

1

2

Mr. Larry Mauk

3

Oral History

4

Kennedy Space Center

5

Held on June 20, 2002

6

7

Interviewer: Dr. Patrick Moore

8

9

Transcriptionist: Sharon Youngquist

1 Moore: Today is Thursday, June 20th, 2002. I'm Dr. Patrick Moore, University of West Florida,
2 Public History Program and Kennedy Space Center Summer Facility Fellow and I'm here today with
3 Larry Mauk who has been a longtime player, if you will, in the progression of Public Affairs and
4 working with the visitor complex and these type of things.

5

6 Moore: How are you today?

7

8 Larry Mauk: Pretty good.

9

10 Moore: Good. If we could start off. Give me a little bit about your background. Where did you,
11 where were you originally from. What brought you to Kennedy Space Center?

12

13 Larry Mauk: I'm from Conemaugh, Pennsylvania. It's a little town two miles outside of Johnstown,
14 Pennsylvania, famous for its floods. Uh, I grew up there, went to the Art Institute of Pittsburgh after
15 graduation, actually I went there seven years after I graduated. I worked in the steel mills for seven
16 years and then went to the Art Institute of Pittsburgh. Graduated there, was Art Director for a TV
17 station up in Parkersburg, West Virginia for a year, migrated to Florida on vacation and took a job with
18 Boeing.

19

20 Moore: Now what years were these in? This was...

21

22 Larry Mauk: Uh, what years? I graduated from the Art Institute of Pittsburgh in '61, I graduated from
23 high school in 1955. Uh, the reason I have seven years with the steel mills is I was laid off a lot times

1 and that's when I decided there had to be a better way of making a living for a little family. So, I was
2 laid off after I went to Art School. I actually, I was still with them when I went to Art school but I was
3 laid off.

4

5 Moore: So you went, you start, you graduated from high school and went to the mill?

6

7 Larry Mauk: Steel, steel mills and it was too erratic. You couldn't really build a future in it. Business
8 was going down in the steel mills so I started looking for something to do and we had a lay off and I
9 went down and started art school. I left my family in Johnstown with my family. I had a wife and kid,
10 two kids at the times and uh, so I went to art school and then I come back out in the steel mills.
11 Actually asked me to come back to work and I says no, so I took the job down here as...

12

13 Moore: This was with Boeing.

14

15 Larry Mauk: No I took the job in Parkersburg, West Virginia as Art Director for the TV station. Uh, I
16 was there a year.

17

18 Moore: What were you doing with them, putting your art skills to, to work.

19

20 Larry Mauk: Yeah. Their uh, I did their spot commercials and things like that. I was an independent
21 station so we did a lot of real time advertising. Do art today for tonight's commercial. A lot of lay
22 time, a lot of thought put into it. Whatever hit the paper went on the air. I'm glad I don't have to look
23 at that stuff anymore.

1

2 Moore: But how long...

3

4 Larry Mauk: Wouldn't be real proud of it. (laughs)

5

6 Moore: It's a stepping stone. How long were you with them?

7

8 Larry Mauk: I was there a year.

9

10 Moore: And then was it, you said it was vacation that brought you down here.

11

12 Larry Mauk: Yeah. I come down here, me and my wife on vacation. We hadn't had one in a long
13 time and I had a friend that was down here working for Chrysler.

14

15 Moore: Was this 1960...

16

17 Larry Mauk: '65.

18

19 Moore: '65.

20

21 Larry Mauk: And uh, went up to, he talked me into going and looking for a job and I went and talked
22 to Boeing and Boeing hired me right away.

23

1 Moore: Now was he here working for Chrysler?

2

3 Larry Mauk: Yeah.

4

5 Moore: When you came down to visit, did you specifically come down to visit him?

6

7 Larry Mauk: Not really. I knew he was down here but I didn't really come down to visit him but...

8

9 Moore: Were you just coming down on vacation?

10

11 Larry Mauk: Yeah.

12

13 Moore: Where did you go?

14

15 Larry Mauk: Cocoa Beach. We spent the week at the beach and was going to go back up and get a
16 job in the northeast again but after he talked me into at least looking around I talked to Boeing and
17 that was the first place I went and the only place I went. They hired me into their graphics department
18 on the Saturn buy program, and they were doing the proposal on the S1B.

19

20 Moore: So you were thrown right in. Was there any interest in working for the space program or
21 was it completely...

22

1 Larry Mauk: Didn't know anything about it. Knew they were sending them up but didn't really pay too
2 much attention to it.

3

4 Moore: Which is a little different than a lot of people who came down here because they wanted
5 to be a part of what was going on.

6

7 Larry Mauk: No, up in Pennsylvania and West Virginia you really didn't get much news of it. It was
8 basically a spot on the news. There was no excitement about it. Nobody knew much about it. Uh, so
9 I come down here on vacation and stayed with Boeing until '69 after the Apollo launch. Of course
10 they had the big layoffs, wound up working for Pratt and Whitney for a short period of time.

11

12 Moore: Still here at the facility?

13

14 Larry Mauk: No it was down in West Palm.

15

16 Moore: Oh, so you packed up and moved south for a while.

17

18 Larry Mauk: No. I moved there, my family stayed here in our house on Merritt Island.

19

20 Moore: How long were you with Pratt and Whitney?

21

22 Larry Mauk: I was only there six months and I had an opportunity to come back to Boeing and come
23 out here and work so they took over the graphics contract out here from LTV, in uh, '71.

1

2 Moore: Tell me about when you first started working for Boeing out here. There was a lot of
3 excitement going on, a lot of...there was certainly a focus of what was taking place and what they
4 were trying to accomplish.

5

6 Larry Mauk: Actually we were down in what's now the Shelton College was where I worked. Boeing
7 was down in across from the Pub, I forget, I don't know what's there now but that was where they had
8 their graphics unit off base. There wasn't enough space on center. Uh, it was a boom town of
9 course. They were hiring people. You could walk out of Boeing and get a dollar an hour with
10 McDonnell Douglas that afternoon or more. Uh, they couldn't get enough people. Boeing, I finally
11 with Boeing took a third shift job because we couldn't find office space, we had to go to a second shift
12 and finally a third shift. I had just bought a house so I volunteered for the third shift for about a year
13 and lead a group of illustrators on the night shift.

14

15 Moore: What were you working on. What, what kinds of things were they...

16

17 Larry Mauk: Uh, it was project, not even visibility – charts, graphs, things like that – it was the bulk of
18 our work. We had a small special graphics unit that did a little bit of rendering but most of it was
19 management visibility stuff. None of it was exhibits.

20

21 Moore: Was this any fun to work on this stuff.

22

1 Larry Mauk: It was interesting. I had studied commercial illustration, and uh, you know, it just, it was
2 interesting to me 'cause it was very mechanical, very straight forward and there is an art to building a
3 chart. Good people can read. Most charts that people built when I came here were too busy and one
4 of the people that taught me a lot was Tex Johnston, the guy that turned the 707 upside down over
5 Seattle. He was the head of Boeing at the time, and uh, there was Dick Hanson who was the Art
6 Director there that taught me a lot about building charts and stuff so I got interested in it, I didn't mind
7 it, a lot of people did if they were true artists but I enjoyed the work.

8

9 Moore: Were there any specific things they taught you? How, how was it, I mean conceptually,
10 you don't have to go into a ton of detail, but what was it that they were looking for that you were able
11 to bring to the table or that they taught you.

12

13 Larry Mauk: It was just the background in art and the use of the tools was what they were looking
14 for. That, that was all I brought to the table at that time. I knew how to use a T-square and a straight
15 edge. (Laughs)

16

17 Moore: And that's how they made graphs then. There were no computers at that point.

18

19 Larry Mauk: No computers in them days.

20

21 Moore: So throughout the course of that program did you take on ownership in this, did you feel
22 like you were part of something that was significant or...

23

1 Larry Mauk: I got involved in the space program and stayed in it. Yeah, I got very involved in the
2 space program. The more I learned about it the more I took ownership of it, very much so.

3

4 Moore: This was certainly and this is kind of on the side but still part of it, this was certainly a
5 race with the Soviets to accomplish something during a time in American history. Did you have that
6 sense or was it kind of a...

7

8 Larry Mauk: No we, I don't think anybody that I worked with had that sense. It was just we were
9 going to go to the moon and that was it and we were going to do it safely and we were part of the
10 company that was going to build the first stage. Of course, later Boeing got the integration contract
11 which I wasn't a part of, I was out here. But, it was a sense of accomplishment when the first Saturn
12 V lifted off even though, you know, it went from 25,000 people down to about 8,000 and a lot of
13 people knew that their job was ended as that thing lifted off. But, you know, I worked in the steel
14 mills, lay off was a way of life with me.

15

16 Moore: So you came back to Boeing in 1971.

17

18 Larry Mauk: Uh, I went to Pratt and Whitney for six months and then Boeing, came back to Boeing
19 when they took over the contract out here as lead illustrator.

20

21 Moore: Now you were physically out here?

22

23 Larry Mauk: Yeah. We came out here on the second floor of the Headquarters Building.

1

2 Moore: Were you doing essentially the same type of work that you were. . . ?

3

4 Larry Mauk: Pretty much. We had a special graphics unit that I headed up and in fact we eventually
5 split the group into two, one that did the special graphics and one that did the day to day charts and
6 graphs. Uh, simply because when I came out here I was kind of appalled that LTV was doing things
7 out of the 30s. A poster to them was nothing more than taking type off of a varityper machine – if
8 anybody remembers what one was – and pasted it up in strips and putting an 8 x 10 photo on it and
9 that was a poster to them. And uh, with my background and training in graphics that was intolerable
10 so a couple of people I worked with at Boeing came with me and we started revamping the way they
11 did things down there and set up a design group that designed the posters and literally silk screened
12 them and, so we started that movement and then they, they decided that maybe that should be a
13 separate little group so I headed up that little group for the rest of my time I was in that unit.

14

15 Moore: Now these posters they were making, were these of what? Were these...

16

17 Larry Mauk: For launch. The same as you find in these lobbies now. It was just the way they used
18 to be done at the time. Uh, now they're done on all computers and a lot more sophisticated. As time
19 goes on things get more sophisticated.

20

21 Moore: It happens. Did you save copies of your early work?

22

23 Larry Mauk: No.

1

2 Moore: Looking in the archives I guess.

3

4 Larry Mauk: Well I do have, I think I have one in my portfolio, one of the first ones we did just, I used
5 to use it as a, sort of a sales tool when people come in and tell me you are going do a poster in a
6 different way, but I didn't really keep much of a portfolio.

7

8 Moore: Well apparently the change that you brought about appealed to NASA, the new look,
9 more than just picture taped...

10

11 Larry Mauk: It appealed to NASA and part of our contract at that time was to take care of the Visitor
12 Center. At that time the Visitor Center was not self-supporting. It was under, it was maintained, the
13 grass was cut by the DOC contractor out here. The exhibits were maintained by the NASA prototype
14 shop. Uh, and the graphics on them was done by the graphics unit. You know I think the
15 concessionaire did it at that time which was I think TWA - they changed their name a couple of times.
16 But I think it started as TWA when I come out here. They run the tour, they sold some sandwiches
17 out of a vending machine and they had a few people giving demonstrations – that was the extent of it
18 and it was run as a strict concession agreement with the rest being maintained by NASA. They didn't
19 take care of the exhibits and NASA'd come in and take care of them.

20

21 Moore: Now this fell under you're...

22

1 Larry Mauk: It fell under the graphics unit. The funny story on it was, is the first time somebody
2 walked in the door and told me that they needed an exhibit done I told them I wished them a lot of
3 luck, that we didn't have anybody on staff to do that.

4

5 Moore: Now but this was under your, under your direction...

6

7 Larry Mauk: Yes.

8

9 Moore: . . . was this a new contract that had put it under you?

10

11 Larry Mauk: No. It had always been under LTV's contract, Boeing just picked it up and they failed to
12 tell me that we did exhibits. Uh...

13

14 Moore: Was this right after you came in, in '71?

15

16 Larry Mauk: Yeah, we were here a week. So they went away and of course they went to the project
17 manager and says, you know, your guy down there won't help us so he called me up there – he was
18 a very nice guy – I told him, you know I don't have anybody on staff that has that skills and Nick
19 looked at me and he says, sure we do and I says who and he says I'm looking at him. I said, no Nick
20 I was trained as a illustrator not as a industrial designer. He said, you didn't hear what I said and I
21 said yeah I heard what you said. (Laughs) So, that was my introduction to exhibits. I went down and
22 did the best I could and unfortunately they liked it.

23

1 Moore: So now the Visitor Center essentially before you came in had been open for, what, four
2 years now. From 1967 thereabouts.

3

4 Larry Mauk: Yeah, '66 to then. It had opened mid '66.

5

6 Moore: Okay. And then, until...

7

8 Larry Mauk: Actually tours started in mid '66. We had a Visitor Center long before that out at the
9 gate. It was a trailer that had a few displays in it and at that time what Boeing, what they did was, I'm
10 sorry, what NASA did was, it was a bunch of cast off trade show exhibits is what they had, so that's
11 what we were doing was redesigning them to something else but I had no idea what I was doing, trust
12 me. Uh, so my nature is they kept coming back so I decided I had to learn something about this.

13

14 Moore: Well tell me about the first exhibit. They said you do it I don't do this...

15

16 Larry Mauk: I don't, I don't, I don't even remember. We just, they just, you know I finally filled out a
17 work order and says you know okay I'll do the best I can. So we tackled it and did the best we could
18 and sent it back to them and they were very pleased with it and they came back with another one.

19

20 Moore: Now you were just designing the exhibits you weren't actually out there on the space,
21 literally did you go out and look and say okay we'll this is what we have to work with.

22

1 Larry Mauk: No. They didn't, I didn't get that luxury. They brought everything to me. Uh, I guess as
2 we went on about it I decided we needed to learn a little more about exhibit design and there was
3 nobody to learn from, that is what I find out first is there was nobody or no courses in the colleges,
4 nothing here. You had to, so I looked at it as a three dimensional illustration, that was what my
5 background was, was designing magazine ads so I just looked at them and says okay it's nothing
6 more than a three dimensional illustration so I started looking at them like that. I got a lot of criticism
7 from museums later for that but I will say that most of them are starting to follow that concept.

8

9 Moore: What were the criticisms?

10

11 Larry Mauk: Uh, that I was, it was, you know, it wasn't no pure museum. You weren't taking an
12 artifact and sitting it there and putting a little tin card in front of it and saying that this is what it is – you
13 know, boring, boring, boring. I was treating it as some kind of a hook to get people interested in it and
14 then instead of putting technical information I was trying to get it more into the general interest of the
15 public, something more human. As Delaware North says I like to get to the soul of the space
16 program. Let them go pick up a history book or a technical manual and get the details but I'm more
17 interested in the human factor, what it took to get there.

18

19 Moore: So in many respects you were really a visionary on where the museology profession
20 has evolved.

21

22 Larry Mauk: Umm...

23

1 Moore: You don't want to take the credit...

2

3 Larry Mauk: No.

4

5 Moore: But that's okay. This the way we think now. So...(Laughs)

6

7 Larry Mauk: Yeah, it's uh, I think it was just dumb luck that I just was kind of fortunate that I didn't
8 have anybody to, I mean, this is okay this is the way we do it in a museum. So, you know, or I'd have
9 fallen into that. I says okay, you're the expert, I'll do it. I just didn't have the expert so I did it my way.
10 I can't call it visionary. (Laughs) It's just falling back on your training and that was what I was trained
11 to do.

12

13 Moore: So tell me about this evolution, how did it evolve> What kind of visitors and what were
14 you trying to tell them in terms of a story, communicate?

15

16 Larry Mauk: Well, let me give you a good example. Used to spend a lot of time going out to the
17 Visitor Center and eaves dropping on the visitors, find out what they were looking for and one I like to
18 tell is I went out there and we had an exhibit we had taken from Comsat, that was out there and it was
19 very technical in nature and I was standing there and there was a couple, they must have been in
20 their 70s, late 70s early 80s, and they were looking at this exhibit and he looked at his wife and he
21 says, what is a megahertz, he says better yet he says why do I care if megahertz, he says what good
22 is this thing to me, and that is basically what the visitors want to know, is what are they getting out of
23 this program and what is the human toll that took to do it. They're not real interested in the size and

1 shape, you get the space buff that, you know, dies for that information but the majority want to know
2 what they're, what we're doing for them and they love to hear the stories about the hardships that
3 were down here. They don't realize that these people were living in swamps with, infested with
4 mosquitoes that you couldn't even go outside. As a matter of fact when I first started with Boeing I
5 didn't understand why they told me that I was going to get \$21.00 a week swamp pay but the first
6 week I lived in Florida I found out. It's the Air Force's equivalent of hazard pay.

7

8 Moore: Hazmat pay.

9

10 Larry Mauk: (laughs) so, you know, the beach at the time was wall-to-wall night clubs. There was no
11 family entertainment. Being a nondrinker I didn't go out and enjoy it but it was there. It has changed
12 quite a bit over the years. It was a boom town, party town, a lot of divorces. A lot of long hours.

13

14 Moore: That still exists to some extent. (laughs)

15

16 Larry Mauk: Well it still exists to some extent but at the time it was, I couldn't reckon it to what you see
17 in the movies with the gold rush days but it was pretty much the modern equivalent of it. Wall-to-wall
18 party places and people worked long hours and when they got off they partied hardy.

19

20 Moore: Was this because of the large number of temporary contractors that knew they were
21 here for a brief time mission and were planning on going back some day wherever it was they came.

22

1 Larry Mauk: I think it was because of we were growing up so quick and haven't matured. It was
2 interesting to watch it mature over the years. Nightclubs started closing up after, after the Apollo
3 launch and the influx of people went away and jobs got more stable, harder to find. It got where in
4 the '70s where you didn't walk out and go next door and get a dollar an hour more because they were
5 crying for people. It got to where you had to hunt for a job if you wanted to change jobs and you had
6 to have some value to you.

7

8 Moore: Well it sounds like you were fortunate in being able to come back and do something.
9 When did you start to enjoy this facet of your position, working with the museum side?

10

11 Larry Mauk: Well, it just evolved. I can't really give you a date where it dawned on me that I enjoyed
12 it.

13

14 {phone rings in background}

15

16 Moore: Do you need to get that?

17

18 Larry Mauk: No, leave a message. No it just sort of evolved. I don't know. I know I left the center
19 'cause Boeing lost the contract to McGregor Warner. McGregor Warner took it over. I had trouble
20 with them. They was, were not what I considered a nice company to work for.

21

22 Moore: Now you were...Boeing lost the contract but you stayed on and McGregor Warner
23 essentially took you over as a contractor.

1

2 Larry Mauk: McGregor picked me up, yeah. Transitioned to that.

3

4 Moore: What year was that in?

5

6 Larry Mauk: Probably around '79 or '80, and uh, I stayed with them maybe a year or so. I'd have to
7 go back and look at my resume if I have one around anymore. But, uh, didn't like the company so I
8 just up and quit one day and was offered a job running a small airlines, running prisoners around the
9 country.

10

11 Moore: Running prisoners?

12

13 Larry Mauk: Yeah.

14

15 Moore: Ok. I want to come back to the prisoners but what was it about McGregor Warner that
16 you didn't like working for.

17

18 Larry Mauk: Just their management philosophy. People were just dispensable to them and they
19 used them and threw them away and there was just no loyalty for people. It, that grates on me.

20

21 Moore: So tell me about working for an airline flying prisoners around the country.

22

1 Larry Mauk: Well, that was a mistake too. A friend of mine had started the company and uh, him
2 and his wife out of their bedroom and it evolved into a six million dollar a year, 35 employee operation
3 over at the Titusville airport but they had never set it up as a business so they asked me to come do
4 that for them.

5
6 Moore: To set it up as a business.

7
8 Larry Mauk: Yeah. So I went over as his, basically his CEO and it was interesting 'cause I went in
9 and the first thing he asked me was should he raise the rates and I said I have no idea 'cause I just
10 got here. I said let me look at the books and the receipts and see what it's costing us to move these
11 people and he had a vague idea but his wife was their bookkeeper and all their receipts were in an
12 envelope for the month so whether it was air plane parts or paperclips they were all in this envelope,
13 she didn't separate them and when she listed air plane parts down it was air plane parts. He didn't
14 know what it was or what air plane it went into. So it was kind of hard to get a cost.

15
16 Moore: Now what was the name of this company?

17
18 Larry Mauk: Air Security Transport.

19
20 Moore: And it, this was a nationwide company, would they take the plan to X spot...?

21
22 Larry Mauk: Yeah.

23

1 Moore: ...pick up the prisoner, fly to somewhere else.

2

3 Larry Mauk: They were running all 48 states. We were moving 900 prisoners a month.

4

5 Moore: How many planes did they have?

6

7 Larry Mauk: We had 12 air planes.

8

9 Moore: How about these air planes? This is fascinating. I assume I guess that this kind of
10 things happens, but, were they specially made planes? Did they have...?

11

12 Larry Mauk: No. We, we were running Cessna 401s, 402s and then we had some smaller twins for
13 localized traffic. We had the Cessna, or no, I'm sorry, the Piper Seneca and we had some single-
14 engine Piper Lances for very local, like running down to Key West or something where it wasn't
15 feasible to take a twin-engine running 48 gallons of gas an hour. But there was nothing special about
16 the airplanes. They were off the shelves. The trick was in how you handled the prisoners. The
17 prisoners had to be by FAA rules able to get out of that airplane in an emergency on their own. So
18 what they were is they were changed around the waist, they were hand-cuffed and their handcuffs
19 were fastened to that chain so they could reach a doorknob and turn it. They could get up and feed
20 their self but they couldn't reach out and grab the pilot around the neck.

21

22 Moore: Would they bring a guard or somebody with them?

23

1 Larry Mauk: We had a pilot and guard both of them were, in fact the pilot was a trained police officer,
2 they were certified. Both of them were armed.

3

4 Moore: Would they only transport one prisoner at a time?

5

6 Larry Mauk: No, we transported, the 402 would handle 8 prisoners and if we did it by van we had a
7 van that would run down to Ft. Lauderdale and picked them up and took them up to this Florida State
8 prison. It handled 15.

9

10 Moore: (laughs) Now how long did you do this particular job? You really were the jack of all
11 trades weren't you? (Laughs)

12

13 Larry Mauk: I was only with him six months because he had a habit of talking pilots into flying into
14 weather they shouldn't be in and we lost the first set of pilots and me and him had a discussion about
15 that and he agreed since the pilots worked for me that if I felt it wasn't safe for them to go they
16 wouldn't go. A month later we lost another airplane and pilot and guard and found out that he went
17 back on his word so I just told him I was out of there. I didn't kill people.

18

19 Moore: And lost a prisoner too or were they alone?

20

21 Larry Mauk: No they weren't alone. We lost a couple of prisoners. Believe it or not I didn't really
22 care about the prisoners. After you are around them a long, long time you get very insensitive to
23 them.

1

2 Moore: Was there any guard on the plane...?

3

4 Larry Mauk: You sit an airplane and listen to them talk for hours on end you find out that they don't
5 really think like the average person.

6

7 Moore: Would you go along on some of these trips.

8

9 Larry Mauk: Yeah. I had to understand what my pilots were up against.

10

11 Moore: So was it because, it wasn't because this was a company that did, had problems but
12 rather you didn't like the management approach or the way that it was being handled?

13

14 Larry Mauk: Well let me give you an example. Whenever the first plane hit the mountain we lost a
15 pilot, and a guard and two prisoners. Him and his wife came in and their comment was, well there
16 goes our schedule. I was concerned about the pilot and guard we lost. Of course I was the one that
17 had to notify their wives too. So it, I just, and after the second one and he went back on his word and
18 talked that one into flying into a storm, I just said I'm out of here and a month later he lost another
19 pilot. What the FAA couldn't do the insurance companies did – they put him out of business.

20

21 Moore: So you left working for this business and then what did you do?

22

23 Larry Mauk: Actually...

1

2 Moore: 'Cause what year was this that you were doing this, 19...?

3

4 Larry Mauk: '81. Actually that's an interesting story because I walked out of his office telling him that
5 after the second crash that I was history and the phone rang and my secretary told me they wanted to
6 talk to me and it was NASA who called and asked me if I'd come to work for NASA and work in their
7 visitor center again.

8

9 Moore: Same day.

10

11 Larry Mauk: Same hour. So how can you turn down somebody that has that good a timing? And
12 that was Arnold Richmond and Chuck Collins, they was calling because I had worked with Arnold on
13 the Visitor Center before and I guess he liked what I was doing. So, it took him about two months to
14 get the paperwork and everything and I just helped the company start, helped the employee start a
15 new business moving prisoners around which I don't know if it is still in business or not. They moved
16 to someplace in Tennessee. So I spent two months doing that.

17

18 Moore: So back to NASA.

19

20 Larry Mauk: Back to NASA.

21

22 Moore: But this time you were...

23

1 Larry Mauk: Actually with NASA.

2

3 Moore: Formal NASA employee instead of a contractor. What did they want you to do? What
4 was their, what was their vision at this juncture?

5

6 Larry Mauk: So. Well before I left I had designed the, what was then the Hall of History which was a
7 new building. At that time it was a Butler Building with a lot of exhibits and displays setting in there
8 with no flow or traffic pattern. It was just random like a warehouse and I started pushing for a floor
9 plan, a flow of people. Arrange and put some walls up and make people go in a steady flow. And uh,
10 finally bought into it, they were a little reluctant at first but they finally bought into it and it was built
11 while I was gone and then they thought it was the greatest idea they ever had and I agreed with them.

12

13 Moore: (laughs)

14

15 Larry Mauk: So that was so successful that they decided that they wanted me back. I used to refer
16 to it as NASA's attic. It was just, everything was thrown in the room and you just wandered around. I
17 had visitors come down and ask me if we had a moon buggy. I said did you see the moon rock and
18 they says yeah. I said if you had turned around you would've tripped over it. So. Anyway. I came
19 back and Arnold told me that I could have a free hand in redoing the Visitor Center and he asked me
20 what I was going to do first and I said start the bulldozer. That's when I found he lied. (Laughs) I
21 didn't have that much of a free hand. He wouldn't give me a bulldozer.

22

23 Moore: You were ready to start from scratch.

1

2 Larry Mauk: Yeah. No, I was just joking with him. But any rate, uh, we started doing away. The first
3 thing I did was I says I don't want to accept any cast off trade show exhibits. They were designed for
4 a specific audience and it's usually an engineer or very technical audience. Do not take any more of
5 them and they're too hard to redesign. It's easier to start from scratch and Arnold bought into that
6 and so did Chuck and we went from there and slowly eliminated all their trade show exhibits and
7 started putting new ones in and then the first major one we did was the Satellites and You exhibit. I
8 spent two-and-half million dollars on that. It was relatively successful even though it didn't really say
9 a lot but it proved a lot of points and we went from there. It was small stepping stones that you had to
10 get through because of this. In fact that was the one that I was criticized most from the museums on.
11 I was turning it into a Disney and, uh, I was very happy when I went to one of their museums and
12 seen that they were trying to do the same thing and said that they had just come up with this great
13 idea on how museums should be. I said yeah it's wonderful, I'm going to try and do that down there
14 and we did.

15

16 Moore: Although they were criticizing you they were still emulating you.

17

18 Larry Mauk: Hey. They probably had the idea up front, they just...

19

20 Moore: When Arnold contacted you and said we want you to come back because you had put
21 this...

22

23 Larry Mauk: Actually he didn't, personnel did.

1

2 Moore: Okay. But it was through, in a round about kind of way. It's the big, Arnold, not
3 the...and he sat down with you. Did he sit down with you? Was there a discussion about, this is the
4 direction we want to go in? There seems to be this overbearing presumption that NASA has some
5 master plan for how they're going to make everything work, etc., and that's obviously not true but it
6 comes down to individuals like yourself and Richmond who said...

7

8 Larry Mauk: No. Arnold just, we didn't really have that discussion. We just sat down and when I
9 come here and we just wanted to continue what we started in the Gallery of Space Flight or the Hall
10 of History which later became the Gallery of Space Flight, and uh, bring the Visitor Center up to a
11 more informative scale for the general public and he left it up to me and how we'd do it and
12 shuddered sometimes when I brought him ideas.

13

14 Moore: So what was your vision then? You were essentially in although he wouldn't let you
15 have your bulldozer, uh, he, what was your – you must've had a view – you're an artist.

16

17 Larry Mauk: Well yeah. My vision at the time if I had my way and this was a little too soon for this
18 was to sit down and develop a master plan for the visitor complex but at that time they still felt that it
19 had grown as much as it was ever going to grow. Uh, even though we were only doing about a
20 million five, they said it was never going to do any more, maybe 2 million at the best. I was saying 5
21 million. Uh, wasn't worth arguing so we picked up from there and I just did, worked with what I had.
22 And after we got the Hall of History we went on the Satellites and You which was successful so that

1 gave me a little more credibility to go and say let's redo the lobby and make it better and as the
2 credibility grew the, I guess, the trust grew.

3

4 Moore: Now you didn't have a formal master plan but was there a master plan in your mind?

5

6 Larry Mauk: Just to improve the overall appearance of it to make it more professional at that time
7 and more informational to the general public. Uh, it was, that was my master plan was just to give it
8 some more uniformity. But to do a master plan, we finally did do a master plan but it uh...you just
9 couldn't do it with the place. Rearrange the way it was 'cause it had grown up Helter Skelter as I call
10 it – with no idea of how people move around, just, that's a nice place for a building let's put one there.
11 As a matter of fact when I come back out here they had just changed it to a full concession
12 agreement and the concessionaire had to run it as a, at no expense to the government and the
13 concessionaire TW had brought to the table 8 million dollars as part of that concession agreement.

14

15 Moore: This was a new agreement, 1980. . .

16

17 Larry Mauk: '80.

18

19 Moore: 1980, okay.

20

21 Larry Mauk: And uh, that built the I-Max, built the new gift shop, remodeled the old gift shop into the,
22 what's now the Lunch Pad. Uh, when I came here they had just finished the gift shop which if I'd had
23 been here before it wouldn't have been in that location.

1

2 Moore: Where would you have put it?

3

4 Larry Mauk: At the exit. People don't buy gifts while they're here they buy gifts on their way out. Uh,
5 the I-Max theaters would've been different. They were under budgeted and overbuilt. So, something
6 had to give. You can't build a 40-room mansion on a duplex price but they tried.

7

8 Moore: When they were building, so when you came back a lot of this had already been put into
9 place or was in the process of being built.

10

11 Larry Mauk: Yeah, they were digging the foundation for the I-Max. So, unfortunately that was too far
12 along to stop and say let's go back and rethink this.

13

14 Moore: Where would you have wanted the I-Max?

15

16 Larry Mauk: It wasn't where I would have wanted it. I don't have too much problem with the location
17 it was the trying to for two and a half million dollars build that building, big of a building with two
18 theaters in it and making the theaters what I call gobots. The I-Max if you look at it and look at other
19 I-Maxes is not a true I-Max. The rake of the seats is not steep enough. So it was a compromise
20 between a regular theatre and an I-Max theater. In fact, both of them are so. You know you either
21 have the I-Max or you don't is my opinion because some people lose the real I-Max feel in that
22 theater.

23

1 Moore: Because they have heads in front of them or...

2

3 Larry Mauk: Yeah. Plus you're not far enough...the whole purpose of I-Max is it pushes everybody
4 up against the screen so the screen fills up their peripheral vision so the rake has to be very steep to
5 get the upper levels up against that screen, our's isn't and so, the back ones actually doesn't fill up
6 your whole vision, you don't get the true feel of being there.

7

8 Moore: But it's popular.

9

10 Larry Mauk: 85% of our people consistently have visited it.

11

12 Moore: So once you came back, what did you bring? What was, what kinds of things did you
13 start to implement a new change. Obviously the, the Satellites and You exhibit but then what was the
14 next phase, what was the next step.

15

16 Larry Mauk: After the Satellites and You? Redesign the lobby. The lobby was just, it had a sort of a
17 make-shift information counter in there with, it looked like three tables put together and a drape on
18 them. It was, it was very rudimentary. Uh, so we redesigned it, added some new exhibits. One was
19 the highlights of NASA which was an interesting program, it's, people could come up and punch in to
20 the year and it would give you some highlights of what we did that year and what was going on in the
21 country like historically or the music that was playing in then. Another one was know your astronauts
22 where you could punch in an astronaut and bring up his resume and his biography. Uh, you could
23 punch in a launch and it would tell you what day he did that day, that launch, the experiments and

1 stuff. The one that never got funded was one I had in mind to have a robot that would talk to the kids
2 and answer their questions. We built the area but we never built the robots.

3

4 Moore: Just the cost.

5

6 Larry Mauk: Well, people went on to other things you know. I had that problem, I had the money and
7 then something else would come up and management would take the money and go a different
8 direction and I would sit there with no money to do it, so.

9

10 Moore: Now this is 1981.

11

12 Larry Mauk: 1981, '85, that period when we was doing that.

13

14 Moore: This is when, this is after a pretty significant role in space activity with the U.S., between
15 the end of the Apollo-Soyuz test project and the launch of the Shuttle.

16

17 Larry Mauk: We were building up for the Shuttle.

18

19 Moore: Did the interest, did visitor shift in the interest in what you were doing take off again after
20 the Shuttle return or was it pretty consistent throughout the previous era.

21

22 Larry Mauk: It's had it ups and downs and it has nothing to do with that. It, I keep charts on that.

23 We've had a, we've had highs and we've had lows. It's a chart that looks like the Swiss Alps but uh

1 the consistency has been a steady growth of about 2.3% from the day the Visitor Center opened. Uh,
2 things that'll hurt us will be like the fires. Our visitation dropped and then it came back. The gas
3 crisis, it dropped drastically but it came back with gusto right after that. Uh, Disney opening a new
4 theme park may have a temporary effect on us because people won't come over.

5

6 Moore: You'll have a drop when they open a new park.

7

8 Larry Mauk: Sometimes. Sometimes we don't. Sometimes we actually have an increase. It's, I
9 can't quite figure that out.

10

11 Moore: It's like trying to figure out ebbs and close in the stock market.

12

13 Larry Mauk: But I track them and put them on a chart and uh, when they opened one park it dropped
14 us maybe a couple hundred thousand people a year for the next six months or so but then it came
15 back up.

16

17 Moore: Which...

18

19 Larry Mauk: And other times they'd open a park and it would just stay constant.

20

21 Moore: Do you have any recollection on which did which.

22

1 Larry Mauk: No. I can get it real quick. Uh, but like I said it has been steady about two-point (Long
2 pause) Let's see where is that.

3
4 Moore: Remarkable kinds of trends. (Laughs) Pattern is evolving. Um. So from that next step
5 then you completed the lobby. How did you vision this expansion? When did the ideas for saying...I
6 know that Arnold Richmond certainly said his vision for the Saturn V Center, how was that we're
7 going to expand this, this process. Okay.

8
9 Larry Mauk: Uh, actually I was pushing for a master plan for the Visitor Center so that we didn't have
10 sporadic growth. Uh, in the. . .

11
12 Moore: You can be candid. (Laughs) I can only imagine what's going on through your mind.

13
14 Larry Mauk: Arnold actually fought the Saturn V project for a while.

15
16 Moore: Well where did it come from? Tell me about, it is part of your master plan idea?

17
18 Larry Mauk: Not the Visitor Center company, Apollo Saturn V comes from a process of looking at the
19 visitor comments at the time and putting the, the ones under tour under one heading and what they
20 were complaining about was, believe it or not, Saturn V was laying out along the road there, all the
21 tours were outside. No matter what the weather was the bus dropped you off every 10 minutes, you
22 got to take some pictures and then you were put back on a bus so the complaints were: 1) The
23 elderly people, it was too much getting on and off the buses. It was too hot. If it was raining you

1 couldn't get off the bus . You had to shoot your pictures through the windows. Some people didn't
2 give one iota about the Saturn V, that was history they weren't interested in it which sort of didn't set
3 well with me but...and they just wanted to go see the Shuttle. So then I had factored in there the fact
4 that we had a Saturn V out there deteriorating rapidly,

5

6 Moore: Now this was when you came back.

7

8 Larry Mauk: Yeah.

9

10 Moore: 1980, 1981, 2, 3 somewhere in that era.

11

12 Larry Mauk: Right.

13

14 Moore: Okay.

15

16 Larry Mauk: So we had a Saturn V deteriorating very rapidly out in the weather. Uh, so I coupled
17 that with all the visitor's complaints and started on my on little TQM process, you know, how do I
18 solve their problems and which ones fit one solution and it come down to building permanent tour
19 stops and putting a building overtop of the Saturn V which is something Arnold wanted to do but then
20 I presented it to him and he told me that we didn't have funding for it. At the time we didn't. We
21 barely made enough money to do exhibits. And, so, I went back and I put together a plan that says
22 let's put a surcharge on the buses tour that the concessionaire don't get any of it because at the time

1 the concessionaire got 42 percent of every dollar made out there so I'd been giving him 42 cents for
2 not doing anymore than he was doing before. And, Arnold bought into it but he didn't want to do it.

3

4 Moore: Why?

5

6 Larry Mauk: Because he felt that he could use it to, when he retired and took over the contract that
7 was his goal and we had some problems with that. In fact, I transferred out to the press site for a
8 while because of it.

9

10 Moore: Wait a minute. His...

11

12 Larry Mauk: I'm an idealist.

13

14 Moore: Sure, now, his...

15

16 Larry Mauk: He looked at me and said it was a good plan but he couldn't take it upstairs because it
17 would jeopardize his chance of him taking over the contract. So, he was going to take the plan and
18 he was going to keep it until he got some backing, which he eventually did, he, Bionetics, he was on
19 Bionetics proposal and that was going be part of their proposal to fund that. Of course at the time he
20 thought it was only going to cost ten million dollars, I doodle high sometimes. I did learn to work the
21 system. If you tell them it's going to cost thirty million dollars it's dead in the water.

22

23 Moore: You work for NASA don't you?

1

2 Larry Mauk: Yeah.

3

4 (both laugh)

5

6 Larry Mauk: Uh, as a matter of fact that's how I got the Gallery in Space Flight going or the Hall of
7 History, was I told them it was only, they only needed about four thousand dollars and then after they
8 got a little more enthusiastic about the plan they, I upped it to fifteen thousand that I had misjudged it.
9 We spent two hundred and fifty thousand dollars on it.

10

11 Moore: So originally he said no, he wasn't.

12

13 Larry Mauk: He wasn't going to do it and he wouldn't let me take it forward.

14

15 Moore: What year was this?

16

17 Larry Mauk: Right after, about '83. Uh, and one day I had a meeting with him and the Center
18 Director and Chuck Collins said and much to Arnold's chagrin I brought it up.

19

20 Moore: What year was this?

21

22 Larry Mauk: About that time, maybe the same time. And uh, the Center Director said well that's a
23 great idea why don't we do it, and then Arnold got real enthusiastic about it. Arnold's a political

1 person, he didn't want to do anything that would, might jeopardize his career path too. I'm not. My
2 career path is always jeopardized.

3

4 Moore: Well did you and Arnold have words after this?

5

6 Larry Mauk: Yeah we did and it, the relationship was strained after that and finally I just moved out to
7 the Press Site for a while.

8

9 Moore: What year was that in?

10

11 Larry Mauk: I don't know. I'd have to go back in the records. I didn't keep track of that.

12

13 Moore: Well when you were over at the Press Site you just kind of started doing things over
14 there, left the Visitor Center.

15

16 Larry Mauk: Yep. And uh, just working with them and finally I guess it was Hugh Harris come back
17 and out there and says that he didn't have anything permanently out there for me that he'd find
18 something for me, and I said nah, I don't want something you find for me and by that time I had
19 reconciled in my mind that nobody was going to chase me off, I was going back, so I just showed up
20 at my office one day and told Hugh I was going back down to work on the Visitor Center. But Arnold's
21 and I's relationship was somewhat strained after that for a while.

22

23 Moore: Now he was technically your boss.

1

2 Larry Mauk: Yeah.

3

4 Moore: And you just showed back up at work. Your position. . .

5

6 Larry Mauk: Well my job...my job was still there. I still had the job.

7

8 Moore: How long were you over at the, at the Press Site?

9

10 Larry Mauk: Press Site, for about three months.

11

12 Moore: Arnold didn't mind the fact that you were not around for three months. It's just kind of
13 an odd interplay. Usually if you pack up and go somewhere else there is...

14

15 Larry Mauk: It was actually I guess to Hugh Harris' benefit and Chuck Collins said that they knew
16 there was a problem there that they let me go out there and get away from him for a while rather than
17 let it fester. But they, you know, the job was still there. I hadn't been removed from my job I was just
18 temporarily detailed out there.

19

20 Moore: I see.

21

1 Larry Mauk: It's, we do that, NASA does that. We have people detailed, to other jobs to learn them
2 anyway, and then, but their job is still there when they come back. They may be there for three
3 months, six months, a year. We send people to Headquarters for a year on a detail to learn.

4

5 Moore: So as things got rolling, but this 1983. You still have 12 years before the Saturn V starts
6 to become a reality.

7

8 Larry Mauk: Yeah. You have to build money. We were only getting two dollars per tickets and we
9 were only doing a million tours a year so we were only getting two million dollars for a forty million
10 dollar project. Uh, what happened then was we did fund the design. We had Morse Architects, of the
11 RC Imagination Arts and have them to come in and come up with the concept. We funded the
12 design. That's was two million and some dollars. We were able to fund putting utilities out there.
13 There was nothing out there. The nearest utilities were the Saturn, the Apollo, the VAB.

14

15 Moore: The visitor, the viewing complex. Nothing was out there it was just. . .

16

17 Larry Mauk: Nothing. They had bleachers out there and a holding tank for the restrooms. There
18 was no sewer lines. There was no electricity. There was nothing so we had to...

19

20 Moore: Did they just let the people in the bleachers go sit out there with no sound, no lights, or
21 anything.

22

23 Larry Mauk: No they had sound. It was temporary. It was...

1

2 Moore: They just run out temporary.

3

4 Larry Mauk: Yeah, uh, and generators for lights. So when we were, we says we're going to locate
5 the Saturn V there it was a case of we had to pay to run sewer lines out there from the VAB area and
6 power and com lines and that was two million dollars and we funded all that and then Arnold retired.
7 Jim Ball come back from Headquarters and Jim got the idea that maybe we could accelerate this
8 cause we were going to be 10 years in building up the money to build the thing and Jim went and
9 started looking for a bond program since we can't put the government in debt and he was very
10 successful. He did a very good job of finding Spaceport Florida and all that. He probably told you all
11 that. So, you know, Jim accelerated that quite a bit. He had a, very influential.

12

13 Moore: We're almost out of tape for this tape but whose idea was it, why this particular location
14 for the Saturn V. There's nothing out there, it's a long way away.

15

16 Larry Mauk: That's was Arnold's and that was a political decision that we could use it for the VIP's
17 for launch. We'd have this big building that we could use for them. It was pretty much a political.

18

19 Moore: Did it make sense for your vision?

20

21 Larry Mauk: I didn't have any problem with it. It's, you know, it's, I wanted to build it. I wanted the
22 project and I wasn't going to sit and argue to have it, I would've like to have it down at the Visitor
23 Complex even though the tour needed help. But uh, at the time my mind set was still, that we were

1 going to run the tour cause that was the only one we were going to have in an air conditioned building
2 and at the time I set it up as, in fact the drawings of my original design are someplace around here. I
3 think they're down in storage. Uh, the original design was, is the bus dropped them off at one end
4 and then they stayed in that building as long as they wanted and they could come out the other end
5 and get another bus and go out to the pad and stuff because they were still tour. And it was after the
6 contract changed that we had Delaware North out of their thirty-five million build a permanent, the
7 tower. You know, we did finally get to our permanent bus stops where people pick what they want to
8 do, spend as much time there as they want and if they didn't like it then move on to the next one.

9

10 Moore: I want to continue with this. Let's switch tapes.

11

12 (tape change)

13

14 Moore: It's June 20th, 2002. I'm with Larry Mauk, Patrick Moore, University of West Florida and
15 Kennedy Space Center. We're continuing our interview on his experiences. You were telling me, we
16 were going through this progression of the, of the Saturn V Center and its construction and this type
17 of thing. Tell me more about this, when, once it became a reality that this was going to happen and,
18 and we brought it on line, how did that design process evolve? What was the, the stages in terms of
19 getting this project completed?

20

21 Larry Mauk: Well, we went out on a request for proposals, actually we went out on a request for
22 interest. We weeded through them, found a, a group of companies that, we felt could handle this size
23 project. We went out on a request for proposal. We had. . . I think it was eight companies come in,

1 give us their presentations and we asked for it to come in as a team. It wasn't just for the exhibits. It
2 had to be an architect, exhibits designer, show designer, the whole thing, this was a package deal.
3 So, we had like eight teams come in and present.

4

5 Moore: What year was this taking place in?

6

7 Larry Mauk: You keep asking me that.

8

9 Moore: I'm sorry. It's historians, we like to have things. . .

10

11 Larry Mauk: I don't keep track of things.

12

13 Moore: I'll ask it in a different way. Was this, this was before the transition from TW Services to
14 Delaware North.

15

16 Larry Mauk: Oh yeah, oh yeah.

17

18 Moore: Ok. So this is like late. . .

19

20 Larry Mauk: Saturn V was developed by TWRS.

21

22 Moore: Ok, so this was late eighties?

23

1 Larry Mauk: Yeah.

2

3 Moore: This was taking place? Ok.

4

5 Larry Mauk: Yeah. And, when they come in we had, we eliminated all but two very quickly and it
6 came down to the two and it was the Morse Architect was the lead on the one we chose, BRC
7 Imagination Arts, Levitan Design for the exhibits, and Architectura of Vancouver for the architectural
8 design of the building, even though Morse did the engineering finally. And then on one of the other
9 teams that came in second was Gene Cernan and Gene came to me after their presentation and
10 says, if they didn't get the contract he would still like to be part of the project, program, project. And
11 Gene and I had talked about a concept I had in mind at that time about him getting all the astronauts
12 together to interview them before they died.

13

14 Moore: Not a bad idea.

15

16 Larry Mauk: On their, what their, basically the same as we're doing now, and one-on-one just talk to
17 them about their thoughts and inner feelings as they were going to the moon and training for the
18 moon and they had families, they had. And, we never did it but simply 'cause we could never find the
19 funding. But, uh, I did remember Gene wanted to be involved in it. So when we got into it later on we
20 finally got the finalized. We funded, like I said, the engineering design by Morse Architect and they
21 did the actual final design on the building and we had a show concept from BRC. Then after the, we
22 started building the building we had the money, Jim had arranged for the loan through Spaceport
23 Florida Authority. TWS wrote a contract to actually start construction on the building that started

1 before, the actual construction started before Delaware North took over and then we waited until they
2 come on board because it was too close to actually put the others on the contract - BRC to do the
3 final and the only one that dropped out was Len Levitan. We, I felt that his price on exhibits for what
4 he was giving us was a little high and we had the right in the contract that any of these if we couldn't
5 negotiate a good reasonable price we could go out to somebody else so we put that out for bid again
6 and then BRC, Imagination Arts actually did them too. So those started after Delaware North took
7 over in the restorate...refurbishment - I don't want to use the word restoration - we didn't restore the
8 rocket we refurbished it. Refurbishment of the rocket started after they took over. We cut that
9 contract. The only contract that was let before they took over was the actual construction of the
10 facility.

11

12 Moore: Now you had a, before we go on with this, you had an idea, a vision that you drew up of
13 what you saw.

14

15 Larry Mauk: Yeah.

16

17 Moore: ...this building would look like. How much of that or of any came out in the final product.

18

19 Larry Mauk: None.

20

21 Moore: Did you even share it with the designers and say I kind of have, this is kind of my idea,
22 what do you think and they said thank you very much?

23

1 Larry Mauk: To sell the idea. To sell the idea I always had to come up with my own drawings. Uh,
2 NASA didn't accept just you telling them how great it would be they had to see it at that time so I did
3 the drawings and a friend of mine that lived down in Melbourne did some architectural renderings of
4 it, that's his business. He used to be one of my supervisors, and uh, that sold the project and that's
5 all I expected to ever do. The, when they come in they were told, don't, you know, don't use them
6 drawings, we want your ideas that's what we're paying you for. I'm very adamant about that that, in
7 fact I hesitate to give anybody any sketches because to many people will say well that's what they
8 want that's what we'll give them and I want their ideas. They're in the business constantly so. But in
9 that case I made it very clear when they come in that these were just things that sold the project and
10 now we want to know what it looks like and other then the length of the building and the height of the
11 building and the width of it that's about it and that was dictated by the rocket. There wasn't much you
12 could it with you had to cover the rocket.

13

14 Moore: So the contract starts and the process of refurbishing the rocket, did you take it to a new
15 site. Did they build the building first and refurbish it once they put it inside. How did that process
16 work?

17

18 Larry Mauk: Okay. Actually we were building the building and the idea was always to leave the
19 south end of the building open, we refurbish the rocket where it set, up in front of the VAB. The
20 company to come in, the company Tamarius out of Ohio got that contract and what they did was they
21 bought an inflatable building that would cover half of the rocket so the first stage sat out and then they
22 pressure cleaned it in place with scaffolding and the other parts were in this inflatable building and
23 they refurbished them in there and painted them and then as they, after the building had dried in and

1 before the floor was poured there is a floating floor in that because of the weight of the stages that
2 had to go in there and before the columns were put up for the first stage they took the Command
3 Service Module and all them and the second stage or the third stage and the second stage out and
4 put them in place and then the Saturn, the first stage had to be moved and that was the bugger. It
5 took nine hours to move that, that one and a half miles.

6

7 Moore: If you only had some capability of moving large equipment around. Oh, (laughs)

8

9 Larry Mauk: Well we do. Uh, actually...

10

11 Moore: Personally crawlers don't go in that direction. (Laughs)

12

13 Larry Mauk: Beyel Construction moved that for us. They do a lot of work for us. Uh, it was
14 interesting. They come out with their dollies and jacked it up and set it on there and the biggest
15 problem was getting it over the curb. Their truck couldn't hold it and their truck had 800 horsepower
16 in it so they brought another 700 horsepower truck and hooked it to that truck to get it over the curb or
17 we were going to have to jack-hammer out the curb and we got it going.

18

19 Moore: So they had to take out the curb.

20

21 Larry Mauk: No, we wound up going over it. But it took 1400, 1500 horsepower to do it. That's
22 250,000 pounds, I think, we were trying to move.

23

1 Moore: I hate to ask a dumb question but how did you get it onto that site to begin with. It didn't
2 just walk out of the VAB.

3

4 Larry Mauk: Actually I don't know. It was there when I came here. Uh...

5

6 Moore: So, like Stonehenge.

7

8 Larry Mauk: Well, no I do know. I'm sorry I do know. It was on its transporter. If you look at the
9 early pictures you can see the tires. It was on its transporter and a transporter operated it at the time.
10 But after 20 years of sitting there it didn't operate anymore and actually it's still on the transporter.
11 We cut the part that takes, holds the wheels off and just mounted it intact. We didn't want to disturb it
12 as much as, anymore than we had because there was a problem. If it would've flexed we didn't know
13 what was going to happen and since there is only three Saturn V's in the world left and the other two
14 are deteriorating fast that uh we were being very careful with it so we decided to, we couldn't move it
15 on the original tires so we cut them off and we put on dollies and moved it. So yeah I do know how it
16 got there, it actually was rolled in there on its dolly and it was parked and it set there for the 25 years.

17

18 Moore: Now, what happened to the transporter after they got it into the facility?

19

20 Larry Mauk: It's up there except for the wheels. If you look up there and you look at the early
21 drawings you will see that that is the transporter up there without the wheels. We asked the
22 Smithsonian if they wanted the wheels and they says no so we sent them off for scrap.

23

1 Moore: Huh. Fascinating.

2

3 Larry Mauk: There was nothing fascinating about the wheels the wheels were just wheels off of any
4 tractor trailer or something and heavy equipment so the Smithsonian had no interest in them.

5

6 Moore: Now while they were in the process of refurbishing how long did that take before, from
7 when the company came in and started working on it until the time it went inside.

8

9 Larry Mauk: Mmm, about six months.

10

11 Moore: Could the tour see what was going on? Were they able to still see?

12

13 Larry Mauk: No.

14

15 Moore: It was covered.

16

17 Larry Mauk: It was pretty much out of their sight then. As a matter of fact the Smithsonian when I
18 talked to them, there is an interesting story on this. Let me go back to it. I had been talking to the
19 Smithsonian every time I met with them for almost 10 years about putting the Saturn V in a building
20 and refurbishing it and I was up there, the Friends of the Museum get together and I says well we're
21 building the building and we're getting ready to refurbish the Saturn V and they looked at me and
22 says you can't and I says what do you mean I can't. And they says well we never let anybody
23 refurbish or restore any of our stuff, we do it ourselves and we don't have an agreement that you can

1 do that. So my first comment was, what do you think I've been talking about for the last 10 years and
2 they said we didn't think you were serious and I said well I'm serious.

3

4 Moore: Now do they technically own the, the...

5

6 Larry Mauk: They own the Saturn V.

7

8 Moore: All three of them.

9

10 Larry Mauk: All three of them.

11

12 Moore: How did they get the right to it just out of curiosity?

13

14 Larry Mauk: They are the National Repository of all. . .

15

16 Moore: Old stuff.

17

18 Larry Mauk: . . . nation artifacts and all the capsules and everything are automatically turned over to
19 them and then we borrow them back, so there I was building the building, getting ready to refurbish
20 the Saturn V on a very tight schedule. It had to be moved into the building in May or else we were
21 going to be held up on our construction so there was a girl in our office called Carol Cavanaugh, so
22 we sent her, poor little Carol up to negotiate with their attorneys on this and she spent a couple of
23 days up there with them attorneys and hammering on an agreement that we could refurbish the

1 Saturn V and they finally agreed to do it and sent us down this big book of guidelines which would
2 have put the thing back in flyable condition again which we ignored.

3

4 Moore: This was something the Smithsonian sent down.

5

6 Larry Mauk: According to Carol I violated every aspect of that agreement the first week.

7

8 Moore: (laughs)

9

10 Larry Mauk: You should talk to her sometime. She's a hoot.

11

12 Moore: Where is she?

13

14 Larry Mauk: She is down on the second floor, down you know Chris Berry's office. But uh, Carol
15 was overseeing the refurbishment, we assigned her to that.

16

17 Moore: Well, I, I, need to go back and catch this again. I, you, they said sorry you can't do this
18 and you said what have I been coming down here and they said well we didn't think you were serious.
19 How did, how did you resolve this impasse, did you just say fine I'm going to switch...?

20

21 Larry Mauk: Well they didn't have any choice. The Saturn V was deteriorating. The Smithsonian
22 didn't have the money to refurbish it. They didn't, you know, what were they going to do with it?

23

1 Moore: So ultimately they did.

2

3 Larry Mauk: So they did, you know they agreed but they says we have to have an agreement so
4 that's when we got Carol involved and sent Carol to Washington and says here you go up and iron
5 out an agreement with them and she, you know, Carol says I don't know anything about it, just go do
6 it. So she went up there.

7

8 Moore: How complex was this agreement? That you violated every...

9

10 Larry Mauk: It was only about an inch thick. I never read it personally. Uh, sorry, and I did agree to
11 bring down some Smithsonian people on a regular basis to check to see if it was being down properly
12 which was actually a blessing I didn't realize at the time because they sent a guy named Al
13 Buckmeyer who has become a very good friend of mine. He is out on the Dallas Airport project now
14 and he was over their restoration facility up in Silver Hills at the time and Al come down and I was,
15 you know, we were building the tower out there. We were building the Saturn V. We were trying to
16 develop new exhibits and we had a new concessionaire on board that had to learn how to spell
17 NASA. Uh...

18

19 Moore: New concessionaire meaning...

20

21 Larry Mauk: Delaware North.

22

23 Moore: Delaware North. This was at this juncture when they came down.

1

2 Larry Mauk: Yeah. So, you know, everything was happening at once and it just was too much to try
3 and see that, so we got Al down here and to look it over and Al took pretty much charge of it, and you
4 know, him and the other guy with him called Scott Wertz who is now out in Boulder, Colorado or
5 some place, Colorado Springs. He's with the Air Force. They did great. They just took over and
6 made sure that the thing was done right.

7

8 Moore: Part of the...do you still have a copy of the agreement of how this was going to happen
9 somewhere?

10

11 Larry Mauk: Possibly. (Laughs)

12

13 Moore: That you violated every piece of, but when, but when...

14

15 Larry Mauk: That's her story.

16

17 Moore: (Both laugh) Okay. But when Al came down...

18

19 Larry Mauk: I never read that so I don't know if I violated it or not.

20

21 Moore: You don't know if you violated it. When Al came down did he, he was essentially the,
22 the conservationist to help facilitate this.

23

1 Larry Mauk: Well Al's first comment was, in six months you can't do it, it can't be done and I says
2 sure. So when Al come down for his first visit he seen some things he didn't like which I wasn't
3 paying attention to 'cause I didn't have time to and he made them right and then we brought him
4 down and then we had him stay longer. The Smithsonian wasn't happy I understand about the time
5 he spent down here but we were funding it, it wasn't costing them anything and Al was having a ball.
6 And, it turned out wonderful.

7

8 Moore: Is he still up in Washington?

9

10 Larry Mauk: Yeah. He's still working on the Dallas Airport project.

11

12 Moore: Part of this was the notion of getting it, they wanted it to be flight ready like you...

13

14 Larry Mauk: Well, when I glanced at the agreement that's the idea I got, that it was, they wanted it
15 restored like they restore their airplanes, you know, every little part polished and...we weren't going to
16 do that for two million dollars. Actually it came to 2.6 million dollars they spent on that rocket but to
17 do it the ways their curators, Al wasn't the one, that was their curators, you know, you had to take
18 every little bolt out it and polish it and put it back together and we would've probably spent three
19 billion dollars on that rocket putting it back together if we could've. Believe it or not there is no
20 blueprints left for that. The Saturn V can not be built to this day, according to Boeing, simply because
21 the blueprints weren't kept, so, it created us a lot of problems. . . But the Smithsonian got to be some
22 of our best friends in the process...

23

1 Moore: And they were happy when it was finished.

2

3 Larry Mauk: Oh yeah, they're very happy. They got one Saturn V that is in a air-conditioned, heated,
4 weather-proofed environment but believe it or not the Saturn V will not last forever. It was not built to.
5 It actually has dissimilar metals that are actually eating away at it even in that building. Maybe some
6 day they'll figure out how to stop that but right now it's like a boat.

7

8 Moore: Things made of metal will do that.

9

10 Larry Mauk: Yep.

11

12 Moore: So once you have this project finished essentially how, how, what, did you manage to
13 come in on time, the six months that you wanted it to have happen?

14

15 Larry Mauk: Yep. We moved it in the building in May. In fact the contractor come and says, ask us
16 if we could hold off a month 'cause he was behind. We said no, we had to move it in. It wasn't going
17 to lay out in the weather after we put all that work into it. So we moved it in.

18

19 Moore: What were the logistical challenges then of getting all of the pieces in terms of the
20 design, the cost, the theaters, the exhibits, everything coming in. Were there pitfalls along the way
21 that you had to deal with?

22

1 Larry Mauk: Yeah. There was a screw-up by the architect where they had written down on their
2 blueprints the length of the rocket but they hadn't when they sized up the building and put the
3 individual pieces together. It was actually 10 feet longer than what the blueprint said if you'd added
4 them up, so when we hung the first stage or the Command Service Module, the escape rocket literally
5 went through the elevator and out the other side and of course it was too late to change the building
6 and make it longer and if you look up there you'll see that the Command Service Module and the
7 hangers it's, were built into the ceiling to hold it. They're clear back at the furthest end and the escape
8 rocket is still sticking into the, the tower a little bit which it wasn't supposed to, it was supposed to be
9 out away from the tower about 5 feet and then we took up some space in each of the distances
10 between them so we don't really have a 383 foot long rocket there anymore. We probably have
11 about 384, or a 374. So...

12

13 Moore: What did you have to take off?

14

15 Larry Mauk: Well where the separations are we had to pick up the space because the, the piers, the
16 foundations were already in there to put the piers in for the first stage so it had to go where it was
17 going to go and also you had a wall there that it couldn't go through so we had to eat up this extra 10
18 feet by backing up the first stage and then taking some spaces out of, as we went down to make it
19 look right.

20

21 Moore: Most people don't know that it is actually 10 feet shorter.

22

23 Larry Mauk: No, thank God they don't.

1

2 Moore: Nobody's paced it off. I'm surprised that you haven't had somebody whose paced this
3 down.

4

5 Larry Mauk: But it was just little problems like that. Actually everybody did a good job. It was just,
6 you know, the engineers when they, sentences okay this, the first stage is 133 feet long and you have
7 this gap between it where the, the adapter panels would have went and you have the next stage is so
8 long. Well they put them down and that's what they went by to put up their braces and hangers and
9 then somebody just put in there it's 383 feet long. Well if you still can add in all them measurements
10 up you come out to 393 feet long. A little screw-up, but you're talking about a very complex building
11 and these things happen and we were able to recover. Just, uh, other than that there was some
12 value engineering done on the building without the benefit of the show producer and people didn't
13 understand what all this extra conduit was done and they were trying to cut costs on the building to
14 get it down into the budget and they took the conduit out so when we come to put the show in we
15 didn't have conduit to run the lines which had to all be put back in, but.

16

17 Moore: An additional cost.

18

19 Larry Mauk: Yeah. It's a lot of disciplines in one building. It's not like building an office building
20 where you have, we were actually building a Disney building. You had two theaters in there and
21 everything that goes with theaters and uh, plus the building and a rocket that had to go into it. Yeah,
22 its, there were a lot of problems. There always is, always will be.

23

1 Moore: Tell me about this transition though. So you have this project going in and then coming
2 up for a new contract for a new concessionaire who is going to take this process over. Did they have
3 any role in the Saturn V Center, that project, or was it far enough along that they were, didn't have a
4 say in the way it evolved?

5

6 Larry Mauk: They didn't have any say in the way it evolved. They uh, when we contracted out the
7 shows and stuff then they were involved in them, they had some say in the development of the
8 presentations and the exhibits but the building was set in concrete at the time they moved in.

9

10 Moore: Were you happy with the way it came out?

11

12 Larry Mauk: I'm very happy with the way it came out.

13

14 Moore: There weren't things along the way you were like, I wish it could've been this way or,
15 obviously not having this...

16

17 Larry Mauk: No actually we changed a lot of the concepts even afterwards and as far as the show
18 goes. We always wanted the, the firing room to be as exact as we could on the firing room, but we, –
19 I'll give you an example, we never envisioned that we'd make the windows rattle and simulate the
20 liftoff. That was something that came as we developed the concept, that some of the show producers
21 and people out in California says, you know, we can make them rattle, we can actually give the
22 people the experience – so do it if it's within the budget. The lunar show was completely different. It
23 was, we changed the whole concept of it.

1

2 Moore: What was it going to be? What was your original vision?

3

4 Larry Mauk: It was the lunar landing but it was, uh, at the time it was a, actually a mock third scale
5 command service module that come along and docked with the thing, the Lunar Lander. We didn't
6 have an actual lunar landing and I think everybody thought that that was going to look a little bit hooky
7 and BRC Imagination Arts went out and started looking at new concepts and come back with this one
8 and says well, you know, so we did this and we built the landing, uh, and I think it turned out really
9 great.

10

11 Moore: This relationship with Disney, talk to me a little bit about this. There has been some,
12 some look that says, you know, as you have mentioned a number of times, you know we went more
13 of a Disney way, had to do this kind of Disney thing. Certainly from a, from a, a marketing
14 perspective, you have market share of how you're going to get somebody to come over here and
15 spend part of their day when Disney has actively worked since the very beginning to say we're going
16 to take the entire time, full seven days of a tourist's family's time going to be here – how is that you've
17 worked to try and integrate how you're going to pull people over here and have this continually be an
18 element of their tourist experience.

19

20 Larry Mauk: My concept has always been that people want to be entertained and we want them
21 informed and I think the two go together. I have always used the example, if you remember your high
22 school days, who was your best teacher – the one that made the class interesting. The one that was
23 up there very dryly telling you that two plus two made four, had to wake you up to tell you that, but

1 every now and then you come across a teacher that would make it really interesting and exciting and
2 that always stuck in my mind. So when Disney come along Disney was the only one I had to learn
3 from so I went over to Disney and I kept looking at his place and saying how can I apply that to this
4 place, and I wasn't looking for market share I was looking at a better way to get people really
5 interested in the exhibit or the presentation and, so they would absorb it and pay attention to it. I had,
6 I'll tell you what I had. When I first got, come out here, comment cards, sixty percent of them were
7 complaints on the exhibits, when I come to work for NASA. And a good many of them wrote right
8 across the front of the card in big bold letters "BORING". So I set my goal that I had to get that off of
9 there so then we got that off of there and then it was go to the next step and then make it entertaining
10 as well as informative, so that's part of what went into the Saturn V – how do you make the Saturn V
11 program exciting. It's an exciting program to begin with but right now you're umteen years away from
12 it and kids today aren't interested in it. And, yeah, I'm happy with the Saturn V. It went from a 10-
13 minute stop that I had a lot of comments that, you know, they didn't want to stop at it to where now it
14 is an average of one-and-a-half-hour stay at that building and I get, every compliment comes on that
15 building. So I says alright, somebody's right. We need more of that.

16

17 Moore: Had there ever been an, years ago before you came and before the Disney Park
18 opened over in Orlando, they had actually approached NASA and the, the head public affairs officer
19 about bringing bus tours around here and having a formal relationship and operation, umm, that
20 never materialized in a, in a tangible sense. Did you ever have any connection with the folk over
21 there during your tenure here and...

22

1 Larry Mauk: The only connection I had with them was when we were bidding this contract Disney
2 was very interested in it. As a matter of fact they had gone...

3

4 Moore: The concessionaire contract?

5

6 Larry Mauk: Yeah. They had gone to NASA headquarters to Golden personally and gave him a
7 presentation that I understand was a hundred and ten million dollars they would invest in this place
8 over here and do not bid the contract out just give it to us and we will run it for you. Golden was very
9 impressed from what I understand. Uh, but unfortunately he told them legally he couldn't do that he
10 had to bid it out and they came to all the preproposal conferences we had over here and I toured
11 them through the visitor center and stuff. They were very interested in and a lot of, they went to Bob
12 Crippen, Bob Crippen at that time was Center Director and they showed him that proposal and he
13 was really thrilled with it. I've never seen it. I've never heard much about it other than Bob Crippen
14 was very impressed with it. Uh, some of the changes we made in the concession agreement and
15 relaxation of NASA's oversight of it were made based on what Disney had sent over, it says that they
16 wanted made. My personal feeling is if they had bid on it they'd have got it.

17

18 Moore: What happened?

19

20 Larry Mauk: I have no idea. I know some people who worked for Disney who says they were
21 working on the proposal, one day they came in and says throw everything in the box and we will
22 reassign you back to your regular jobs. That's all they knew. Why Disney decided against bidding on
23 it, uh, there was speculation that Eisner when he said they had one more theme park planned and it's

1 a space park. I don't know if it is or not. But Disney is very interested in space. They make, they
2 haven't been very successful at it but they are very interested in it. The only relationship I know that
3 we have with Disney is in the lands in Epcot.

4

5 Moore: What was your attitude about this notion that Disney might come in?

6

7 Larry Mauk: I think Disney would have done a very good job of it. I think Disney understands the
8 psychology of the people. Uh, I think Disney is probably one of the best at understanding the
9 psychology of a visitor. They spend a great deal of money understanding the psychology of the
10 visitor and that's where the, most of the others, the pitfall is with most museums is they don't
11 understand the psychology of their visitor. They're curators and their main concept is preserve an
12 artifact and entertainment just drives them straight up a wall. But Disney is, I remember seeing a
13 early speech by Walt Disney where he says he was not developing a new entertainment concept he
14 was developing a new education concept which struck in my mind so I did, yeah, I did go over and
15 study Disney a lot. How they move people, how they do things, why they do things, and it is based
16 on the psychology of their visitor. They evidently studied it very deeply.

17

18 Moore: One of the criticisms that I found of what takes place, and not necessarily here but as
19 NASA as a whole from astronauts, from other people, is it that, it's a challenge and there's been
20 short-comings in getting the NASA message across. Not necessarily in the Visitor Center but this is
21 just at large. And there are many people who argue quite to the contrary, well we do a better job than
22 the other government agency in telling the story. For Kennedy specifically how is it that you worked,
23 or maybe you weren't – maybe you were not looking so much from the technical side but more the

1 human side as you had said – but were there ever efforts made to try and get the technical, the hard
2 science work that really took place here during the Shuttle, Shuttle years out to the people, to explain
3 to them what this place means to us today, not in a historic sense but where are we now, where are
4 we going?

5

6 Larry Mauk: We put some concepts together like that. We have our own internal struggles. Uh, one,
7 you notice there is no spin-off exhibit out there which I think is vitally important to the general public
8 that there is such a return on investment in NASA programs. But we have somebody that thinks that
9 that's boring, and my, my take on that is, my standard take, that anything is boring if you make it
10 boring, it's how you present the story and I always use the example – if I go over to Universal and I
11 look at Twister and then I come back here and I start thinking about the weather satellites out there
12 that are tracking hurricanes as soon as they leave the African coast. And I think back that in the
13 twenties and thirties the only way you knew a hurricane was coming was when they'd slap you upside
14 the head, so if I build an exhibit and put somebody in the middle of a hurricane it would get their
15 attention. Then when I told them how much they relied on the satellites to make sure that they never
16 got in that position it drives the point home, so you can make it interesting it just takes money and
17 time and thought and I have, you know there's people that do that. Spoken mirrors, Disney does that
18 very well, how else would you have ghosts dancing in a mansion. So it's, it's not the entertainment
19 it's what you do with it. It's the hook. I go back to the advertising. Entertainment's the hook and then
20 you sell them. But Disney, or NASA for a long time was its own worst enemy. It, uh, for a long time I
21 was told we could not market, I had to stay away from anything that was rah-rah NASA because we
22 weren't to market ourselves.

23

1 Moore: Why?

2

3 Larry Mauk: I don't know. That came down from headquarters some place according to the people
4 who were above me and I says then why do we have a visitor complex, isn't that marketing. They
5 said that's informing and I said well that's marketing. When I do an advertisement I inform people
6 about the product and tell them how great it is and it's new and improved. I changed the box. I says
7 but you know it's, it's marketing, I says, you know, if we're just going disseminate information I can
8 take a pipe or club and a bunch of leaflets and do that and a lot cheaper.

9

10 Moore: When did that change or has it?

11

12 Larry Mauk: It evolved. I think it's just sort of gone by the wayside. I don't know what happened
13 there. It's just, you know, I don't get much of that, I don't get any of it really and uh, but the, and
14 they've accepted the fact that, you know, that we're, I don't like to use the word theme park, we're not
15 a theme park. Theme park concept applied to us we would do the same things they do. We move
16 people, we feed people, we, and we inform people, you know. So we got to do the same things so
17 you learn from them. The difference is, is the theme park, Disney is entertainment for entertainment's
18 sake, ours is entertainment for education's sake.

19

20 Moore: You were involved in this transition from TW services to Delaware North.

21

22 Larry Mauk: Right.

23

1 Moore: Were you pleased with the contract? Was that a challenge when that came up?

2 Obviously Disney didn't come through, Delaware North got the contract, now you oversee this
3 contract.

4

5 Larry Mauk: Part of it.

6

7 Moore: Part of it. From your perspective how, how is that coming around? Are they
8 accomplishing the task? Obviously you're charting the visitors who are coming through. Are they
9 doing what they're supposed do be doing?

10

11 Larry Mauk: I'm not happy with Delaware North. Delaware North is in it for the money. Their mouth
12 says that they are here to tell a NASA story, I don't think they know what it is. Uh, I didn't vote for
13 Delaware North when they got the contract.

14

15 Moore: Who were you more in favor of?

16

17 Larry Mauk: I was more in favor of Bionetics, I thought their contract was better. Delaware North told
18 us coming in that they would never have, need a gate fee, as soon as they got the concession
19 agreement they started to campaign for an admission fee. So, no I don't have a lot of faith in their
20 credibility, I didn't at the time when I listened to their talks I ranked them right in there with any used
21 car salesman. But we don't get proposals from Delaware North, in fact Delaware North is the one
22 that says spin-offs are boring.

23

1 Moore: So this is Delaware North whose has the opposition to the spin-offs.

2

3 Larry Mauk: Yeah. Given their way they'll turn it into a theme park, pure and simple. Roller-
4 coasters, cupie dolls, the whole nine-yards, I'll guarantee it.

5

6 Moore: Is it going in that direction?

7

8 Larry Mauk: No. Not while I'm here.

9

10 Moore: Unfortunately for the center your, your time here by your own decision is. . .

11

12 Larry Mauk: Well.

13

14 Moore: . . . going to be ending at the end of this year. Will it change?

15

16 Larry Mauk: I think so. Delaware North is very good at lobbying. It's caused me a lot of problems –
17 we won't go into that.

18

19 Moore: Well, what, what, what, in what you can tell me. I mean how.

20

21 Larry Mauk: Let's just say they are very good at lobbying.

22

23 Moore: Where do you see the future for, for the facility then?

1

2 Larry Mauk: The Visitor complex. I think it's in trouble.

3

4 Moore: Although its attendance is going up but it's...

5

6 Larry Mauk: It's not going up.

7

8 Moore: So even though we looked at the charts that says there's nobody coming but

9 September 11th is that, that isn't the cause?

10

11 Larry Mauk: No. One thing Tex Johnson taught me was the value of tracking things on charts. Let's

12 see which one am I looking for, no, that one, percentage of increase/decrease from '98 to 2001, yeah

13 2001, we at thirty-three, minus thirty-three percent. The next one close to use is Animal Kingdom

14 which has been in trouble since the day it opened, they have eighteen percent.

15

16 Moore: You have attendance figures for Disney Parks?

17

18 Larry Mauk: Sure.

19

20 Moore: Where did you get these figures?

21

22 Larry Mauk: There is an organization up there that keeps track of all the theme parks.

23

1 Moore: Now these are external. Somebody else is doing some monitoring.

2

3 Larry Mauk: Yeah. So even in '98 to. . . , just in one year we've lost 22 people last year, 2000 to
4 2001. The closest one again is down here and that was after 9-11. This is the 9-11 figures here.
5 Epcot was the only one hit anywhere near close to that.

6

7 Moore: My goodness. How can they fix this?

8

9 Larry Mauk: Right there's the problem.

10

11 Moore: What are we looking at?

12

13 Larry Mauk: The last floor. Admission.

14

15 Moore: Are we talking about the cost?

16

17 Larry Mauk: We lost 25 to 30% of our people just by the admission.

18

19 Moore: Now the way it was previously was people could come through and if they wanted to
20 pay for the bus tour they paid for the bus tour, I-MAX they would pay for the I-MAX.

21

1 Larry Mauk: Right. But they could come out here and enjoy the day, buy all the food they wanted
2 and stuff and not pay anything. Now when they come up with the, we were told that they had to, we
3 had to give it an admission fee.

4

5 Moore: You were told this by Delaware North.

6

7 Larry Mauk: No. Delaware North can't tell me they have to have an admission fee that has to come
8 from somebody in NASA.

9

10 Moore: Okay.

11

12 Larry Mauk: When I was, we were told that in our office. We put together a proposal that says okay
13 what is palatable since we have to do it and we come up with a concept where people pay ten dollars
14 to get into the park and they do anything they want. At that time an I-MAX was seven-fifty and that
15 was the only thing in the park you paid for. So, it'd pay for one of, one of the I-MAX's and half of the
16 other one and then they could do anything in the park they wanted and then the tour which we had,
17 we knew 25 to 30 percent of our people did not take the tour. We had a variety of reasons of why we
18 knew they didn't. They didn't have time, they didn't want to take the tour, they just brought friends out
19 here and they work out here, they weren't about to pay fourteen dollars so the tour would have been
20 a fourteen dollar option. The figures we run on that based on the attendance that year we'd had to
21 lose 20 percent of our visitors bulk rate to lose any money. Delaware North did not buy that. They
22 wanted people to pay for their tour whether they took it or not. So yes I don't think Delaware North is
23 the best thing for our visitors. And yes, we lost that 25 to 30 percent. Now Delaware North disputes

1 that. They say they were never there that we didn't count right and somebody's buying into that but I
2 was here all along, I know how we counted it and I knew it was fairly accurate.

3

4 Moore: So this is coming from NASA side?

5

6 Larry Mauk: Yeah.

7

8 Moore: Somebody internally is saying that we need to...

9

10 Larry Mauk: Yeah, they got somebody's ear. Somebody thinks they do great, that they know what
11 they're doing but that's what caused it. And that's what's going to continue to cause it, we're pricing
12 our self right out of the market. The history of the Visitor Center is when they took over the prices
13 within the first three years even without the visitation doubled. The cost of food doubled. And the
14 value is not there. Think about it, if you're going to spend twenty seven dollars to get into some place
15 and you go out there and walk around what we have to offer and then you go over to Disney and say
16 I can spend twenty more dollars here and what do you have to offer for me for a full day for me and
17 my family – where are you going to go? Twenty bucks isn't that much. My concern is what we lost is
18 the people that can't afford either and they were my main concern because I grew up with nothing. I
19 know what it was like not to have the quarter to go a movie with the rest of the class, I usually took
20 that day off and that has always been a concern of mine is the people that the rest of the world refers
21 to as the have-nots. I was one. And, that's truthfully the ones we're trying to capture. My sister
22 teaches school in Pennsylvania where I grew up, 60 percent of her class and she did a poll, says that
23 they were going to do just like their parents and live on Welfare. I spent a lot of time going to art

1 school with a wife and two kids to get out of that Welfare society so, yeah I am very attuned to them
2 and that's the ones that I think we lost and that's the ones that hurt me the most.

3

4 Moore: That's a tragedy.

5

6 Larry Mauk: You know I think they could've afforded ten dollars, at least a lot of them. You know,
7 and they'd still had a good day. They may not have taken the tour but they'd had a, we could have
8 offered them a lot out there to learn about NASA but now we went to twenty-six, twenty-seven bucks.

9

10 Moore: That certainly would have been in keeping with Debus' original vision for the institution.

11

12 Larry Mauk: Yeah it would've. Debus was a, one of my idols. A lot of people didn't like him, I met
13 him a few times when I first came here. I worked under every Center Director that was had. Debus
14 was an interesting person and I think he had a good vision for that. Uh, I don't know if he was our
15 best Center Director, he was in a lot of respects, from the space point of view – yes, I think Debus
16 was the best. I tried everything.

17

18 Moore: Any other pieces of information that you can put in here that I haven't brought up.

19

20 Larry Mauk: Like what.

21

22 Moore: That's my question.

23

1 Larry Mauk: I actually talked too much already.

2

3 (Both laugh.)

4

5 Moore: I would hope though that I imagine if I have other questions that need come up that we
6 could get back together and go on. I also might if we could potentially go over to the Saturn V Center
7 and do a walk through with that with cameras so you can kind of talk about it. Is that possible too?

8

9 Larry Mauk: Sure.

10

11 Moore: Okay. I appreciate your time. You've given me two hours now and I certainly
12 appreciate it. Thank You.

13

14 Larry Mauk: I talked too much.