

University of North Carolina at Asheville

**“Marketing the Biltmore Estate:”**

A Senior Thesis Submitted to  
The Faculty of the History Department  
In Candidacy for the Degree of  
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Department of History

Submitted by:  
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George W. Vanderbilt first came to Asheville in 1888 with his mother on vacation. Though he left Asheville repeatedly, his heart never did. This led him to visualize building an estate modeled after an English manor, “One that would serve not only as a showcase for his cherished collections and a retreat for entertaining but also a profitable, self-supporting business.”<sup>1</sup> Through world wars and depressions his vision has remained intact. The Biltmore house is the only estate of its size in America and the largest privately owned estate in the world. Most estates of this magnitude have fallen into the public domain because of the great cost of conservation, preservation, and upkeep. The Biltmore Company has remained private due only to the continual reinvention of itself through estate marketing and careful attention to what its guest want and the means to make it possible. As one of America’s best examples of a heritage tourism destination, its solvency is safe for future generations.

The North Carolina Department of Commerce describes Heritage Tourism as, “travel that is motivated by a desire to experience the authentic natural, historic and cultural resources of a community or region.”<sup>2</sup> Biltmore allows its visitors to see a snapshot in time of an era gone by. It is probably the single best living example of the gilded age in American history and the excesses of its wealthy class.

In, “Heritage Tourism is Hot,” Rachel Dickinson a contributing journalist for American Demographics points out that while the majority of tourists still travel for such things as visits to cities, beaches, family, lakes, and resort-style destinations, nearly 45% intend to visit a historic site while on vacation. In her article she quotes David Listokon, a professor at the Center for Urban Policy Research at Rutgers University in New Jersey,

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<sup>1</sup> Jerry F. Patterson, The Vanderbilts (New York: Henry Abrams Inc. 1989). 163.

<sup>2</sup> N.C. Commerce Home, “Heritage Tourism Program,” <http://www.commerce.state.nc.us/tourism/heritage/> (25 October 2001)

as saying, “aging baby boomers are interested in their cultural roots...they have greater interests than their parents in things historic and in preservation.”<sup>3</sup> As tourism becomes more and more focused on heritage sites, Biltmore should become a beneficiary of this new niche in the tourism industry.

In “Small Towns, Big Dreams” journalist Cynthia Long points out that tourism is the second largest employer in America, and the third largest in sales revenue. She states, “Heritage tourism preserves a region’s character, instills local pride and generates dollars.” The advantage of having a heritage site can be overwhelmingly positive for a region. She sees the southeastern U.S. as being the largest heritage tourism area in the country. She does also caution that the heritage aspect can be overdone and misused by a town causing it to become a liability instead of an asset.<sup>4</sup>

Valery Patin, Sociologist, and administrator of the International Scientific Committee on Cultural Tourism, expresses her concern for heritage tourism sites in her article, “Will Market Forces Rule?” Her primary argument is that these sites will be overly exploited and under funded in the name of making a profit. Publicly funded sites are bringing in funds but her fear is that the government will not put the money back into the sites for restoration and preservation.<sup>5</sup> This is one of the very arguments that William Cecil made for keeping Biltmore in private hands and away from government bureaucracy. When asked why he worried what might happen to Biltmore if it were to be put into a not-for-profit organization or under control of the government, Mr. Cecil said, “suffice it to say that I cannot think of a single North Carolina property in state hands,

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<sup>3</sup> Rachel Dickenson, “Heritage Tourism Is Hot,” *American Demographics*, September 1996.

<sup>4</sup> Cynthia Long, “Small Towns, Big Dreams,” *Insight To The News*, 12 May 1997.

<sup>5</sup> Valery Patin, “Will Market Forces Rule,” *UNESCO Courier*, July-August, 1999.

which comes close to breaking even...its rules and regulations seem to be incompatible with the successful running of a business.”<sup>6</sup>

In “Tourism and Heritage Are Not Strangers” University of Queensland scholars Bruce R. Prideaux and Lee-Jaye Kininmont do research on the best avenues for heritage attractions such as historic sites, and museums, to make them known better to the traveling public. According to them, pamphlets, flyers, and signage are the best avenues for advertising. Articles in newspapers, journals, and magazines are also invaluable. They concluded that “heritage tourism is a rapidly growing segment within tourism and that through focused advertising these sites can grow even more.”<sup>7</sup> Focused advertising enables people to know about Biltmore when they are traveling through Asheville. Pamphlets in gift areas and at attraction displays in motel lobbies, at the Chamber of Commerce, and other sites around Asheville do just that.

Rachel Carley, an employee of Biltmore, has written a guide that gives guest with background information on Biltmore to aid their visit. George Washington Vanderbilt was born in 1862, the son of Maria Louisa and William Henry Vanderbilt. Born into one of the wealthiest industrialist families in America at that time, George Vanderbilt fostered a love for books instead of business. One reporter noted upon visiting the family home in New York that his was the only room in the house, including the library that was lined with books. He exclaimed, “The effect of the whole was sober and serious.”<sup>8</sup> George Vanderbilt’s love for books is evidenced by the collection now housed at Biltmore House, of some 23,000 volumes. He also was capable of reading eight languages.

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<sup>6</sup> “Draft Answers to CP&L Questions,” (1993) Biltmore Estate Archives.

<sup>7</sup> Lee-Jaye Kininmont, and Bruce Prideaux, “Tourism and Heritage are not Strangers,” Journal of Travel Research, February 1999.

<sup>8</sup> Patterson, 163.

Vanderbilt and his mother were visiting Asheville in 1888 when he happened across a knoll above the intersection of the Swannanoa and French Broad rivers. This is where he was to build his country estate. He commissioned the most desired architect and landscaper of the time, who both happened to be friends of the family, Richard Morris Hunt and Frederick Law Olmstead. Together these three men set out to design and build the most prestigious home in America. Vanderbilt began buying land through agents and eventually amassed 125,000 acres. Work began on the house in 1889. It took over 1,000 men 5 years to build.<sup>9</sup> Vanderbilt wanted Olmstead to make the entire grounds into a park. However Olmstead found the forested areas to be in bad shape and recommended instead, “to make a small park (250 acres) into which to look from your house, make a small pleasure ground and garden, farm your river bottom chiefly to keep and fatten livestock with a view of manure, and make the rest a forest...”<sup>10</sup> C.D. Beadle was hired to assist Olmstead with the gardens, and Gilford Pinchot to oversee forestry.<sup>11</sup>

The building of the house was such a major undertaking that others in the area could not help but take notice. Edgar Wilson Nye was in the process of building a house in Skyland and frequented the grounds of Biltmore to engage George and gain ideas for his own property.<sup>12</sup> In an excerpt from a diary, a student at Asheville Female College remarked about taking a day trip to visit the construction site on April 23, 1893. She wrote, “The Mansion will be immense... [there] will be 8 fountains, and they will fill large basins... Egyptian Garden, then joining the main building is a bowling green.”<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Carley, 6.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Bill Nye, “The Vanderbilt Estate,” *Asheville Citizen Times*, 25 February 1891.

<sup>13</sup> “Excerpts from the Diary of a student at Asheville Female College,” 23 April 1893. Biltmore Estate Archives.

After 5 years, Biltmore opened on December 24, 1895 with many family members present. The guests stayed busy horseback riding, swimming, hunting, reading and having all of their needs met by Vanderbilts' staff. They often stayed for several weeks once they arrived. Vanderbilt also invited his staff and their families and gave each of them gifts from under the huge Christmas tree.<sup>14</sup> In April of 1898 George Vanderbilt was engaged to Edith Stuyvesant Dresser and the couple married in June. The ceremony took place in Paris where they had met. Also in 1898, Carl Schenk opened the Biltmore Forest School, (the first such school in America) under George's direction.

Through the late 1890's and early 1900's George Vanderbilt and Biltmore drew great attention. The New York Times, which kept up with all of "society" during this time, published numerous articles. Ainslee's Magazine published a 10 page article about Biltmore Estate and all of its lavishness.<sup>15</sup> The Evening Telegram, in New York, the Grocers Criterion, in Chicago, The Ladies World, Broadway Magazine, and others enjoyed visiting and writing about Biltmore.

Broadway Magazine called Biltmore "the Finest Estate in America." Allen Wiley says that, "there is no mansion in the suburbs of the great eastern cities, in Newport, or in the millionaire colonies on the Jersey coast that equals it in magnificence."<sup>16</sup> The Evening Telegram wrote about Biltmore and its creator and said of him, "I built my soul a lordly pleasure house, wherein at ease for aye to dwell," and described the house, how it was built, and its owners.<sup>17</sup> Country Life in America called Biltmore, "The Great Model Estate of George W. Vanderbilt in North Carolina – Village, Farm, Dairy, Forest,

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<sup>14</sup> Laura Daly, and Cathleen Henshaw, Biltmore Estate, A Young Persons Guide, (Asheville: The Biltmore Co., 1990).

<sup>15</sup> Philip Poindexter, "The Biltmore Estate," Ainslee's Magazine, (New York: Street and Smith, May 1900).

<sup>16</sup> Allen Willey, "The Greatest American Estate," Broadway Magazine, July 1908, 91.

<sup>17</sup> "Daily Life of Well Known Men," Evening Telegram, 1 May 1901.

School, Gardens, Nursery, and Herbarium, all welded into One Immense Enterprise.”<sup>18</sup>

Vanderbilt received attention just because of who he was, but the building of Biltmore drew even more than was common.

In 1914 while recovering from an appendectomy, George W. Vanderbilt died. He left most of his property including Biltmore in a trust to his daughter, Cornelia. Before his unexpected death, George had been negotiating the sale of 80,000+ acres to the federal government. The Estate had become too hard to manage and newly imposed taxes made it impossible to keep the Estate intact. Edith carried the sale to fruition in 1915 and the land sold became the nucleus of the Pisgah Forest.<sup>19</sup> Thus the end of the George Vanderbilt era at Biltmore had come shortly into the new century.

In September of 1929 a new era began at Biltmore. Cornelia Vanderbilt was given the deed to the Biltmore House. Edith Vanderbilt had been the executor of the estate until Cornelia Vanderbilt reached the age of 28. Edith Vanderbilt still held properties in Transylvania, Haywood, and Henderson counties that would become Cornelia’s upon her death as well.<sup>20</sup>

On October 29, 1929 the stock market crashed. Asheville now faced the new challenge of being a tourist destination in a time of financial crisis. On December 10, 1929 the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce passed a resolution that in effect asked Cornelia and her husband John F.A. Cecil to open the doors of their great estate to visitors. The resolution noted the interest that had been created in Asheville when George Vanderbilt built such a spectacular home. It recalled how generous he had been to allow people to drive by on a scenic tour to view the house, and how he issued annual passes to

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<sup>18</sup> George Weston, “Biltmore,” Country Life in America, September 1902, 180.

<sup>19</sup> Carley, 2.

<sup>20</sup> Asheville Citizen Times, 10 September 1929.

those who might frequent the estate such as the one given to Bishop James M. Horner in 1908.<sup>21</sup> The resolution cited that some, “250,000 persons have availed themselves of this opportunity...thus creating extremely valuable publicity for this community.”<sup>22</sup> They noted that, “the Biltmore Estate is given great prominence in all of the publicity and advertising of the city of Asheville.”<sup>23</sup> The resolution went on to add that the Chamber of Commerce would be willing to help in any way possible to make this a reality.<sup>24</sup> Biltmore did not have a marketing department at the time, but the Chamber of Commerce was willing to do all the advertising necessary to publicize the opening of the house. This is the beginning of relationship between Biltmore Estate and local area organizations that would prove to be a valuable asset that continues to this day.

On February 7, 1930, Junius Adams, the Cecil’s attorney, wrote to Eugene Bearden, head of the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce, in reply to a previous letter. He acknowledged that the Biltmore House would open its doors to the public on March 15, 1930. Admission would be \$2 for adults and \$1 for children under the age of twelve. He also stated that the hours of operation would be 9:30 am till 7 pm from April to October. During the months of October through April, closing time would be one hour earlier. Guests were to be out of the house thirty minutes prior to closing, allowing them time to be at the gates by the stated closing times. Tickets would be available at the, “Biltmore Estate Offices, Chamber of Commerce, Grove Park Inn, Asheville-Biltmore Hotel, Langren Hotel, Battery Park Hotel, George Vanderbilt Hotel, and M.V. Moore and

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<sup>21</sup> Annual Pass, Issued by, “George W. Vanderbilt issued to Bishop James N. Horner, 1908. Biltmore Estate Archives.

<sup>22</sup> Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce, “Resolution to persuade the owners of Biltmore Estate to open its doors to the public,” 10 December 1929, Pack memorial Library, Vertical files, vol.7, Asheville N.C.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.



Company.”<sup>25</sup> This move helped Asheville survive the Great depression and gave the Cecil’s some income to help with Estate maintenance.

The Chamber of Commerce expected a large crowd for opening ceremonies. In the Asheville Citizen Times article dated March 12, 1930, the Chamber urged local citizens to come early to avoid the rush that was sure to come later in the day. The Chamber also stated that it had widely publicized the opening of the house throughout the entire country using advertisements in local papers, for example in, “New York City alone it was reported that the circulation was 3 million in the metropolitan newspapers.”<sup>26</sup> Mr. Weede, a Chamber of Commerce employee, had just completed a tour of Florida and in the process had distributed some 60,000 pamphlets, 15,000 in St. Petersburg alone. This was the start of the relationship between the marketing of Biltmore as a tourist destination and the free press that was making it possible.

Ailing hotels also hoped to benefit from this new venture. They told the Chamber of Commerce that it had the full support of the Asheville-Western North Carolina Hotelmen’s Association. John Goode urged both organizations to work with each other and assured the hotelmen that 32 cents out of every dollar given to the Chamber of Commerce was spent on advertising for the city.<sup>27</sup>

On March 15, 1930 the Biltmore House was opened with much pomp and circumstance. Newspapermen, photographers, area dignitaries, and visitors from all over were on hand.<sup>28</sup> Short speeches were given commemorating the event and Mrs. Cecil:

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<sup>25</sup> Junius G. Adams, “Letter to Mr. Eugene M. Bearden, Secretary of the Convention Bureau, Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce,” 27 February 1930, Biltmore Estate Archives.

<sup>26</sup> “Biltmore House Opens Saturday,” Asheville Citizen Times, 12 March 1930, 4.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> “Biltmore House is Thrown Open,” Asheville Citizen Times, 16 March 1930, 1-4.

First of all I want to thank you for the nice things you have just said. Mr. Cecil and I hope that through opening Biltmore House to the public, Asheville and Western North Carolina will derive all the benefit they deserve and that the people who go through the house and the estate will get as much pleasure and enjoyment out of it as Mr. Cecil and I do in making it possible.<sup>29</sup>

It was reported that 300 people from twelve states visited the house on opening day.

William Cecil would later recall that he and his family hardly noticed the tourists.<sup>30</sup> He went on to say, “We would sit outside in the garden and listen to baseball games and not worry about it.”<sup>31</sup> A portion of the first floor was all that was open to the paying guest.

The News, a weekly paper in Rutherfordton North Carolina, ran an ad and sent a reporter to write about the opening. The ad depicted the house as an “exact replica of a renaissance chateau.”<sup>32</sup> The reporter mused that “cars from four different states...people from all over the country and even people from foreign countries were visiting this new showplace of North Carolina.”<sup>33</sup> The opening of Biltmore was seen as a success not only by Asheville but also the surrounding areas. In another article by Ruth Peoples the house was also mistakenly called a “replica royal chateau.”<sup>34</sup> She gives a room by room account of the house and some background to Mr. Vanderbilt and the craftsmen who helped build the estate.

In an effort to draw as many visitors as possible, on May 5, 1930 Judge Junius Adams, the Cecil’s attorney who took care of public relations for the family, wrote a letter to Mr. Wm. H. Tayloe, passenger traffic manager for Southern Railway, urging him to put together a special package to bring more people to Asheville using Biltmore as a

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Allen Freeman, “Backstage at Biltmore,” Historic Preservation, November-December 1995, 48.

<sup>32</sup> “Carolinians---Know Your State,” The News, 20 March 1930.

<sup>33</sup> “The Biltmore House,” The News, 20 March 1930.

<sup>34</sup> Ruth Peoples, “Thousands Visit Biltmore Since March Opening,” newspaper unknown, no date, Biltmore Estate Archives.

destination point. He noted that the visitors were going away as “walking advertisements” and felt that Biltmore and the Railway could both benefit by advertising the two together. Adams suggested that he make color pictures available in special folders showing the beauty to be seen. A few days later in the Cincinnati Commercial Tribune, (travel section) an advertisement appeared depicting “special excursions, Asheville, NC.” Roundtrip fare was \$15. Southern Railway was helping promote Biltmore as a tourist attraction. In an accompanying article Biltmore was mentioned by name. Bus service could be obtained to and from Asheville with an admission charge sufficient to “defray the expenses of the opening of the house and gardens to the public.”<sup>35</sup> Again, this all shows how Biltmore has profited from free advertisement.

Biltmore made complementary tickets available to the Asheville Department of Safety in appreciation for their help in directing tourist traffic to the house. In a letter written by C.H. Bartlett to C.D. Beadle, (Mr. Beadle was the manager of Biltmore for the Cecil’s) Mr. Bartlett offers his thanks for the tickets donated to the police and fire departments and assured Mr. Beadle that they would give “hardy cooperation in steering our visitors into the Biltmore Estate.”<sup>36</sup> Biltmore was already seeing the value of cooperation with local businesses, government agencies, and media.

The Biltmore Stage Company offered “De Luxe sightseeing bus service to the estate.” The service would be offered four times daily at the cost of \$1 for a roundtrip ticket. However admission tickets for the house still had to be purchased at the afore

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<sup>35</sup> “Biltmore House, Big Attraction near Asheville,” Cincinnati Commercial Tribune, 22 June 1930, (Travel section), Biltmore Estate Archives.

<sup>36</sup> C.H. Bartlett, “Letter to C.D. Beadle,” 8 May 1930, Biltmore Estate Archives.

mentioned locations. The bus schedule would allow for a visitor to be on the grounds for approximately two and a half hours.<sup>37</sup>

In another effort to bolster the number of visitors, Adams requested Mr. Beadle send him 25 sets of postcards that he would forward “to the editors of certain publications...and a few of the metropolitan dailies, in the hope that it may excite interest...and lead to a special article.”<sup>38</sup> Judge Adams was clearly making an attempt to market Biltmore beyond the Asheville area.

To ensure that all visitors were treated properly, strict rules were set for the gate keepers and guards to follow. Failure to do so would result in dismissal.<sup>39</sup> There were also rules for visitors on their brochures. Admission could not be transferred to another person. Tickets had to be presented at lodge gate to gain access to the grounds. There was to be no destruction of vegetation; no admittance to any portion of the house’s restricted areas; no cameras, umbrellas, canes, firearms, or pets allowed. The speed limit was not to exceed 30 miles per hour.<sup>40</sup>

In a letter to Dr. Fairchild, manager of Deering Estate, Mr. Beadle explained that he thought it feasible to “make of Deering Estate a showplace more or less self supporting.”<sup>41</sup> In this letter he states that “the results (of Biltmore’s opening) have been remarkable, though not wholly self supporting.”<sup>42</sup> Mr. Beadle offered totals for visitations at Biltmore between March 15, 1930 and March 15, 1931 to be 40,065 guests. Though he

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<sup>37</sup> “DeLuxe Sightseeing Bus Service to Biltmore House and Gardens,” Biltmore Forest Stage Co., no date, Biltmore Estate Archives.

<sup>38</sup> Junius G. Adams, “Memorandum to Mr. Beadle,” 8 September 1930, Biltmore Estate Archives.

<sup>39</sup> Sue Clark, “The Opening of Biltmore House,” no date, Biltmore Estate Archives.

<sup>40</sup> “Rules for Visitors,” no date, Biltmore Estate Archives.

<sup>41</sup> C.D. Beadle, “Letter to Dr. David Fairchild,” 3 April 1931, Biltmore Estate Archives.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

considered these numbers to be a huge success, it was not enough to support the expenditures of the estate.

On March 20, 1931, the Asheville Advocate, published an ad showing the pamphlets that were being handed out throughout the main corridor between Florida and Port Huron Michigan. These could be handed out as brochures at any point along the way.<sup>43</sup> There is no documentation stating how these were being distributed, but my assumption is that they were left at area Chambers of Commerce and with local newspapers along the way.

On April 4, 1932 Mr. and Mrs. Cecil filed papers transferring all of Mrs. Cecil's property in Buncombe County, including the Biltmore Estate, to the Biltmore Company. When questioned, Mr. Cecil explained that they would be going to England for an extended period of time and this would allow the day to day operations of the estate to be run more smoothly.

Directors of the corporation are: Mrs. Edith S. Gerry, John F. A. Cecil, and Judge Junius G. Adams. The officers are: Judge Adams, President: John F.A. Cecil, Vice President: and C.D. Beadle, Secretary and Treasurer. The corporation will be domesticated and authorized to transact business in North Carolina.<sup>44</sup>

Noticeably absent from this list of executors was the name of Cornelia Cecil.

Cornelia and John were divorced in 1934. Mr. Cecil returned to the states where he resided at Biltmore in the Bachelor's Wing of the house until his death in 1954. Cornelia lived mostly in England and Europe, returning on occasion to Biltmore, but died at her home in England in 1976.

On January 9, 1943 Biltmore was closed due to WWII. To that date some "263,204 visitors had paid \$2 each to go through the main portal of this mighty

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<sup>43</sup> "Biltmore House Now Open Every Day," Asheville Citizen Times, 20 March 1931.

<sup>44</sup> "Cecil Property Put In Company," Asheville Citizen Times, 5 April 1932.

mansion.”<sup>45</sup> The house remained closed until the war ended. In 1942 the “works of art from the National Gallery in Washington D.C. were stored in Biltmore House.”<sup>46</sup> After fear for their safety was gone they were returned to the Gallery in 1944. The house reopened in 1944 when Mr. Beadle invited soldiers and their families to visit the house free of charge to show appreciation for their efforts abroad. In the days following the war the United Nations considered Biltmore as its headquarters before locating in New York.<sup>47</sup>

The 50s brought about the deaths of many of Biltmore’s prominent people. Chauncey Beadle died in 1950, John F. A. Cecil in 1954, Carl Schenck in 1955, and the matriarch of the estate, Edith Stuyvesant Gerry in 1957.

George Cecil, eldest son of John and Cornelia Cecil, had returned to Biltmore after WWII and stayed to learn the dairy business. William Cecil, youngest of the children, had gone to Harvard and received a degree in business but it was not until 1962 that the brothers took control of the company upon Judge Junius Adams’ death. George was elected president; William was elected vice president and treasurer.”<sup>48</sup>

In a speech given at the University School of Business, British Columbia, William gave his reason for returning to Biltmore and trying to make it a successful business.

In the early 1960s Biltmore Estate was losing \$250,000 a year. The depression, WWII, and the fact that the cost involved in operating the property were enormous and skyrocketing daily had all created financial hardships for the estate. It would have been much easier to stay at Chase Manhattan Bank, where I was working. And I might have, except that someone told me that saving my “white elephant” was impossible. That was the only gauntlet that I needed.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> S.R. Winters, “Biltmore Mansion, Monument to a Golden Age,” The Highway Traveler, April-May 1947, 20.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Brenden Gill, “What’s in a Name,” House and Garden, November 1989, 78.

<sup>48</sup> “Cecil Heads Biltmore Co.,” Asheville Citizen Times, 19 January 1962.

<sup>49</sup> William A.V. Cecil, “Biltmore Estate and the Business of Historic Preservation,” Peter Murphy. Ed. in, Quality Management in Urban Tourism, New York: John Wiley and Sons Press, 1997, 157-166.

William was up for the challenge. The dairy business was still thriving at this point and was keeping the estate solvent. Ticket sales would not have kept the estate running. Therefore the dairy business was the only thing allowing Biltmore to remain open to the public.

The first order of business for William was to come up with a mission statement. The mission statement needed to be conducive to Mr. Vanderbilt's original purpose that the estate be self-supporting. The mission statement was and is, "*The mission of the Biltmore Company is the preservation of the Biltmore Estate as a privately owned, profitable, working estate.*"<sup>50</sup> Mr. Cecil was not interested in the Biltmore Estate's fate being like that of so many other historic landmarks, in governmental control.

Essential to marketing the estate was to actually create a marketing budget. The marketing budget for the previous year was a mere \$1500 to the Asheville Citizen Times and the same old 5 cents postcards that had been for sale at the gate house since the 1930's. In 1962 the entrance was remodeled.<sup>51</sup> New Guide books were made with color pictures that could be produced cheaper and sold for more money. In 1960, 83,043 had visited Biltmore and by 1963 the 100,000 mark was missed by only a few hundred.<sup>52</sup> In 1963 Biltmore was named National Historic Landmark.<sup>53</sup> Also 1963, Biltmore was chosen to be part of a historic calendar produced by Pilot Life Insurance. It was chosen "because of its outstanding historic value to the people of this area and its appeal to persons throughout out the South." Biltmore's heritage was being seen as a part of Southern history. The calendar was to be distributed to more than 150,000 firms

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<sup>50</sup> Grizzle, 3.

<sup>51</sup> "Extensive Changes Set For Entrance to the Estate," Asheville Citizen Times, 31 March 1962.

<sup>52</sup> "Visitors Through Biltmore House Gates," 1979, Biltmore Estate Archives.

<sup>53</sup> "Biltmore Estate Eligible for US Marker," Asheville Citizen Times, 23 May 1963.

throughout the south.<sup>54</sup> An advertising campaign of this size could have cost thousands, but it appears to have been free. Since Biltmore had become a national historic site it was eligible to be on this calendar. Mr. Cecil had this type of free publicity in mind when he was lobbying for Biltmore to become a National Historic Site?

In 1965 the Charlotte Observer ran a full page about Biltmore in the Women section. The article gave a glowing review of the house as well as a personal interview with William Cecil. Perhaps trying to keep previous visitors' interest in the house for a return, he said that his favorite room is usually the one we've "just re-done."<sup>55</sup> Being in the women's section was also in recognition that nearly 70% of Biltmore's guests were female.

In July of 1966, William Cecil began promoting Biltmore with an advertising campaign. The first campaign featured "Alice." She was to be called the Mountain Queen. Though Mr. Cecil denied any connection to Alice In Wonderland, the ads certainly had the appearance of her. In an interview Mr. Cecil thought that the advertising campaign had a direct affect on admissions, they were up 25% in 1966 and nearly another 14% in 1967.<sup>56</sup>

Free advertising was and still is one of Biltmore's biggest assets. Papers from all over the country and especially the Southeast have run articles on Biltmore on a consistent basis. It seems as if reporters just can't stay away. Howard Preston, reporter for The Plain Dealer said, "BUT THE HOUSE, the house! It is an impossibility – but

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<sup>54</sup> "Biltmore Mansion Listed On Calendar," Asheville Citizen Times, 4 December 1966.

<sup>55</sup> "For and About women," Charlotte Observer, 14 February 1965.

<sup>56</sup> Nat Osborne, "Estate Co-Owner Calls Ad Campaign The Hard Soft Sale," Asheville Citizen Times, 21 January 1968.



there it is.”<sup>57</sup> Preston is the first reporter that I have found to use what Elizabeth Simms called the “WOW” factor. Mrs. Sims is currently head of the marketing department at Biltmore. She explains it as one of Biltmore’s strongest assets. When people make that right hand turn through the gate all of a sudden there stands something that is almost unbelievable, Biltmore’s enormous size. All of the pictures, videos, pamphlets and descriptions of the house just cannot prepare you for what is actually in front of you when you go through the gate and look across the huge front lawn at the front of the house.<sup>58</sup> This is probably what keeps reporters coming back time after time and writing about the estate. Biltmore’s public relations department handles all the details for reporters to visit the estate. After they put out a press release they invite reporters to come and visit the Biltmore and get a guided tour. This allows reporters to see for themselves how Biltmore is operated, and sometimes they even get to see things that regular guests never get to see. Valery Patin points out that because of the medias support in the area of cultural and heritage tourism that, “For most visitors, heritage has become a familiar, easily accessible commodity.”<sup>59</sup> The cooperation of the media has made Biltmore known to more tourist than could have ever been possible through advertising alone.

Newspapers and the people who work for them were and still are as important to Biltmore as any ad campaign one could conceive. Mr. Cecil knew the value of a good story and took great pains to not only take care of the reporters that came but too allow them to have a relationship with Biltmore. “Our goal is to cement relationships with the press, because you never know when or where they might be useful...the rule was you

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<sup>57</sup> Howard Preston, “An Essay on Monuments,” The Plain Dealer, 30 October 1967, Biltmore Estate Archives.

<sup>58</sup> Elizabeth Simms, Interview by Author, 5 September 2001.

<sup>59</sup> Patin.

never lost touch with them. If they moved, you got a forwarding address.”<sup>60</sup> One example Mr. Cecil gave was about a reporter who had moved from Asheville to Iowa. Iowa was having a particularly hot summer and while talking to the reporter Mr. Cecil decided to send him a picture of Biltmore with snow on the ground. The reporter ran the picture on the front page the day after he got it.<sup>61</sup> People in Iowa who may never have heard about Biltmore were being exposed to it on the front page of their newspaper because of the policy of keeping p with reporters even after they have moved away.

In another effort to gain free publicity for Biltmore, William Cecil actively pursued was having an exit close to the entrance of the house off of the new interstate that was coming through, I-40. The price he would pay to achieve this goal would be to allow I-40 to cut through the estate just out side of Biltmore and follow along the French Broad River for a few miles. The only real intrusions that a guest might notice are a couple of bridges that cross the estate road. The bridges are tastefully done with rock façades and are not really an intrusion at all.<sup>62</sup> Having the interstate come as close as it does to Biltmore House is another example of far sighted marketing that Mr. Cecil feels has been a valuable asset to the estate.<sup>63</sup>

In yet another move to gain access to cheap exposure, the NBC Today Show broadcast live from Biltmore on Jun 1, 1967. This would give Biltmore nationwide exposure of the magnitude that could never be afforded through an advertising campaign. George and William Cecil both helped host the show which included Alice Saarinen, a famous architectural author. The producer offered a comment to her when he thought

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<sup>60</sup> Grizzle, 4.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>62</sup> Freeman, 48.

<sup>63</sup> Simms.

nobody was listening, “This ought to be a real swing piece.”<sup>64</sup> Good luck and good marketing helped visitation reach nearly 170,000 in 1967.

The movie industry has given Biltmore an even more visible marketing tool. “The Swan” was the first film to be made on the Estate in 1956. Since then, “Private Eyes,” “Being There,” “Mr. Destiny,” “Last of the Mohicans,” “Forest Gump,” “Richie Rich,” “Patch Adams,” “Hanibal,” and one that is currently in the process of being made have used the Estate.<sup>65</sup> When asked why he thinks they continue to come back, Steve Miller, (current vice-president of marketing at Biltmore) notes that the experience of his staff plays a large role. Obviously just the house itself has a lot to do with it as well Biltmore being a secure facility. He also mentioned what a hard job it was to assist in the actual setup within the house. Biltmore employees are the only ones permitted to touch and re-arrange the pieces in the collection, and a crew can only film in two rooms at a time. So if the scene calls for eight rooms to be used the set has to be broken down a minimum of four times. This has also allowed for additional revenues to be brought in, because use of the Estate and its grounds is not inexpensive.<sup>66</sup> Costs range from \$1,000 to \$25,000 per day depending on where the filming is going to take place and how much Biltmore’s staff has to be involved.<sup>67</sup>

In 1968 with a recession going a new advertising campaign was started, “A Taste of Europe, Right Here At Home.” This campaign focused on letting people know that they did not have to go to Europe to see a castle. Ironically enough, in 1968 Biltmore made its first yearly profit, \$16.34. Visitation had actually dropped off to only 160,000

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<sup>64</sup> Paul Cunningham, “Biltmore House Becomes a Star,” Asheville Citizen Times, 8 May 1967.

<sup>65</sup> Clarke.

<sup>66</sup> Steve Miller, Interview by author, 1 October 2001.

<sup>67</sup> Kathleen Moser. Interview by author, 5 November 2001

but somehow a net profit was shown.<sup>68</sup> The 60's were a time of learning and growth for The Biltmore Company. A time, in which a young entrepreneur turned a "White Elephant" losing \$250,000 a year into one that is creating a profit, though small it may have been. Innovation and recreation were the themes of this time, but they had only yet scratched the surface of the possibilities that lie in the future. The house did run a small deficit in 1969 to end the decade, but that would be the last time to date it has done so.

1970 marked Biltmore's 75th anniversary. To commemorate the Silvery Anniversary William Cecil came up with another marketing idea with the sole purpose this time of generating more local and statewide interest in the house. Even though ticket prices were still a mere \$3.50 for adults and \$2.00 for children over 6, local people were not returning to Biltmore to take advantage of the beauty the different seasons had to offer. The "Ambassador Pass" allowed North Carolina citizens to use the pass, was purchase a ticket at regular price one time for the entire year providing that on their return visits they were accompanied by two additional guests who paid the full admission price. William Cecil thought this would create more interest in the beauty that each season had to offer.<sup>69</sup>

In April of 1973, the Biltmore House had a foreign flavor to it. Seven foreign journalists got to tour it as part of the United States Travel Service "American Ways of Life" tour. This was in an effort to build interest in American tourism sites for those abroad.<sup>70</sup> The cooperation with the foreign media was like that of the domestic media, Biltmore would gain free advertising in Europe in much the same way it had done both locally and across the country. The tour must have been successful because later in the

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<sup>68</sup> Grizzle, 4.

<sup>69</sup> "Biltmore Estate to Introduce New Pass Plan For 70 Season," Asheville Citizen Times, 1 January 1970.

<sup>70</sup> "7 Foreign Journalist to Visit Here," Asheville Citizen Times, 2 April 1973.

year a German television film crew shot a 30-minute documentary at the house to be seen in Germany, Belgium, and Hungary early the next year.<sup>71</sup> Marc Dierikx, tourism analyst from the Netherlands, says in his article, “In Pursuit of the American Dream: The Spread of the Televised American Image and the Rise of European Tourism to the United States, 1945-1980,” that for Europeans their, “Favorite destinations were those best known from television and the movies.”<sup>72</sup>

In 1975 Mr. Cecil put together a Christmas special to be filmed and aired as such. He was looking for something to give the house a festive atmosphere. This was also traditionally the slowest season of the year. What he hoped for was that, “this special Christmas in November will, open the doors to the Biltmore House in its Christmas finery to millions of other people in other places.”<sup>73</sup> This event was so successful and received such high praise from visitors to the house while the decorations were up, that in 1976 Biltmore began to decorate specifically for the Christmas season. According to Mrs. Simms the most valuable tool they use in the marketing of Biltmore is to listen to the people who visit the estate.<sup>74</sup> One of the valuable insights that they had discovered was that during the brief period in which they had set up for Christmas to film the musical special in 1976, people really enjoyed the decorations. In 1979, the Christmas season accounted for only about 7% of yearly visitations. Now the Christmas season has been expanded and is the busiest time of the year attributing to nearly 27% of all visitors

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<sup>71</sup> “Biltmore House Topic of German Documentary’s,” Asheville Citizen Times, 10 October 1973

<sup>72</sup> Marc Dierikx, “In Pursuit of the American Dream: The Spread of the Televised American Image and the Rise of European Tourism to the United States,” European Contributions to American Studies, [Netherlands] 1996, 114-132.

<sup>73</sup> Barbara Lake, “Christmas Came Early At Biltmore Estate,” Asheville Citizen Times, 14 November 1975.

<sup>74</sup> Simms.

for the year ending 2000.<sup>75</sup> Paying attention to their guests wants has been a success in this area.

In an article by the Winston-Salem Journal, Joe Goodman chronicles some of the problems Biltmore faced in the 70s. He estimated that at that time it cost nearly three million dollars a year to keep the house open and continue the preservation of the Biltmore Estate. The new music room, just opened in 1976, cost \$100,000 by itself. The music room was left unfinished for reasons unknown. Perhaps Hunt's untimely death and the rush to open the house played a role, but there is no evidence to substantiate any particular reason. Goodman also estimated that it takes \$12,000 to \$15,000 a year to keep up maintenance of each room that is open to the public.<sup>76</sup>

In 1979 for estate tax purposes, George and William Cecil split The Biltmore Company. George received "Biltmore Dairy Farms and undeveloped estate land, (mostly the Southern portion of the property), and William received the remainder of the estate and the Biltmore Company."<sup>77</sup> This would make passing the estate on to their heirs much less complicated and also gave William Cecil entire control over the House and its surrounding properties.<sup>78</sup>

This brought William Cecil face to face with the next great challenge of the estate, how to pass the estate on to his children with an inheritance tax to be levied of up to 55% of its value.<sup>79</sup> Depending on how the government would assess the value of the estate could make the difference between keeping it private or putting it into a foundation. One major hurdle was trying to get the government to agree on the actual

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<sup>75</sup> Miller.

<sup>76</sup> Joe Goodman, "Biltmore: A Costly Treasure," Winston-Salem Journal, 30 May 1976.

<sup>77</sup> Clark.

<sup>78</sup> Simms.

<sup>79</sup> Cecil, 165.

value of the property years in advance of Mr. Cecil's death. His options were limited to either finding a way to pay the taxes when they became due, or turning it into a governmentally controlled not-for-profit foundation. As stated earlier, Mr. Cecil has little or no faith in the ability of either of these institutions to carry on the type of preservation necessary at Biltmore.

If he were to put Biltmore into a foundation it would be hard to continue preservation efforts. Mr. Cecil believes that "The government and not-for-profit organizations should be 'preservers of last resort', not the main preservers." He uses the Thomas Wolfe House as an example of how the government is not meant to be in the preservation business. The Thomas Wolfe House burned in 1997 and has not been restored yet. The money simply has not been funded by the State to do so. In a time of financial trouble any State run foundation is going to have a hard time receiving funding. Valery Patin states, "In some cases however, the income from these sites is used for other purposes than their preservation and development as may be justified by the economic plight. (of their host community)[sic]"<sup>80</sup> Mr. Cecil believed that this option was completely unacceptable for Biltmore Estate. "With all of the foregoing thoughts in my mind I set about finding something that would fit into the Estate, but at the same time would create a cash flow sufficient, when added to the existing flow, to pay off estate taxes due at my death."<sup>81</sup> The problem of determining how much money was going to be needed was the next hurdle. After acquiring life insurance policies, taking advantage of life time giving, and exhausting all of the other avenues his attorneys could come up with, they felt they would still come up short. It was becoming very clear that in order to

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<sup>80</sup> Patin.

<sup>81</sup> "Draft Answers."

keep Biltmore solvent and in family hands for the next generation, it would have to find new ways to create capital other than simply selling tickets.

A more aggressive approach would now be needed to market the Estate. It is not easy to draw tourist to heritage sites and to be effective they must show the public, “what is particularly unique about the site,” says professor Listokin.<sup>82</sup> Mr. Cecil had been considering the idea of making wine on the estate since the mid 70’s.<sup>83</sup> Mr. Vanderbilt had previously made wine on the estate, and North Carolina had previously been the top wine producer in the nation containing some twenty five wineries. Some of its wines were reputed to be amongst the favorites of George Washington. In 1979 Mr. Cecil announced the opening of the Biltmore Estate Wine Company. Like most of the French Chateaus before it, Biltmore now had its own vineyards and wineries. The actual winery itself was dedicated on May 11, 1985.<sup>84</sup> A winery would certainly classify as a unique drawing attraction in the mountains of Western North Carolina.

Deerpark Restaurant opened in 1979. The restaurant was designed to use an existing barn that was already on the premises.<sup>85</sup> The idea behind Deerpark was to create a banquet facility and also give guests a place to dine on the Estate. This was yet another way to increase revenue and add more cash to the coffers and allow for more preservation. Steve Miller suggests that the ultimate goal for all of Biltmore expansion is preservation of the house and grounds as privately run estate.<sup>86</sup>

In keeping with tradition in 1980 Biltmore again gave its guests what they had asked for, the opening of more rooms. According to Mrs. Simms, one of the most

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<sup>82</sup> Dickinson.

<sup>83</sup> Miller.

<sup>84</sup> “Draft Answers.”

<sup>85</sup> “Banquet Facility To Be Located At Biltmore Estate,” Johnson City Press-Chronicle, 14 January 1979

<sup>86</sup> Miller.



requested additions to the Biltmore experience, is to see more rooms.<sup>87</sup> The basement with its huge indoor pool, gymnasium, kitchen, luggage room and many others was to be offered as a separate tour. Admission price for either tour was \$8.00, or \$12.00 for both.<sup>88</sup> In 1982 the two would be combined into a regular ticket for a price of \$12.50.<sup>89</sup> Attendance went up twenty eight percent and ticket revenues climbed fifty five percent. This was to be a trend throughout much of the 80's. For example in 1985 when the winery opened attendance went up twelve percent but admission revenues increased by seventeen percent.<sup>90</sup>

In 1985 the most successful program at Biltmore began, Candlelight Christmas at Biltmore. Christmas was still a particularly slow time. Biltmore was open during the day but for an extra fee you could return at night and get the full benefit of the lighting displays. This is what Mr. Cecil called, "Perhaps our most glowing success story. . . admissions went from 24,476 in 1979 to 158,676 in 1993, or a 548 percent increase. In addition, the increase in admission revenue totals more that 2,228 percent."<sup>91</sup> When asked to what he attributes the success of Christmas at Biltmore, Steve Miller suggests it is due in large part to the historical accuracy. They actually have meticulous records showing how the house was decorated, the number of trees, and their placement in the house.<sup>92</sup> This is another reason I believe Biltmore Estate is a perfect example of a heritage tourism destination.

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<sup>87</sup> Simms.

<sup>88</sup> Nancy Brower, "Mansion Opens Up Rooms," Asheville Citizen Times, 10 March 1980

<sup>89</sup> Asheville Citizen Times, 4 December 1983

<sup>90</sup> Cecil, 161.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Miller.

After the major success of Candlelight Christmas, the marketing department would now turn its attention to another slow period of the year, spring. With the bulk of visitation in the months of July through September spring needed a special event of its own to help increase interest. The next marketing idea would be the “Festival of Flowers” campaign. This seemed like a natural fit for Biltmore since the gardens were already in bloom anyway.<sup>93</sup> The idea behind the festival was to allow people to see that the, “gardens are beautiful in the spring, with fifty thousand tulips, one of the most extensive collections of native azaleas in America (thanks to C.D. Beadle who started it in 1940) and variety of rare and valuable plantings originating to Mr. Olmstead.”<sup>94</sup> Response was again overwhelming increasing spring visitation by sixty six percent from 1979 to 1994. Revenue increased by two hundred and four percent as well.<sup>95</sup>

What the marketing department has done to increase visitation during the normally slow periods of the year is isolate the times when visitations were at their lowest points and build a special event around that particular area that fits the season, such as, Candlelight Christmas during the late fall season, Festival of Flowers in the spring, Summer Evening Concerts on the south lawn, and Michaelmas autumn harvest festival. With the exception of the Summer Evening Concerts, all of these events have helped increase visitation during slower periods of the year. The summer was already a busy time before the Concert series began.<sup>96</sup>

With the exception of the winter months which still only have an attendance rate of eight percent, the rest of the year revenues and attendance are distributed exceptionally

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<sup>93</sup> Simms.

<sup>94</sup> Cecil, 162.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Miller.

well. “Due to weather conditions and just the fact that people don’t travel as much during these months, we don’t see a big increase in this season.”<sup>97</sup> Mr. Miller also noted that this slow time allows for maintenance to be done with the least intrusion possible for our guests.

In 1987 with the additions of the Winery and Deerpark increase in retail sales Mr. Cecil decided to renovate the stable area and turn it into a café. The stable which once housed Mr. Vanderbilt’s horses was going to be, “an essential part of experiencing a grand day on Biltmore Estate.”<sup>98</sup> In keeping the café with its historical roots even the stalls which formerly included horses were renovated into booths for seating. The menu would change with the seasons.<sup>99</sup>

Through surveys that are done while guests are visiting the Estate they are asked what would make their Biltmore experience more enjoyable, and one of the most frequent answers was still to see more of the house. “Listening to our guests has been the most important thing that we do.”<sup>100</sup> In 1989, “the third floor living hall, Mrs. Vanderbilt’s bath and dressing area and sewing room are restored and added to the self guided tour. Visitors again expressed their satisfaction even though ticket prices had now reached \$17.50 per person. Visitation increased by twenty two percent while admission price rose by only nine percent.”<sup>101</sup> In an effort to show guests even more of the house and increase revenues without going up on general admission, the “Behind the Scenes” Tour began in 1990. For an additional \$10.00 a guest could see many of the rooms that had previously been off limits to all except for the occasional V.I.P. Members of the press

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> “Biltmore Estate Opens Stable Café,” Bristol Herald Courier, 25 May 1986. 4E

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Simms.

<sup>101</sup> Cecil, 166.

were sometimes guided through these areas as well. The Behind the Scenes Tour went through the Sub-basement where some of the mechanical intricacies of the house were located, the Butler's pantry where the family's China and Crystal were stored, the 4<sup>th</sup> floor Observatory and two un-restored staff rooms could be seen, and also two un-restored guest bedrooms on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors. Men seem to prefer the sub-basement and women prefer the Butler's pantry.<sup>102</sup>

By 1994 The Biltmore Co. was made up of four separate entities, all owned by the family of William Cecil. There is the main company that was incorporated in 1932. The Biltmore Estate Wine Co. incorporated in 1982. The Biltmore Estate Reproductions, which sells furniture and accessories based upon the Estate collection incorporated in 1992. Biltmore Estate Direct mail order catalogue featuring some of the items sold in the gift shops on the Estate was incorporated in 1993.<sup>103</sup> These companies have helped Biltmore go from a business that relied almost solely on revenue generated by ticket sales to a company that is much more diverse and is closer to a fifty-fifty split between retail and admissions.<sup>104</sup> In 1960 when Mr. Cecil began his career at Biltmore the total number of employees was about 60. In 1979 when the dairy business split away the house had 129 employees. In 1994 The Biltmore Co. employed some 625 people. And today in 2001 the number is over 1600.<sup>105</sup> "The Biltmore Co. has evolved into a sound company."<sup>106</sup> Since 1979 Biltmore has paid over \$10 million dollars in taxes and spent more than \$35 million in restoration. Imagine if the \$10 million spent in taxes could

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<sup>102</sup> Karen Kloman, Interviewed by author, 2 October 2001.

<sup>103</sup> Cecil, 166.

<sup>104</sup> Simms.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Cecil, 166.

have been put towards restoration as well, how much more of the house would a guest be able to see?<sup>107</sup>

Over the last century the Biltmore Estate has remained true to the vision of its founder, George Washington Vanderbilt, and remained a self-supporting Estate. They have been able to do this through the implementation of sound marketing strategies, a vision to remain private, and the ability to keep the attention of news reporters who are looking for a good story to tell, whether it be about the House, the Gardens, the Winery, the forestry projects begun on the estate, or one of the many other aspects of the Estate and its heritage. Biltmore realizes that it must sell the aura of the experience of visiting there. The marketing department has created reasons to come see Biltmore other than just come see the house. All of the events center around the “Heritage” of the Estate, and are not just designed to get you there to take your money.

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

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### Asheville Citizen Times,

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Junius Adams was the first president of the Biltmore co. The letters like this one that I found at the Estate archives give good insight into who was doing the business of the Estate during the early period when the house was first opened to the public.

Adams, Junius G., to Mr. Beadle, Superintendent of Biltmore Estate, 8 September 1930. Transcript in the hands of Biltmore Estate Archives. Asheville.

Annual Pass, given to Bishop James M. Horner by George W. Vanderbilt, 1908. Transcript in the hands of Biltmore Estate Archives. Asheville.

I thought this pass was unique in that it showed that the Lodge Gate really was a gate that was used to stop unwanted people from gaining access to the grounds. It also shows that Mr. Vanderbilt was kind enough to allow some guest on the property at their own convenience.

Asheville Advocate, "Biltmore House Now Open Every Day." 20 March 1931.

This was a weekly paper from the mid part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century around the time that Biltmore was opening to the public.

Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce. "Resolution to persuade the owners of Biltmore to open the Estate to the public." 10 December 1929. Transcript on file at Pack memorial Library, vertical files, vol. 7. Asheville.

I thought this was politics at its very best. Not that there is any thing wrong with all the fluff that goes along with mutual agreements, but should resolutions like this be necessary?

Asheville Citizen Times,

Blake, Barbara. "Christmas Came Early at Biltmore Estate." 14 November 1975.

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"Cecil Heads Biltmore Company." 18 January 1962.

"Cecil Property Put in Company." 5 April 1932.

"Extensive changes Set for Entrance to the Estate." 31 March 1962.

"7 Foreign Journalist to Visit Here." 2 April 1973.

10 September 1929.

4 December 1983.

I believe some of the most valuable sources that I used were newspaper articles. To me they gave good insight to what was going on around the house, and how people in other areas viewed the Estate. The Biltmore Estate gets publicity from not just local papers but it receives free press from all over the world.

Bartlet, C.H., to C.D. Beadle, 8 May 1930. Transcript in the hands of Biltmore Estate Archives. Asheville.

C.D. Beadle was the manager of the Estate at this time. Many of the documents that Biltmore has on file have his name on them. I feel that these letters were a valuable to give insight about how the estate was being run at the original opening.

Beadle, C.D., to Dr. David Fairchild, 3 April 1931. Transcript in the hands of Biltmore Estate Archives. Asheville.

Bristol Herald Courier, "Biltmore Estate Opens Stable Café." 25 May 1986.

Biltmore Forest stage Co., "DeLuxe Sightseeing Bus Service to Biltmore House and Gardens." No date. Transcript in the hands of Biltmore Estate Archives. Asheville.

This really seemed to show how things were vastly different in the 1930s. how many people take a bus ride from the Dairy Bar to the house today instead of driving their own car?

Biltmore Estate, "Rules for Visitors." No Date. Transcript in the hands of Biltmore Estate Archives. Asheville.

As I looked at these rules I didn't find any of them to be too restrictive but I did wonder how they were going to enforce them consistently.

Cecil, William A.V., "Biltmore Estate and the Business of Historic Preservation." Speech given at University of Victory School of Business. 11 November 1994. Transcript in the hands of Biltmore Estate Archives. Asheville.

This speech really shows some of the things Mr. Cecil has done to be successful and also that he is really concerned with preserving the Estate and keeping it private.

Charlotte Observer, "For and About Women." 14 February 1965.

Cincinnati Commercial Tribune, "Biltmore House, Big Attraction Near Asheville." 22 June 1930.

This and some of the other newspaper articles were used to show how other areas around the country were addressing Biltmore and cooperating with them.

"Draft Answers to CP&L Questions." (1997?) Transcript in the hands of Biltmore Estate Archives. Asheville.

This is another document that Mr. Cecil has used to share his concern with the viability of the Estate if the government were to assess its value by breaking it up and putting a price on each individual item in the collection. It would truly be a shame if Biltmore were to be taxed out of existence and put into a public foundation.

Excerpts from the diary of a female student at Asheville Female College. 23 April 1893. Given to Biltmore Estate by authors daughter, Mrs. Harold Volger. Transcript in the hands of Biltmore Estate Archives. Asheville.

I found this document to be fascinating. It especially made me realize that not just men like the nuts and bolts of building. She seemed to thoroughly enjoy her visit.

Goodman, John. "Biltmore: a Costly Treasure." Winston-Salem Journal, 30 May 1976.

Who would have ever thought that it could cost so much to run the Estate? This article gave the average person a reason to understand why Biltmore had to charge so much for admission, I think it was about \$6.00 then.

Grizzle, Ralph. "Man of the House." 18 October 2001. Transcript in the hands of Biltmore Estate Archives. Asheville.

This is another article Mr. Cecil has helped with to get out the message that he intends to keep Biltmore private as long as possible, indeed forever if his children run it as well as he has.

Johnson City Press-Chronicle, "Banquet Facility to be Located at Biltmore Estate." 14 January 1979.

Kloman, Karen. Interview by author. 2 October 2001.

This is my wife obviously. She has worked at Biltmore since 1991 on and off. She has toured school groups, done Behind the Scenes Tours and simply stood post in the house. She has good insight as to what people think when they take one of the special tours.

Miller, Steve. Interview by author. 1 October 2001.

My interview with Mr. Miller really went well. He seems to be one of the most knowledgeable people when it comes to the day to day running of the Estate. It was exciting to get to listen to him talk about not only the history of the Estate but what is going on right now and also what the future holds.

Peoples, Ruth. "Thousands Visit Biltmore House Since Opening." (1930?). Transcript in the hands of Biltmore Estate Archives. Asheville.

This was one of the first major articles I found done by a reporter who had visited the Estate after its opening.

Poindexter, Phillip. "The Biltmore Estate." Ainslee's Magazine. May 1900.

It's hard to imagine just how much people were enthralled with Biltmore. People in the upper crust of society couldn't seem to get enough of the Vanderbilts and their lifestyle.

Preston, Howard. "An Essay on Monuments." The Plain Dealer, 30 October 1967.

Transcript in the hands of Biltmore Estate Archives. Asheville.

Rutherfordton (N.C.) The News, "Carolinians---Know Your State." 20 March 1930.

Rutherfordton (N.C.) The News, "The Biltmore House." 20 March 1930.

Simms, Elizabeth. Interview by author. 5 September 2001.

My interview with Mrs. Simms went really well. Though she didn't have much literature to share with me she did give me a great deal of insight into the marketing aspect of Biltmore.

Winters, S.R. "Biltmore Mansion, Monument to a Golden Age." The Highway Traveler, (April-May) 1947.

## **Secondary Sources**

Bryan, John. Biltmore, a Most Distinguished Private Place. Asheville: The Biltmore Company Press, 1994.

John Bryan was commissioned by Biltmore to write this book in lieu of the centennial celebration. It is a well written scholarly portrait of the creation of Biltmore and its creators.

Carley, Rachel. A Guide to Biltmore Estate. Asheville: The Biltmore Company Press, 2001.

Rachel Carley is in the employ of Biltmore. She wrote this guide to accompany guest as they tour the house. It has a good amount of information about Biltmore, its creators, the collection, and some family background.

Clark, Sue. "Biltmore Estate Timeline." 2001. Transcripts in the hands of Biltmore Estate Archives.

Sue Clarke is the resident historian at the Biltmore Co. The timeline gives a good chronological picture of the progression of events in the history of Biltmore.

Clack, Sue. "Visitors Through Biltmore House and Gardens." No date, Transcripts in the hands of Biltmore Estate Archives.

Daly, Laura and Henshaw, Cathleen. Biltmore Estate, A Young Persons Guide. Asheville: The Biltmore Company Press, 1990.

Daly and Henshaw are in the employ of Biltmore. They have written a good guide to enhance a young r visit to Biltmore House.

Dickenson, Rachel. "Heritage tourism is Hot." American Demographics, September 1996.

I could not find any information about Rachel Dickinson. American Demographics is a scholarly journal. In this article Dickinson explores what heritage tourism is all about and how it has become such a valuable part of the tourism industry.

Freeman, Allen. "Backstage at Biltmore." Historic Preservation, November-December 1995.

Historic Preservation is a scholarly journal dealing with preservation of historic sites. Freeman does a good job discussing the past, present, and future of Biltmore and the preservation efforts that are taking place to help insure that Biltmore will be preserved for future generations.

Gill, Brenden. "What's in a Name?" House and Garden, November 1989.

Gill's article takes a good historical view of Biltmore at the time surrounding WWII.

Kininmont, Lee-Jaye and Prideaux, Bruce R. "Tourism and Heritage are not Strangers." Journal of Travel and Research, February 1999.

Kininmont and Prideaux are both lecturers in the field of tourism and are currently professors at the University of Queensland in Australia. This article gives insight on how to market heritage tourism sites. This is a scholarly article.

Kneece, Brian E. "The Biltmore Continuum." 8 December 1997. Transcripts in the hands of Biltmore Estate Archives.

This is Brian Kneece's senior research paper. Therefore it is a scholarly and goes through a timeline of sorts on the history of Biltmore.

Long, Cynthia. "Small Towns, Big Dreams." Insight to the News. 12 May 1997.

This is a scholarly article presenting some of the pitfalls that some areas fall into while trying to create a heritage niche for tourism in a particular area. She also points out that not all heritage sites should be classified as such.

Murphy, Peter E. ed., Quality Management in Urban Tourism, New York: John Wiley & Sons Press, 1997.

Murphy has put a good book together on tourism and the management of the sites. He gives good insight into how some sites are run and how they continue to be successful.

Patin, Valery. "Will Market Forces Rule." UNESCO Courier, July-August 1999.

Patin is a Sociologist and administrator and has written a great scholarly article about some of the concerns that many have over the public funding of heritage sites.

Patterson, Jerry F. The Vanderbilts, New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc. 1989.

Patterson's book is a scholarly look at the Vanderbilt family. It was very valuable in that it looks at the family on an individual basis and is very detailed.

Discover Biltmore. Make the most of your visit with our itineraries or explore our estate map. see [itineraries](#) [view estate map](#). Stay. Village Hotel. Hotel Information. Special Offers. Dining.Â Biltmore House is truly a wonder of architecture and hospitality. As our guest, youâ€™re invited to enjoy a self-guided tour of the house, as well as the beautiful gardens and grounds surrounding it, which were designed by renowned landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted. Make the Most of Your Visit. Explore Biltmore House and its fascinating history. Discover Biltmore Winery and enjoy a free wine tasting. Searching homes for sale in Biltmore Estates, Hialeah, FL has never been more convenient. With Point2 Homes, you can easily browse through Biltmore Estates, Hialeah, FL single family homes for sale, townhouses, condos and commercial properties, and quickly get a general perspective on the real estate prices. You can also filter listings based on price drops in the past six months, so youâ€™ll never miss a bargain.Â Thereâ€™s information on the Biltmore Estates, Hialeah, FL real estate market at the bottom of search results pages, if youâ€™re looking for an overview of the area. If youâ€™d like to work with a professional, contacting real estate agents in Biltmore Estates, Hialeah, FL is very easy. All you have to do is check the details for your favorite real estate listing, and use the form there.