Background on the Museum expert visitors.

**Dr. Michael Mares** and **Mr. Peter Tirrell** from Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History (SNOMNH) visited LSU and prepared a report for us on the potential for a Louisiana Museum of Natural History at LSU as a unified, accredited, full service museum (research, teaching, displays, outreach). Our visitors are highly credentialed champions of university museums. In 2004, the American Association of Museums Accreditation Commission Chairman commended SNOMNH for its strategic planning as follows: "The commission commends the museum on its growth since the last review and on its strategic planning process, which we find could be a model for others", wrote Commission Chair Martin Sullivan in a letter congratulating SNOMNH on its accreditation, in its newly built facility.

Mares & Tirrell were at LSU on May 6, 7, & 8, 2009. This is the visit and report that Build-a-Museum Team has been proposing for years and is the follow-up to the Plan from LSU Office of Facility Development for a Museum location on campus.

Michael Mares has served as Chair of the American Association of Museums Accreditation Team for the American Museum of Natural History in New York, the Peabody Museum at Yale University, and the San Diego Museum of Natural History, and has served on the Commission for the Future of the Smithsonian Institution. He has been an LSU Chancellor's Distinguished Lecturer. He is President of the Natural Science Collections Alliance and President-elect of the 4000 member American Society of Mammalogists.

Peter Tirrell has served on the American Association of Museums Board of Directors and is a founding board member of the International Committee of University Museums and Collections, which is a new subcommittee of the International Council on Museums.

"the SNOMNH is THE outstanding RECENT example of a university getting its act together to produce a ‘unified, full service natural history museum’. It has certainly come the farthest in the shortest period of time, and I can only hope that our efforts here at the TMM(Texas Memorial Museum on the UT Austin campus) will come to fruition as have those of Mike Mares’ (the Director) and the rest of the folks who have helped build SNOMNH. I can think of no other modern natural history museum, free-standing or university, that was an assemblage of collections in greatly substandard housing scattered about a university just a decade ago."

*Dr. Edward C. Theriot, Director, Texas Memorial Museum of Science and History and Jane and Roland Blumberg Centennial Professor of Molecular Evolution, The University of Texas at Austin, June, 2002 (emphasis is his).*