands-on or a visual of something.

MS. FUHRMANN:

Two Trustees have seen it. The Director has seen it.

MR. LUECKE:

How does it help to accession it tonight? What's the damage of doing it next time? What's the down side?

MS. FUHRMANN:

It's on the grounds. It's significant to the collection. We have nothing like it in the collection.

MR. LUECKE:

But none of that is going to change if you do it now or later.

MR. MALLAMO:

As I understand it, the donor initially came in seeking the value of the piece and was convinced that it belonged here and it would be preserved. I think this was an attempt to meet –

MS. FUHRMANN:

The donor's request.

MR. MALLAMO:

Yes, the donor's request. But our next meeting is scheduled for four weeks from now.

MS. FUHRMANN:

The donor requested –

MR. LUECKE:

That we do it tonight?

MS. FUHRMANN:

The donor asked that it be made part of the collection as soon as possible.

DR. GITTELMAN:

If that is the case, then it should have been left here.

MS. FUHRMANN:

It should have been left here?

DR. GITTELMAN:

It should have been left here. We should be seeing it.

MR. LUECKE:

The donor has it now?

MR. MALLAMO:

No, we have it now.

MS. FUHRMANN:

It's in the collection. It is not with the donor.

MS. GRAY:

I think the issue was that Florence wasn't willing to leave it here without her presence for fear of it being mishandled.

MR. LUECKE:

Understood.

DR. GITTELMAN:

I, for one, do not agree with accessioning items that I haven't seen, but it's your call.

MR. LUECKE:

Will we lose it if we don't accession it tonight?

MR. MALLAMO:

I don't –

MS. FUHRMANN:

It's possible.

MR. LUECKE:

She knows we're going to accession it.

MS. FUHRMANN:

She knows it's being brought up. She also has other pieces in her home that she's willing to have Florence come and look at. She has photographs of them as children.

DR. GITTELMAN:

It's a bad precedent, but if enough people are comfortable with it, do it.

DR. ROGERS:

Would you kindly explain the problem to me?

DR. GITTELMAN:

The problem is that one of the largest responsibilities we take is when we embrace an item and say this is ours, and we are going to protect it in perpetuity, from a protocol standpoint, we typically are careful about what we bring into the collection. You just have to be careful about what you're bringing into the collection because sometimes items require maintenance or items could have questionable provenance. There are a number of ways in which a museum can find itself in difficulty.

The best practice for accessioning items – we've had items here for 50 years that weren't accessioned. We have items in our collection – that are not in our collection but that are on the grounds that are not accessioned. When you take in an item typically it's a very important responsibility for the board to see it and say, yes, we want this. It doesn't mean the board can't accession this item without everyone having seen it. It's just not typical protocol and probably not great museum practice.

DR. ROGERS:

Where is the item now?

MR. MALLAMO:

It's in the archives right now.

MS. FUHRMANN:

Can you go get it?

MR. MALLAMO:

I wouldn't be able to go and get it, not right now. I wouldn't even know where to begin looking for it, frankly.

DR. ROGERS:

How many of us have seen it?

MR. MALLAMO:

I have seen it, and Deborah Gray and Marjorie Fuhrmann have seen it. Steve raises a very good point. We can certainly have it available for the next meeting. At that point, I don't think you will have any problem accessioning it.

MR. LUECKE:

Should we just table it until the next meeting?

DR. GITTELMAN:

All in favor?

MR. BROXMEYER:

Of tabling it?

DR. GITTELMAN:

Yes, all in favor of tabling? Opposed? Abstentions? **It's tabled until the next meeting.**

(Vote: 5/2/0/8 Opposed: Ms. Fuhrmann & Mr. Seides. Absent: Ms. LeBow, Dr. Pecorale & Mr. Macchione. Five vacant positions.)

MS. FUHRMANN:

Moving on, the school brochure will be back from the publisher any day and will be mailed out next week. A few of the school programs are being revised. Two programs are being substantially revised, one is the "Egyptian Mummies" and the other is "Hawaii and the Islands of the South Pacific." They will now include slides from the Vanderbilt travels.

As you saw in the video, the summer camp program concerning the Vanderbilt Cup was very well received and received a lot of publicity. The walk around programs for outside summer camps will continue until August 26.

Bookings for September school programs are already coming in. We started something new called the early bird rates, so these programs are booking without ever seeing the descriptions of the programs as the school brochure is not out as yet.

There are two new planetarium shows for the school year. One is called the "Vital Triangle." This is geared for third through fifth grade. The other is a revised program called "Sky Tonight." That will be for first and second graders and has more lunar information in it.

The attendance of summer camp and the public increased during the summer months.

Also in the Education and Exhibits Committee meeting, with Lance's attendance, it was agreed that the Dinosaur Committee would be folded into the Education and Exhibits Committee as of the current time, since it's now really an exhibit. It's no longer in development. That's the end of my report.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Thank you. Questions or comments on that report? Finance Committee, Carl.

MR. LUECKE:

Yes, the Finance Committee met right before the board meeting and while there are no issues to bring before the board, just a reminder that everyone has in their folders the month-by-month budget and month-by-month actuals through June for 2004. Since each month the budget gets replaced by the actuals, stapled to your folder you have the budget for each month so you can make a comparison.

There will be a Finance Committee meeting not directly before the next board meeting but within the next couple of weeks to talk about various issues. That's my report.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Any questions or comments on that report? Thank you. Personnel Committee, Deborah.

MS. GRAY:

The Personnel Committee met this evening to get an update on our progress with our ad for a Museum Assistant Director and Development person. As you recall, we ran an ad in the American Association of Museums, and to date we have 17 responses. My understanding is they put the job description online in May, and it was published in their newsletter in July. We made a decision today to leave the position open until October 1. We will accept all resumes up until October 1, and then we will begin reviewing them.

Prior to October 1 we are going to have a committee meeting to develop the criteria for the selection using County criteria as a criteria on our own so that all the applicants will be reviewed against pre-determined criteria before we see who the applicants actually are.

We have asked Michael to join us because part of this job description has to do with development. We will be reviewing the applications in the middle of October. If anyone has any suggestions or other things we should consider, I would be happy to hear them after the meeting.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Questions or comments? Director's Report, Lance.

MR. MALLAMO:

Well, as always happens in the summer months, it's been very busy here. This year has been no exception, but I'm pleased to report, as I did earlier, that last week the Legislature appropriated an amended Capital Budget resolution for \$110,000 in funding to replace the deteriorated lighting in historic buildings including the Hall of Fishes. We had developed a wonderful lighting system for the Memorial Wing galleries. That system will be replicated in the Hall of Fishes. Currently we have cases that have no electricity at all. We're not even able to light them. There are dark spots. We have humming florescent fixtures. It's just a very, very poor experience going into those galleries. We really look forward to that.

The Memorial Wing galleries have been received with wonderful acclaim by everyone who has gone in there. The lighting is so vastly improved. The colors sing in the exhibits, and there is no noise. It's been a wonderful addition. Our maintenance has really dropped. We were opening those cases on a weekly basis to try to keep the lights on in those exhibits, and we're anxious to replicate that system in the marine museum.

We also had a wonderful wine tasting event here at the museum last week in conjunction with the Northport Rotary. Over 1,000 attended the event here at the museum. It was very well received. Visitors that left said it was the best event ever. We have had it here for a number of years. The crowd was easily handled. We added a new tent. Instead of one tent on the golf course, we had two. I think those of us who were here clearly saw we had room for more. We used the Centerport Beach for parking and had buses transport visitors to the museum and used our own trams to access people. It just worked like clockwork. It was very well done. There were several Trustees that were here. Deborah Gray was here and I think no one can deny that it was a really wonderful event. The food was absolutely fantastic. We look forward to a bigger and better event in conjunction with the Northport Rotary next year as well.

Our Vanderbilt Cup Program has really been taking off. You saw that in the kids program that we did, the education programs.

We have made connections with various car clubs and antique car owners on Long Island. We have groups working here in Suffolk that meet at the museum every Saturday and a separate group meeting in Nassau County on a weekly basis right now to work with the event in that area. That event, I understand, as of yesterday they are now proposing to move it from Eisenhower Park to Mitchell Field because they feel it can be better accommodated over there. I was not at the meeting yesterday, but I will be at the meeting on Saturday, and we will be having another meeting next week to confirm that it will be at Mitchell Field. We will keep you posted on that. The handout that Leslie gave you about the different events I see indicates it will

be Mitchell Field. Leslie was at the meeting in my place.

Our replication of the Broadway show or our adaptation of the Broadway Show, "The Vanderbilt Cup" has opened. It's a great show. It takes place on Sundays at the planetarium. It's a multi-media show so the show occurs right here. A projection of the original race footage, we have three minutes of the original race footage and some other racing events take place behind me in the center window. We use a rear projection system. That has worked out so well and is really so innovative when you're sitting here in the lobby and see that. We are now designing a series of interpretive films on the museum so that when visitors come when the show is not going on, we'll have some chairs set up here and they can see other activities occurring in the museum. This will show them what they will see on a mansion tour, what the other galleries are like, promoting the museum for site use and our special events. It will really enliven the lobby up and give people a better sense of the resources that we have here at the museum. That's underway as well.

We're really looking forward to the fall, the Vanderbilt Cup events and then our site visit by the American Association of Museums, which will occur November 2nd through the 4th as part of the final step of the reaccreditation process. We hope for a great fall ahead. Thank you.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Any questions or comments on Lance's report? I guess it's my turn. Having the American Association of Museums come for a site visit is always a good learning experience, if it doesn't raise the blood pressure of the Director too much where he can't function. I've been through it once, and I imagine, Marge, that you went through it also. And so did you, Carl, right?

I think that we are very well positioned for the visit. I believe that our programs, our site, the overall state of mind of the institution – we're ripe. Let them come. I look forward to their visit. I look forward to their commentary. I remember the last time when I sat down with them. I remember their objections. I remember the problems that they had. I feel that we have met them, and I feel that we have met them very effectively. That doesn't mean we can't do better. That means that we have just done, in my opinion, far more than they should be anticipating. We have really grown as an institution. I'm hoping that we will get a ten-year reaccreditation out of this as opposed to a five. When we last went, we were, shall we say, on bad terms with the AAM to some extent. This time, we are a thriving institution making a contribution to the art form. I think we will come over well.

I would hope that the accomplishments that Stephanie has made don't go unnoticed. I wish she was here tonight because not only did she get a grant but now she has gotten a prestigious appointment. This is an important part of what a museum, what an institution is about, and that is having people reach excellence. Stephanie has certainly done that. We should acknowledge her accomplishment perhaps when we next see her.

On the issue that we just went through on the accessioning issue, I realize it's a sore spot. It's a risky spot. I hope that you thank your contributor and explain to them that it's so important to us that we really do have a protocol that we just have to follow. We don't have a choice. We don't make exceptions to it but that we recognize and we're grateful for her generosity.

MS. FUHRMANN:

First I'll have to explain it to Florence.

DR. GITTELMAN:

Excuse me?

MS. FUHRMANN:

First I'll have to explain it to Florence.

MR. MALLAMO:

I'll take care of that.

DR. GITTELMAN:

I think the Director can explain it to the Curator.

In addition to that, I would say that in the things that I have done of late, I'm bursting with programming ideas. I can't wait to settle into from writing this book to putting some of the programs on the table because Willie saw a lot. A lot of what he saw makes him partners with Charles Darwin. I think Willie and Darwin make a great team. I think we have a door open to go "Mr. Vanderbilt meets Mr. Darwin" and just go into programming. There is absolutely no question that Willie read Charles Darwin's book, "Voyage of the Beagle." He says he did. Some of the intricacies of his visits and the way in which it's important to him and the way in which it raises his personal self-value, these are all things I think we can develop as programming for the future.

That's all I've got to say. Any questions? Any old business? Any new business? We have not established the need for an executive session. May I have a motion to adjourn?

MS. FUHRMANN:

Motion.

DR. GITTELMAN:

There's one thing I want to do before I close this meeting. I want to thank Janet Clemens. Janet has been working with me as an intern at the museum. She has done a wonderful job of digging up some of the craziest stuff that I have asked for from our archives and going to the web and finding out who is this person and how can they possibly be connected. When I sit down and look over all the connections she helped me make, she has really helped me develop the story. I just want to thank you, Janet, for all your good work. This is her last day of work, so it's apropos that I thank her so that maybe I could talk her into coming back next year and I could really finish this thing. She has been wonderful, and I'm very grateful.

Anybody else? Anything?

MR. MALLAMO:

I think you should note she also plays Rose Marie Warburton in the Living History Program.

DR. GITTELMAN:

She's really helped bring her character – and by the way, so did my daughter, who did it one year. Yes, we have certainly put a lot of flash on Rose Marie Warburton's bones at this point. We know a lot more about the lady. That's it. Anything else? Thank you. Good night.

(Dr. Gittelman adjourned the meeting at 9:15 p.m.)

SG: ap