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Vanderbilt Estate's 1917 Normandy Manor To Become 2011 Restoration Design Show House

*Transformed French Norman-Style House Will Open to Public
for First Time Ever on Saturday, September 3*

Private Unveiling-Viewing-Cocktail Event Set for Friday, September 2

CENTERPORT, NY (August 23, 2011) – Normandy Manor, the caretaker's house for the William K. Vanderbilt II estate – now being transformed into the 2011 Restoration Design Show House by a group of 18 prominent Long Island designers, artisans and landscape architects – will open to the public on Saturday, September 3.

The event, which will run through October 16, will mark the **first time the grand house has ever been accessible to the public**. The Show House will be open Saturday and Sunday 11:00 to 5:00; Tuesday through Friday 10:30 to 4:30; closed Mondays except Labor Day and Columbus Day.

A private unveiling and viewing of the \$150,000 restoration of Normandy Manor will be held on Friday, September 2, at 7:00 p.m., followed by a buffet dinner in the Vanderbilt celebration tent, on the mansion lawn overlooking Northport Harbor.

Tickets are \$125. To purchase tickets with a credit card, please call Claudia Dowling at 631-421-5290. Dowling, a well-known designer who operates Claudia Dowling Interiors, is producing the 2011 Design Show House. She also led the restoration of the Winter Cottage at Caumsett State Historic Park Preserve in Lloyd Harbor as the 2010 Design Show House.



Vanderbilt Museum photo

Normandy Manor on the Vanderbilt Estate

Regular admission to the Design Show House during its six-week run is \$20, \$15 for seniors (62 and older). Proceeds will benefit the Vanderbilt Museum. Visitors who return with their ticket stub and a paying guest will receive a one-time free admission to the Show House. In addition, all Show House visitors will receive a \$5.00 coupon for a Vanderbilt Museum grounds pass plus a tour of the Vanderbilt Mansion, a savings of \$7.00.

Designed by the renowned New York City architects Warren & Wetmore, Normandy Manor was built in 1917. The same architects, most noted for designing Grand Central Terminal, also designed Vanderbilt's 24-room Spanish-Revival mansion and several other buildings on the Centerport estate he called Eagle's Nest. The estate is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Warren & Wetmore also designed the Ritz, Vanderbilt, Ambassador and Biltmore hotels, the spectacular New York townhouses for the Vanderbilt and Astor families; and some of the finest apartment buildings on Park Avenue and Fifth Avenue.

The two-story French-Norman house, built of pink granite with a steep slate roof, is located on several acres across the road from the main entrance to the Vanderbilt estate, home today to the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum. Normandy Manor was built for the superintendent of the Vanderbilt estate to use as his personal quarters.

The restoration, using mostly traditional design approaches, is being directed by Claudia Dowling. "This project is a great opportunity to showcase the design and landscape talents we have right here on Long Island," she said. "It's also exciting to be able to restore Normandy Manor and to contribute to the enrichment of our beautiful Gold Coast mansions."

Lance Reinheimer, interim executive director of the museum, said, "We're pleased to have these skilled designers transform Normandy Manor and its grounds. It's very exciting for us to be able to open this elegant house to the public for the first time in history."

Since the Vanderbilts lived only part of the year at Eagle's Nest, the superintendent became caretaker not only of the grounds and buildings but also of the mansion and its furnishings. Photographs dating from the 1930s show flower gardens, numerous fruit trees, a greenhouse, and vegetable gardens on the property.

Normandy Manor – owned by the Vanderbilt estate but not part of the original bequest to the county in 1947 – was sold as a private residence. In the summer of 2002, the manor was purchased by Suffolk County, which reunited this historical house and parcel with the original Vanderbilt estate.

Designers participating in the project are Beth Foley Design, Classic Faux Studios and Studio of Decorative Arts, Regina T. Kraft, Joseph Del Percio Interior Design, North Shore Closets, Kate Singer Home, Claudia Dowling Interiors, Center Studio, Studio Guliana Designs, New World Faux, Advanced Closets, Lightstorm Kitchen and Bath Design, Design Concepts, Jane Grucci Interior Design, Garden Rooms, Willow Gardens Design, JLC Landscapes and Soundview Garden Designs.