



Brief Biographies of Nominated AHS Officers for 2023-2024

OFFICERS

President: David Pearson

David is returning to the Board for another term, his first as President. He is a lifelong Arlingtonian and fondly remembers visiting the Arlington Historical Museum growing up. He attended the University of William and Mary, then worked as an accountant before attending the University of Virginia School of Law. He recently retired as a Partner and 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.

Vice President: Sean Denniston

Sean is returning to the board for another term, his first as Vice-President. He has been the AHS Secretary for the past three years. Sean has been researching 1920s Arlington and wrote the definitive analysis of the impact of the legal case where Clarendon sought to secede from Arlington County in 1920. He has been researching the history of the area now known as National Landing (Potomac Yard, Crystal City, Pentagon City). He enjoys speaking to local organizations and community groups and anyone with pictures, memories, or artifacts of National Landing and Arlington in the "Roaring Twenties." He serves on the AHS Events Committee and the Museum Committee and is also a docent at the Arlington Historical Museum. Originally from Boston, Sean has been a Crystal City resident since 2007. 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.

Treasurer: John Tuohy

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

Secretary: Sandy Newton

Sandy is returning to the Board for another term, her first as Secretary. 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 worked 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 House at Arlington National 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.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Catherine Aselford

Catherine is returning to the Board for another term. 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. Catherine has served as the Chair of the AHS Fundraising Committee.

Annette Benbow

Annette is returning to the Board for another term. She has served as the Chair of AHS's Ball-Sellers House Committee since 2012, currently heads the AHS Events Committee and the AHS social media team, and she is on the Museum Committee. In 2014, she wrote for the *Arlington Historical Magazine* and has presented Arlington historical topics to a wide variety of Arlington audiences. She is a docent at both the Arlington Historical Museum and the Ball-Sellers House. She retired in 2020 after 35 years of service in the Central Intelligence Agency where she was a political and security analyst and then managed inspections in the Office of the Inspector General. She 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 published six books. The most recent "Life and Times of the *Falls Church News-Press*" will be out this fall (2023). A native of Arlington, he writes the weekly "Our Man in Arlington" column for the *Falls Church News-Press*. He has also published other books about Arlington history, including "[Lost Arlington County](#)," "[Arlington County Chronicles](#)," and "[Hidden History of Arlington County](#)." He is also the author of the [first full biography of George Washington Parke Custis](#). Charlie currently heads the AHS Preservation Committee and in 2022 he spearheaded the AHS [Preservation Education Program](#) for homeowners, homebuilders, and real estate agents. In July 2019, he retired as senior correspondent for Government Executive Media Group, part of Atlantic Media. He previously worked as an editor and 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.

Cathy Hix

Cathy joined the Board in 2016 and served as the President for the past five years. During her tenure as president, Cathy frequently spoke to the community about Arlington's history and the need to preserve and share our diverse history with all. She was asked to represent AHS in the community, including serving on Arlington County's World War I Commemorative Task Force and the Centennial of Arlington's Naming Committee. For the past three years, she has led the AHS committee tasked to preserve and renovate the Arlington Historical Museum. Cathy retired in 2019 after serving for 39 years as an educator to Arlington's public schools, first as a social studies teacher, then a social studies specialist, and finally as the K-12 Supervisor of Social Studies. Cathy has done extensive work in curriculum development and has worked as an

educational consultant for the Virginia Department of Education. She is an Arlington native who was raised and educated in the county.

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 1st District in Arlington and was re-elected for his seventh term in 2021. He has served on the AHS Events Committee. A 25-year Arlington resident, Patrick is a health care attorney who works in the medical device industry. 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.

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. She serves as editor of the AHS publication, *Arlington Historical Magazine* and is co-director of the project, Memorializing the Enslaved in Arlington. She is also a Master Gardener and headed up research on methods used by colonial Virginians in their kitchen gardens. This research is being applied to the Ball-Sellers House's Plot Against Hunger in partnership with the Friends of Urban Agriculture. A longtime resident of Arlington, Jessica has researched and written about Arlington history for the *Arlington Historical Magazine*, including "[The Bottom: An African-American Enclave Rediscovered,](#)" "[I Was a Union Man: James and Lewis Marcey's Civil War Experience,](#)" and "[People of the Book: Jewish Arlington, 1900-1940.](#)"

Richard Samp

This is Rich's first term on the Board. He has lived in Arlington for 37 years and has had a long-time interest in local history. In 2020, he authored an article titled: "[Arlington's Battle to Integrate Private Schools](#)" for the *Arlington Historical Magazine* that focused on a legal challenge to a racially segregated Arlington pre-school and led to a 1976 Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation in private schools. [He later presented this case at an AHS free monthly lecture.](#) Rich is a semi-retired attorney who specializes in appellate litigation. He was recently appointed to a three-year term on Arlington's Electoral Board. His many community activities in Arlington have included service on the Community Services Board and the School Board's Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee and he is Chair of the County's Substance Abuse Committee.

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 the keynote speaker at the rededication of Arlington's 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. In 2020, he hosted a panel discussion for one of the AHS monthly free lectures with [fellow reenactors in the 54th, Edward W. Gantt and Ben Hawley.](#) He has also spoken to an AHS audience about the rigors of Civil War red tape. Michael is also an author 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 publish a history of the regiment.

Annette Scherber

This is Annette's first term on the Board. Annette is a historian and archivist and has a Bachelor of Arts degree in history from the University of Northern Iowa and a Master of Arts in public history from Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis, where she specialized in environmental and women's history. She has worked for a variety of federal, state, and local government, non-profit, and corporate libraries, archives, museums, and historical institutions. She serves as a docent at the Arlington Historical Museum, conducts research for the [Memorializing the Enslaved in Arlington](#) project, catalogues the historical society's artifacts, and she recently wrote an article about the [desegregation of Arlington's parks](#) for the *Arlington Historical Magazine*. An Iowa native, Annette moved to Arlington from the Midwest in 2019.

Dale Smith

Dale is returning to the Board for another term. He is a veteran of the US Fire Service, serving more than 31 years with the Arlington County Fire Department (ACFD). 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. Like the men before him Dale broke barriers. He rose through the ranks to become the first African American in the ACFD to be promoted to the Chief Officer ranks. Dale received numerous awards over his career including the Valor Award. On September 11, 2001, Dale served as the Interior Incident Commander in the "Inner Core" during the Pentagon Terror Attacks. Dale is featured in two books written about the Pentagon Terror Attacks, "Pentagon 911" and "Firefight: Inside the Battle to Save the Pentagon on 911." Dale is a long time Arlingtonian. He attended Glebe Elementary School when it first opened. Now retired, Dale has stayed actively involved in the fire service by mentoring and counseling other firefighters throughout the United States.

Martin Suydam

This is Marty's first term on the Board. He is a long-time resident of Arlington. Now retired, he has had careers in government (Army, Defense, Navy), industry (General Dynamics, ALCOA, JJMA, BMY, Burke Industries), consulting (FOCUS Consulting, FOCUS Marketing), and teaching (Colorado School of Mines, George Mason University, Washington College, and Marymount University). IN He teaches the several courses for the Arlington County Encore including "Writing a Memoir," "Walk Four Mile Run," and "Walks with Charley." His published books on local history are: "[Walks with Charley](#)," "Building Memories," and "[Walk Four Mile Run](#)," In 2016, he penned an article for the *Arlington Historical Magazine* titled "[From Trolley Park to Sewage Treatment: Luna Park](#)." He spoke to an AHS public event in 2021 about the Frazer family of Green Valley.

Peter Vaselopulos

This is Peter's first term on the Board. He retired from the federal government as Deputy Chief Information Officer at the United States Agency for Global Media (USAGM). He served 35 years at USAGM where he worked as a broadcast journalist, international television producer, and new media and information technology specialist. He is currently a board member of the Alliance to Preserve the Civil War Defenses of Washington, D.C., and former President of the 3rd US Infantry Reenactors, and was a member of Arlington County's Civil War Sesquicentennial Committee. Peter recently completed a master's certificate in Digital Humanities from George Mason University and is working on a digital history project called "[Mapping the Civil War in Arlington](#)." The project's goal is to generate a greater awareness of Arlington's military history during the Civil War. He is a graduate of George Washington University and American University, with Masters degrees in both Managing Information Systems and International Communications. He also teaches history courses for Arlington's Encore adult education program and is a Civil War reenactor. Peter is very interested in the backend systems that support online historical collections and the impact that they are having on the future of teaching history. In particular, he is tracking AI and machine learning, and is fascinated to see what role these technologies will play in promoting public history and the humanities. Peter and his wife, Virginia, are 43-year residents of Arlington County.