

**Minutes of the Semi - Annual meeting
Board of Regents of Gunston Hall Plantation
April 9 – 11, 2011**

Opening Session

The Opening Session of the 2011 Semi - Annual Meeting of the Board of Regents of Gunston Hall was held on Saturday, April 9, 2011. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM by Wylie Raab, First Regent.

Roll was called.

Present: NSCDA President Hilary Gripekoven; President of the Virginia Society Carrie Weedon; First Regent Wylie Raab; Vice Regent Anna Duff; Regents Barganier, Blaylock, Blodgett, Box, Buchanan, Cox, Craddock, Crockett, Dargan, Dines, Field, Grainger, Hardesty, Harney, Hatton, Hill, Holland, Hunt, Jenkins, Jenkins, Johnston, Kennedy (Mrs. Walker), Barbey, Linn, Loughlin, Martin, McCallie, McMillan, Millard, Moody, Norton, Peters, Ravenel, Snider, Van Allen.

Excused: Regents Bowman, Ingham, Kennedy (Mrs. John), Markert, Merrill, Orsi, Osborn, Steele, Tarbutton, Walton

Former Regents present: Adamson

Former Regents excused: Knowles, Macnish

First Regent Wylie Raab asked for additions or corrections to the minutes of the October 2011 Annual Meeting. Hearing none she announced that they will stand approved as distributed.

First Regent Wylie Raab welcomed everyone. She introduced our Administrative Assistant, Lena McAllister.

Report of the First Regent:

“It’s hard to guess how many times over the past 6 years I’ve idly thought about how wise the Hertles were in crafting the Deed of Gift. For everyone in this room, the days of considering that gesture idly are long gone. Had the Hertles given Gunston Hall outright to the NSCDA, we would not have benefited from much the Commonwealth has made possible over 62 years. And had they given it outright to the Commonwealth, it is hard to imagine Gunston Hall would ever have enjoyed the intellectual, scholarly, or meticulous stewardship which the Dames have devotedly provided.

Our authority as managers of Gunston Hall has recently been challenged. It is not the first time the Regents have risen to full height and defended our responsibility. On March 1st nineteen Regents wore our badge with honor, but make no mistake, there were 52 Regents present. The dedicated voices of all of you echoed throughout every

conversation. Your letters, emails, and phone calls were invaluable as we prepared and presented ourselves to Secretary of Education Gerard Robinson.

There are areas in which women ... Dames in particular ... excel. We can work, stretch, and tuck away a dollar like none other. We can impart a definitive message of capability and strength, without being abrasive or challenging. We can show appreciation and respect without sacrificing authority. We can reassure, while seeking reassurance. Every member of this board delivered a strong message that the Regents of Gunston Hall will continue to fulfill the mission deeded to us.

The first Liberty Lecture this year addressed the fact that the opportunity for a successful American Revolution was defined by what was happening all over the world, culturally, scientifically, in terms of travel and communication. That particular decade of the 18th century was the single window of time in which our Revolution could have succeeded.

In the wake of this whole recent experience, I believe a door has been flung open and this particular Board of Regents has a unique opportunity to guide our programming to a new, more sophisticated level. We could not have a brighter, more conscientious, or more dedicated assemblage of Regents.

The moment would not be right without the tremendous accomplishments of David Reese, who has dedicated himself to recreating George Mason's Gunston Hall. It would not be right without the sophisticated and varied areas of technology available in the field of education today. It would not be right without the devotion and loyalty of this particular staff, whose company and intimacy with Gunston Hall we were able to enjoy last night.

It is well known that in the area of historic restoration Gunston Hall, and in particular Gunston Hall during the directorship of David Reese, is considered the standard by which others strive to succeed. Secretary Robinson suggested that one must never let a good crisis go unexploited. I believe this is a moment for us to make education at Gunston Hall also the standard which others wish to emulate. Every committee can be part of a total effort as we formulate a new, expanded plan of education, explore the many facets which might make up such a program, search for dynamic and creative educators to advise us and implement the things we would like to do. Our docents, under the remarkable, focused, and dedicated leadership of Shawn Zurlo, are continuing to do what they have volunteered to do, motivated by a love for this plantation. They are opening the minds of students to the life and vision of George Mason. That is only one dimension of education here. As Secretary Robinson beamed, this is a setting which invites many more sophisticated opportunities for learning, in the areas of science, technology, engineering and math. We are the perfect Board to embrace that opportunity.

Welcome home to Gunston Hall, ladies.”

Report of the Treasurer: Beppy Martin

The Treasurer presented the 2011-2012 Budget. She explained it to the board line by line. Beppy announced that it would be voted on at our closing session.

Report of the Executive Director: David Reese

1. Garden and Grounds:
 - a. The dying oak tree has been removed from the front of the mansion.
 - b. Berto has cleared brush and debris from the west bank of the garden to open up the view of the deer park
 - c. Berto has a new red truck
 - d. Berto has been working without an assistant and we hope to find one soon.

2. Collections:
 - a. The SE Chamber on the second floor of the mansion has not been open for the last 15 – 18 years. We are going to be the first to see it. The original color was found and covers the walls...
 - b. On the opposite end of the second floor in the SW chamber the original mantle piece has been installed. It is made of 18th century pine. The original nailing blocks were found so it was easy to fit. Susan Buck found the original color.
 - c. Caroline Riley has been accepted as an Attingham Fellow in England this coming July. She received a scholarship.

3. Non-Historic Buildings and Grounds:
 - a. The exteriors of the farm house and Berto's house have been restored. The area surrounding the houses has been cleaned up.
 - b. The exterior of the Executive Director's house has been finished with the addition of shutters.

4. The ADA Project
 - a. The lift has been installed and as planned it sits below ground level, out of site, when not in use.
 - b. The temporary wheelchair access on the river side of the mansion will be removed when the hand rails are installed on the new lift.

5. The Front Gate
 - a. Phase two has begun with the side panels being designed by an Architect. They will match the description of the gate given in John Mason's *Recollections*.

6. Library
 - a. The library has received a gift of \$176,999 from the estate of a Former Regent, Mary Porter. The bequest will be used to support the library archival work and book purchase.

- b. Our former librarian organized the new library but not yet analyzed the rare books in the archives. Mark Whatford has started to review the contents and has found many treasures. Some very important finds are letters written between George Washington and George Mason. One is signed by George Washington.
7. New Software
- a. Mark is also Gunston Hall's IT specialist. He has found a software program that will allow fundraising activities to be tracked, Friends letters and addresses to be saved, front desk scheduling, eblasts and online giving. This addresses a long-expressed need.
8. Education
- a. The Education department is moving ahead slowly.
 - b. Frank Barker has been a wonderful asset since the termination of the Education Coordinator position and has assumed many tasks since January.
 - c. The first goal is to continue the school group tours. There were 550 students welcomed in February and 1700 in March. 1300 students are booked for April and 1750 for May.
9. Special Events
- a. 170 people attended the Seeds of Independence presentation.
 - b. Over 50 attended each of the Liberty Lecture Series.
 - c. Kite Day happily saw 800 kite fliers and included brisk sales in the museum shop.
 - d. On Memorial Day the National Spelling Bee contestants and their families will take a day off from competition and spend it at Gunston Hall. We expect 875 to 1200 attendees.
 - e. May 9 – 13 Gunston Hall will be the site of the US Courts System Training for mid-level and upper-level managers. The theme of their event is 'working collaboratively' as did the founding fathers in crafting the Constitution.
 - f. The Bill of Rights Institute will make a return visit to Gunston Hall. This will represent their third meeting on the Plantation.
10. Archaeology
- a. When digging for archaeological mitigation prior to the lift being installed on the east entrance to the mansion, archaeologist David Shonyo found bits of an 18th century path. This confirms that the kitchen was located a distance from the mansion and that the fence would not have abutted the building.
 - b. Exploration will continue on the land front side of the mansion, searching for evidence of the carriage circle.
11. Development and PR
- a. The Friends Campaign is \$10,000 ahead of where we were in April 2010.
 - b. PR is continuing to place articles and ads in magazines and in the local press.

- c. Much effort is continuing in the area of recruiting educational events that are appropriate to host at Gunston Hall.

Announcements:

Weasy Blodgett asked that Regents wanting to ride the shuttle to the airport on Tuesday please sign the sheet on the table with our folders.

Dorothy Dines reviewed the “Book Wish List” for the Library. It, too, will be left on the table by our folders.

There being no further business First Regent Wylie Raab recessed the meeting until Monday, April 11, 2011 at 4:15 P.M.

Following adjournment the Board of Regents went into Executive Session.

Minutes of the Development Meeting of the Full Board of Regents of Gunston Hall Plantation
Monday, April 11, 2011

The meeting was called to order by Development Committee Chair Julie Linn at 9:00 AM.

Regents present: Pearl Adamson, Anita Barbey, Elaine Blaylock, Weasy Blodgett, Angela Box, Ellie Buchanan, Hannah Cox, Peg Crockett, Dorothy Dines, Anna Duff, Tibbie Field, Alice Haney, Tat Hardesty, Winkie Hatton, Sara Hill, Lucie Holland, Melanie Hunt, Avery Jenkins, Margery Jenkins, Dianne Kennedy, Cissy Loughlin, Elizabeth Martin, Elizabeth McCallie, Tia McMillan, Mary Millard, Marcy Moody, Betsy Norton, Betsy Peters, Wylie Raab, Virginia Snider, Susan Van Allen.

Staff present: Susan Blankenship, Mary Pikrallidas, Executive Director David Reese.

The minutes of the October 11, 2010 meeting were approved as distributed.

Susan Blankenship, Development Coordinator, gave the following report:

- Private giving this year is well ahead of last year. Figures include the Regents Fund and the Friends Campaign: 2010: \$244,000 2011: \$423,000.
- The Library and Archives department has received a \$177,000 gift from the estate of former Regent Mary Porter.
- Grant money from the Virginia Foundation for Humanities funded the Seeds of Independence film.
- Dominion Power funded the production of a new rack card for Gunston Hall. The card will be finished in May. Tim Sargent, member of the Board of Visitors, was instrumental in acquiring this grant.

- The Friends mailing by the Regents has had great return this year, especially for the states that mail early. We have 200 more individual gifts this year. The total received so far in 2011 is \$92,000. In April 2010 the total was 80,000.
- We finally have a Foundation-approved Planned Giving brochure. This is fully funded and should be completed by June 2011.
- Gunston Hall will soon have new computer software that will enable online giving, e-blasting, mass mailings, gate receipts, and Friends fundraising information to name just a few capabilities.

The Development Committee Chair, Julie Linn, gave a brief report of the Development Committee meeting. The committee reviewed the process used to distribute the Friends mailing materials to the Regents. Our Development Coordinator, Susan Blankenship is most pleased with the way our procedure works. The Regents are asked to be flexible and to store their materials if they are received before they plan to do their mailing.

The Regional Friends Chairwomen were introduced and each presented the Friends Fundraising total for her Region.

Region I: Julie Linn reported for Anne Rhett Merrill - \$8989.00 total received from: Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Kansas, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Washington State, Wyoming.

Region II: Julie Linn – \$12,485.00 total received from: Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Wisconsin.

Region III: Elizabeth McCallie - \$33,920.00 total received from: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas

Region IV: Ellie Buchanan. \$36,517.50 total received from: Connecticut, District of Columbia, Delaware, Massachusetts, Maryland, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia, Vermont, West Virginia.

After calling for New Business and hearing none the Chair entertained a brief question and answer period.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 AM.

Closing Session

The Annual meeting of the Board of Regents of Gunston Hall reconvened at 4:15 PM on Monday, April 11, 2011. Roll was called.

Present: First Regent Wylie Raab; Vice Regent Anna Duff; President of the Virginia Society Carrie Weedon; Regents Blaylock, Blodgett, Box, Buchanan, Cox, Craddock, Field, Grainger, Hardesty, Harney, Hatton, Hill, Holland, Hunt, Jenkins (Mrs. John), Kennedy (Mrs. Walker), Linn, Loughlin, Martin, McCallie, McMillan, Millard, Moody, Norton, Peters, Ravenel, Snider, Van Allen; Former Regent Adamson

Excused: President of the NSCDA Hilary Gripekoven; Regents Barganier, Bowman, Dargan, Dines, Ingham, Jenkins (Avery), Johnston, Kennedy (Mrs. John), Liebow, Markert, Merrill, Orsi, Osborn, Steele, Tarbutton, Walton; Former Regents Knowles and Macnish

Audit/Finance Committee – Beppy Martin

Chairwoman Beppy Martin, the Board of Regents Treasurer, moved that we approved the proposed budget for 2011-2012 as it was presented on Saturday, April 9, 2011 at the Opening Session. The motion was second by Margery Jenkins and the motion carried.

Nominating Committee Report: Margery Jenkins

The Nominating Committee for Officers met on Saturday, April 9, 2011. Present were Chairman Margery Jenkins, Winkie Hatton, Weasy Blodgett and Susan Van Allen. Anne Rhett Merrill was excused.

There are five positions to be filled: Treasurer (3 year term); Corresponding Secretary (3 year term); Administrative Council Director (3 year term); Nominating Committee (4 year term); and an Assistant Treasurer (1 year term). Candidates will be announced at the Annual Meeting in October 2011.

It was decided by consensus that for this particular meeting the Council reports be accepted in writing, rather than by oral presentation.

Administrative Council Report: Caroline Dargan

The Arrangements Committee A half-day tour to the U. S. Capitol Building and George Mason Memorial is being planned for the October 2011 Annual Meeting. The Committee updated its job description and discussed a possible educational lecture at lunch time in October.

The Governance Committee The rules governing Regents were re-visited and the process will continue via email, and a complete report will be presented at the October 2011 meeting.

The Long Range Planning Committee There is still a problem regarding the timely receipt of the committee's long range plan progress report by the Long Range Planning Committee Chair. So, each committee chair will now receive her LRP progress report form by email ahead of each Regent's Meeting, so that it can be submitted to the Council Director by the end of the Regents' Meeting. From the 2001 AAM Report, deficiencies were identified that need to be addressed. These deficiencies are in governance, staff, guidebook, grants and visitation.

The New Regents Training Committee Reviewed and updated Orientation Strategy for October and made the following adjustments:

- Development will be enhanced
- Transportation coordinator for Observers
- Revised letter sent to Observers
- Eliminated over-lapping areas of training

Program Council Report: Dianne Kennedy

The Program Council met on Monday, April 11, 2011 at 1:30 PM and then dispersed to their various committee meetings. The Restoration Committee met at 3:00pm, Saturday, April 9, 2011. The council reconvened at 3:45 and the chairwomen gave their reports.

Archaeology:

- Reviewed the long range plan and are on schedule as all the goals are ongoing.
- Discussed the importance of creating a space to display the archaeology finds and concluded that when the Visitor's Center is reconfigured it would be an ideal location.
- David Shonyo described his exciting work during the preceding six months.

Collections:

- Reviewed the long range plan and are on schedule.
- Portrait of Anna Maria Murray Mason was received as a gift.
- Blue Book has been completed for the first floor of the mansion.
- As of April 1861 objects have been processed for past perfect software, 613 images added.
- The committee was taken on a tour by Curator, Caroline Riley of the collections storage.

Education:

- Recommended to the Director the hiring of a part time employee for the Education Department.
- Frank Barker was commended for his extraordinary effort.
- In response to a difficult situation, tours have been simplified, the staff is pulling together and the Docent Association may emerge stronger.

Historic Gardens and Grounds:

- name was changed to Historic Landscape Committee.
- Committee's purpose is to interpret and restore the historic landscape of George Mason, IV.
- Boxwood will continue to be fertilized and pruned.
- Health and growth of the Black Heart Cherry Trees is being closely watched.

Library and Archives:

- Added the recent gift of \$177,000 to the existing \$40,000 Acquisition Fund for a balance of over \$200,000.
- Mary Rhodes Montague Porter gift to the library and archives will be used for books and acquisitions with an emphasis on rare books and restoration.
- Purchased a large scanner.
- Accepted a George Mason bond purchase agreement dated 1751.
- Gunston's portion of the Founding Father's Consortium is finished except for the rare book portion.
- Website is ready to go; only direct descendants of George Mason will be posted on the website.

Restoration:

- Reviewed long range plan and added new goals
- Handicap ramp is near completion; black iron gate and railing have not yet been installed.
- Palladian Room door has been repaired and conserved.
- Second floor southeast bed chamber has been restored.
- 18th century mantle has been returned to its original location and painted dark gray with sand to resemble faux stone.
- 20th century mantle has been reinstalled in the Hertle Library.

Support Council Report: Anita Barbey

The Support Council was called to order at 1:00 PM on April 9, 2011. The meeting was suspended and committees met immediately.

Development Committee

- The annual Friends Campaign has raised \$92,000 as of April 2011. This is \$10,000 up from the total in April of 2010. This year's campaign has received donations from 200 more individuals.
- Our new Planned Giving brochure has been fully funded. It will be finished by June 2011.
- The software named Donor Perfect has been purchased for the Gunston Hall computers. This program will allow for online giving, eblasts, Friends mailing, and front desk reservations to name a few.

- The Friends mailing procedure has been deemed a success and we will follow the same outline we did last year. Susan Blankenship is very pleased with the way the procedure works in her office.

Non Historic buildings, Grounds, Gardens, and Farm Committee:

The handicapped entrance to the mansion will be completed shortly with the installation of a handrail. The three residences on the property are being restored, fixed and the area surrounding them cleaned up. Hopefully, this year they will all receive new roofs. Berto has a new red truck! Phase II of the entry gate plans have been drawn. Work is to start after the improvements to the houses and will commence with two six foot side panels. The committee will continue to look for Blackheart Cherry tree seedlings to obtain for future planting. Renovation of the Museum area, Visitor's Center and front desk and the parking lot are capital expenditures and will be addressed in the future.

Leased Operations Committee:

There is much excitement about the upcoming educational events. Several will be money makers for Gunston Hall. There are four new products in the gift shop and data is being collected as to the costs of reprinting Recollections by John Mason and The Five Georges.

Public Relations Committee:

Recent accomplishments of the Public Relations Committee are:

- 1) new rack cards which will be ready soon. They have been paid for by a grant from Dominion Power Foundation.
- 2) A visit by David Reese and Susan Blankenship to the American Bus Association resulting in five tour bus bookings.

Former Regents Advisory Committee Report: Pearl Adamson

The Former Regents Advisory Committee consists of three members appointed by the First Regent for three year terms and are chosen from among former regents. This committee provides continuity and acts as a liaison between present and former regents. Brantley Knowles has been invited to join the committee, has accepted, and will join us in October.

The committee wants to communicate with former regents regarding activities of the Board as well as personal information on regents, past and present. An ad hoc committee may be set up, at the pleasure and direction of the First Regent, to implement this long-standing need. The Former Regents appreciate the letters from Mr. Reese as well as the ever-improving *Gunston Grapevine*. The letters from the Director are riveting to read and impart the energy and dynamic nature of what is happening here. We all love Gunston Hall Plantation and how it reflects George Mason. It is an exciting time to be part of the Gunston Hall Board.

Adjourn

Hearing no further business First Regent called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made and carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Linn

Julie Linn
Recording Secretary

