

2-2-2013

Re: Bill (e-mail message from Edith Overlease about William Overlease's activities at The Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia)

Edith Overlease

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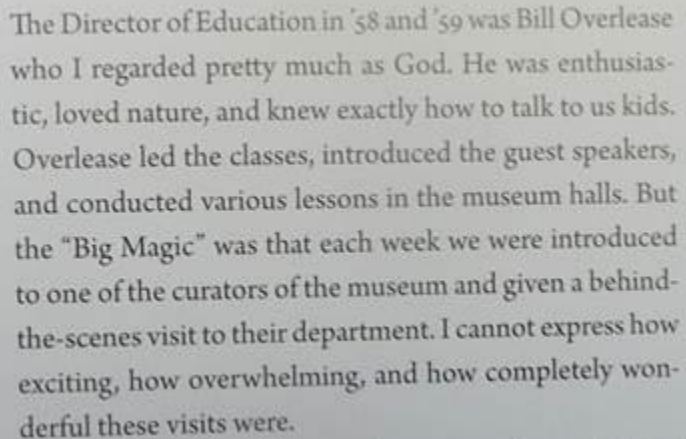
From: Edith Overlease [edie.overlease@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 02, 2013 11:27 AM
To: Hertel, Gerard
Subject: Re: Bill

It was good to hear from you. Thank you for sending the fun paragraph about Bill and the information on the book.

Bill was Assistant then Director of Education at the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia before returning to Michigan State to work on his Ph. D. It was a great experience for us (I helped him some). I remember Bill led many field trips in the city, his favorite was in which he introduced the children to the wonders of the Natural History by discovering weeds etc. in the allies and studying the types of natural stone in the buildings. Of course many of his lessons were conducted around the museum studying the wonderful habitats there. In the evenings we took the guest speakers out to dinner before Bill introduced them for the program. The most exciting evening was when we took Roger Tory Peterson out to dinner!

On Thu, Jan 31, 2013 at 1:28 PM, Hertel, Gerard <GHertel@wcupa.edu> wrote:

Hope this finds you doing well. I just saw a paragraph about Bill in this book:
<http://www.upenn.edu/pennpress/book/14992.html>. [A Glorious Enterprise: The Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia and the Making of American Science, by Robert McCracken Peck and Patricia Tyson Stroud.] What are your recollections about these activities?



The Director of Education in '58 and '59 was Bill Overlease who I regarded pretty much as God. He was enthusiastic, loved nature, and knew exactly how to talk to us kids. Overlease led the classes, introduced the guest speakers, and conducted various lessons in the museum halls. But the "Big Magic" was that each week we were introduced to one of the curators of the museum and given a behind-the-scenes visit to their department. I cannot express how exciting, how overwhelming, and how completely wonderful these visits were.

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