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SBMM NEW 5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN AND 2020 ANNUAL REPORT NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE: Part of the Museum's National Accreditation Process

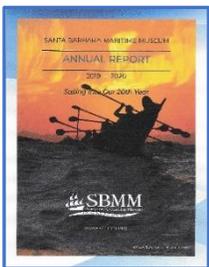
(Santa Barbara, CA. March 7, 2021) As part of a national accreditation process, Santa Barbara Maritime Museum (SBMM) staff, trustees and other stakeholders have completed two important documents that are now available for the public to read or download on the Museum's website—the 2019-2020 Annual Report and the 2021-2026 Strategic Plan. Members of the public are invited to read them and provide feedback.

“Those two documents together describe where the Museum has been, how far it has come, and where it is headed,” said Greg Gorga, SBMM Executive Director. “Part of that future, we hope, includes American Alliance of Museums (AAM) accreditation, which will mean that the Museum can provide more exciting programs and exhibits to the community.”

For the past three years, the Museum has been working toward AAM accreditation, and now is at the last step in that process, a site visit, which is anticipated to be held the week of March 8.

ABOUT THE 2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT

The Annual Report showcases SBMM's mission, the exhibits it has mounted, and the various programs that it sponsored—along with photographs-- over the past year, the impact of that work, and the Museum's community partnerships. In short, it describes and illustrates what SBMM has been doing, its history and accomplishments. 2020 was a year that began with great promise and celebration: the Museum's 20th birthday, its application for accreditation by the American Alliance of Museums, its designation as the Chamber of Commerce of the Santa Barbara Region's Non-profit of the Year, and the 164th anniversary of the First Order Fresnel Lens from Point Conception Lighthouse. Then, on March 13, SBMM's doors closed for the rest of 2020. Despite that closure and the Covid restrictions, much was accomplished, and the Museum invites members of the public to read all about it at: <https://sbmm.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Annual-Report-2019-2020.pdf>.



ABOUT THE 2021-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

The Strategic Plan is the result of a vigorous 6-month strategic planning process consisting of research, meetings, interviews, surveys (an impressive 153 respondents), and focus groups with key stakeholders and community members.

According to Don Barthelmess, President of SBMM's Board of Directors, “The plan is a dynamic roadmap that addresses our mission and vision of and its future direction. It will be critical to our

Board of Directors and committee infrastructure as we utilize this document to address resources, serve new audiences, and focus on American Alliance of Museums’ best practices.”

Goals for the next five years center around: visitor experience and museum visibility; fiscal sustainability; education; exhibits and collections; and public trust and accountability. The plan will also ensure that this evolving vision meets the current and future needs of the Museum’s audiences and the community, and that it defines critical elements used to identify and obtain the resources to fulfill this vision and achieve the goals. The plan is available at: <https://sbmm.org/strategic-plan/>



ABOUT AAM ACCREDITATION

Once the AAM site visit committee has reviewed the quality of SBMM’s exhibits, storage facilities, programs, governance, and management, AAM will determine whether SBMM can join the ranks of some of the most prominent museums in the United States, such as Colonial Williamsburg, the Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island, the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, the Santa Barbara Botanic Gardens, and the San Diego Museum of Art. Of 33,000 museums in the United States, only 1,069 are currently accredited.

“Having AAM accreditation takes SBMM to a higher level of organization and quality of programs and services as an accountable non-profit museum and provider of maritime education,” added Barthelmess. “This recognition also allows SBMM to apply for many grants, qualify for traveling exhibits from other accredited museums, and provide more exciting programs and exhibits to the community.”

According to the AAM’s website (<https://www.aam-us.org/>),

“As the ultimate mark of distinction in the museum field, accreditation signifies excellence and credibility to the entire museum community, to governments and outside agencies, and to the museum-going public. Developed and sustained by museum professionals for almost 50 years, the museum accreditation program is the field’s primary vehicle for quality assurance, self-regulation, and public accountability. Accreditation helps to ensure the integrity and accessibility of museum collections, reinforce the educational and public service roles of museums, and promote good governance practices and ethical behavior.”

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Since 2000, the [Santa Barbara Maritime Museum](#) has featured many artifacts and stories to share the history of the Santa Barbara Channel with more than 40,000 visitors annually, and it provides year-round experiential maritime history and marine science education for local youth. Featuring the impressive *First-Order Fresnel Lighthouse Lens* from Point Conception, SBMM's current exhibits explore *the History of Oil in Santa Barbara Channel & Chumash Use of Asphaltum*, the *Honda Disaster*, and *Wives and Daughters: Keepers of the Light*.

SBMM is located at the historic Santa Barbara Harbor at 113 Harbor Way, Suite 190, Santa Barbara, CA 93109. Visit sbmm.org or call (805) 962-8404 for details.