

# Life

SECTION G | SUNDAY, FEB. 29, 2004

BROOKHAVEN EDITION

FEBRUARY 29

Newsday

## Their hearts leap a beat

Getting a gig on Leap Day is a natural for a music group with a name like Somewhere in Time.

That was the idea, in fact, when Wendy Donohue, special events coordinator for the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum in Centerport, booked the five-man doo-wop group for the museum's fund-raising dinner on Sunday, Feb. 29.

"Music from the '50s is so romantic," said Donohue.

In fact, singing under the stars at the Vanderbilt Planetarium is almost too good a fit for Doug Rodriguez of Sound Beach: The retired Port Author-

ity cop grew up singing under real stars on Bronx streetcorners with his neighborhood group, The Celebrities.

"We would sing about the moon and stars, and the words were easy and in the context of love," said Rodriguez, 61.

That's how he still does things now, only he's doing it in a capella harmony with different friends: Lou Valentino, Douglas Wells and Dennis Colichio, all of East Patchogue, and George De Matteis, of Coram.

It's not just nostalgic, said Valentino, 58, it's romantic. Even the group's name is taken from a romantic film.

"The day is also Sadie Hawkins Day, and I'm hoping we might have a young lady who might want to propose to a gentleman that night" in keeping with the day's girl-gets-guy tradition, added Donohue.

That would make for the kind of romantic conclusion Rodriguez knows well: His wife, Vilma, became his sweetheart, he said, while following his group from one venue to the next in the city. That was 39 years ago.

So there could be magic again somewhere in time this weekend, said Donohue. That is, if it's in the Centerport stars.



**THE DOO-WOP GROUP** Somewhere in Time rehearses for this weekend's fund-raiser for the Vanderbilt Museum in Centerport. Dennis Colichio, left, Douglas Wells, Lou Valentino, Doug Rodriguez and George De Matteis have been singing together since 1992.

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