



**Brief Biographies of Proposed AHS Officers  
and  
Members of the Board of Directors**

**2022-2023**

**OFFICERS**

**Cathy Hix: President**

Cathy joined the AHS Board in 2016 and is returning for another term as President. She is an Arlington native who was raised and educated in the county. She spent 39 years as an educator in Arlington Public Schools, serving as a social studies teacher, a social studies specialist, and finally, as the K-12 Supervisor of Social Studies. Cathy has done extensive work in curriculum development and since her retirement in 2018, has worked as an educational consultant for the Virginia Department of Education. During her tenure as President, Cathy has made several presentations on Arlington history and has served on both the WWI and Centennial County Working Groups.

**David Pearson: Vice President**

David is returning to the Board for another term, his first as Vice President. He is a lifelong Arlingtonian and fondly remembers visiting the Arlington Historical Museum growing up. He attended the University of William & Mary, worked as an accountant, and attended the University of Virginia School of Law. He is a Managing Director in the legal department of The Carlyle Group. David is an Eagle Scout and his past volunteer activities include serving as the Cubmaster for Cub Scout Pack 149, volunteering on the troop committee of Boy Scout Troop 149, coaching soccer and T-ball teams, and serving as a director of America Scores, a national organization providing after school activities in inner-city middle schools. David currently serves as the Docent Coordinator for the Arlington Historical Museum, where he is a docent.

**Sean Denniston: Secretary**

Sean is returning to the Board for his third term as Secretary. He is originally from Boston but has been a Crystal City resident since 2007. Sean is a project manager at the Federal Aviation Administration. He has a bachelor's degree from Williams College and a master's degree from Oxford University both in history and a law degree from Boston College. Sean is a docent and all-around volunteer for the Arlington Historical Museum.

**John Tuohy: Treasurer**

John is returning for another term as Treasurer. He is a Certified Public Accountant and long-time resident of Arlington. He has served as Treasurer of the Warren G. Stambaugh Foundation, CrisisLink, and the Arlington Red Cross. He also is a Union reenactor with the 28th Massachusetts Company B Civil War reenactment unit.

## DIRECTORS

### **Catherine Aselford**

This is first term on the Board. A D.C. native who moved to Arlington in 1998, Catherine Aselford began her theatre career performing in *Bus Stop* at the Source, graduating with a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Catholic University two years later. She has directed or produced at least one Capital Fringe Festival show each year from 2006-2018. As an arts administrator, Catherine has served as Executive Director, Development Manager, and Education Manager at several arts and education non-profits in the Washington, D.C. area. Her community service includes recruiting, training, and coordinating dozens of volunteers to raise money for the homeless through *Taste of Georgetown*; serving on the Arlington Public Schools Advisory Committee on Curriculum; serving on the Board of The Actors' Center and managing their Saturday Morning Workshop Series; serving on the Board of Artomatic; serving on the Arlington Commission for the Arts; and volunteering with school and youth groups in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia.

### **Annette Benbow**

Annette is returning to the Board for another term. She retired in 2020 after 35 years of service in the Central Intelligence Agency where she was an analyst and then a Lead Inspector in the Office of the Inspector General. She has served as the Chair of AHS's Ball-Sellers House Committee since 2012, is on the AHS Events Committee and the Museum Committee, and heads the AHS social media team. She has lived in Arlington briefly but has worshiped in the county for more than 35 years. She has a bachelor's degree in history from the University of New Hampshire.

### **Charles Clark**

Charlie is returning to the Board for another term. A retired journalist, Charlie has just published *Lost Arlington County*, a book of nostalgia and preservation. He also recently released the first full biography of George Washington Parke Custis, an under-sung "child of Mount Vernon," with McFarland Books. A native of Arlington, he continues to write the weekly "Our Man in Arlington" column for the *Falls Church News-Press*. He has written two other books on Arlington history: *Arlington County Chronicles*, and *The Hidden History of Arlington County*, also published by The History Press. In July 2019, he retired as senior correspondent for Government Executive Media Group, part of Atlantic Media. He previously worked as an editor or writer for *The Washington Post*, *Congressional Quarterly*, *National Journal*, Time-Life Books, Tax Analysts and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges. He lives in Arlington with his wife Ellen.

### **Tom Dickinson**

Tom is returning to the Board for another term. He is active in historic preservation in the County and elsewhere. He established and leads an online local preservation advocacy organization named "Save Historic Arlington." He created a photo exhibition on the transformation of early Arlington houses and maintains an expanding collection of over 7,000 images of old Arlington, many of which can be seen on his website [VanishingAmerica.com](http://VanishingAmerica.com). He served on the Arlington-Jamestown 400th Anniversary Commemoration Committee, the Centennial of Military Aviation Committee, and the Arlington Civil War Sesquicentennial Commemoration Committee. He owns and preserves a unique 1885 National Trust Register tobacco warehouse. He is a retired Department of Defense with 33 years at the Pentagon. Tom holds a bachelor's degree in US history from Beloit College. He has been a member of AHS since 1981. He volunteers as a docent at the Arlington Historical Museum.

### **Patrick Hope**

Patrick is returning to the Board for another term. He is a member of the Virginia General Assembly as the Delegate from the 47th District and was re-elected for his seventh term in 2021. A 23-year Arlington resident, Patrick is a health care attorney. He has been involved in numerous community activities and was the founding president of the Buckingham Community Civic Association. He is also active in several Arlington organizations and has been a member of the Arlington Historical Society since 2015.

### **Tracy Hopkins**

Tracy is returning to the Board for another term. She has been membership coordinator for AHS and a Ball-Sellers House docent since 2015. She and her husband, and two almost-grown children have lived in Arlington from more than 25 years. She is retired from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Tracy's other volunteer efforts have included serving as a PTA treasurer and Lyon Park Community Center Board member, and volunteering with the Women's Memorial at Arlington Cemetery. Tracy is a US Navy veteran who graduated from Vanderbilt University as a chemical engineer and earned a master's degree in science in environmental engineering from Stanford University.

### **Jessica Kaplan**

Jessica is returning to the Board for another term. She is a retired archivist and has been a freelance historical researcher for more than 20 years. A longtime resident of Arlington, Jessica researches and writes about Arlington history for the Arlington Historical Magazine, including "The Bottom: An African-American Enclave Rediscovered," and "I Was a Union Man': James and Lewis Marcey's Civil War Experience." She serves as editor of the AHS publication, *Arlington Historical Magazine* and is co-director of the project, Memorializing the Enslaved in Arlington.

### **Sandy Newton**

This is Sandy's first term on the Board. As a military wife Sandy has lived in many places and history has been part of that journey. While in Minnesota she worked as a guide in the State Capitol and at the James J. Hill House. She has been in Arlington since 1982. Since then, she has worked at Mount Vernon for 32 years as a guide, farm supervisor, and character interpreter. As Secretary to the Director and Board she was fortunate to touch all areas of Mount Vernon and continues to volunteer at events. Sandy has a degree in textiles and was a curator at the Hillwood Museum where she catalogued and identified the lace collection. Sandy was President of the Arlington Civic Federation where she was fortunate to work with the many associations that make up the county. She is a spinner and weaver and volunteers at both AHS museums. If you come to Arlington Cemetery, you might find her in the vegetable garden fending off the deer where she volunteers as a gardener in the site's Friends of Urban Agriculture vegetable garden.

### **Michael Schaffner**

Michael is returning to the Board for another term. He is a long-time resident of Arlington, a retired federal employee, an avid amateur historian, and a reenactor in Company B, 54th Massachusetts (the "Glory" regiment). He was keynote speaker at the rededication of Fort Ethan Allen in 2014, has given presentations to Civil War Round Tables, the Museum of Civil War Medicine, and Arlington Sesquicentennial Committee, and has conducted battlefield tours for military personnel from the Embassy of Canada. Michael is also a writer and his publications include the novel *War Boys*, a poetry collection titled *The Good Opinion of Squirrels*, and articles in several journals including *ArLiJo*, *Poetry Wales*, *Poetry Ireland*, *The Tulane Review*, and *Boston Poetry*. He is currently spending a lot of time in the regimental books of the Second United States Colored Infantry, organized in Arlington over the summer and fall of 1863, and hopes to complete a history of the regiment.

### **Dale Smith**

This is Dale's first term on the Board. Dale is a retired veteran of the US Fire Service and served over 31 years in the Arlington County Fire Department. He is a second-generation fire fighter who followed in his father's footsteps and started his career assigned to the historic Fire Station 8 in Halls Hill/High View Park. Dale broke barriers, rising through the ranks to become the first African American in the ACFD to be promoted to the Chief Officer ranks. He has received numerous awards during his career including the Valor Award. On September 11, 2001, he served as the Interior Incident Commander in the "Inner Core" during the Pentagon Terror Attacks. Dale is a long time Arlingtonian. He attended Glebe Elementary School when it first opened. His three sons are all graduates of Yorktown High School. Although retired, Dale continues to mentor and counsel firefighters throughout the country.