Strategic Plan
2015-2020
2019 Update
This quote accurately reflects the theme of CCHS’ 2015-2020 Strategic Plan. Our plan strategically addresses important goals, objectives and tasks over the next few years which are critical to the Society’s long term success. Another theme of the Strategic Plan is transparency. Our membership, history and arts communities, elected officials, sponsors and citizens of Cumberland County should know what we do well but also how we can improve. This document is intentionally designed to be studied, changed and even expanded upon over the coming months and years. Embedded in the Plan, readers will note significant initiatives and benchmarks worthy of expanding upon here:

**Vale-Himes Pocket Park**
This included the demolition of the Society’s 5 North Pitt Street property and saw the installation of a community-oriented pocket-park on the site’s footprint in 2018. We set a $250,000 goal to complete this project and surpassed the goal. A bigger campaign, to launch around 2020, will focus on storage expansion and how best to utilize CCHS’ building on High Street.

**Public opening and development of our new High Street History Workshop.**
Thanks to the generous support of the George B. Stuart Foundation, in tandem with grant funds from the Cumberland County Housing and Redevelopment Authorities, the Society opened its new educational space adjacent to History on
High the Shop. Designed for children of all ages, the History Workshop will provide hands-on history experiences throughout the year.

Development of CCHS research and publications in the digital age.

CCHS cares for nationally significant collections, archival and photographic materials, and bound-published historical content. Yet, altogether, these resources remain relatively untapped in the digital age. While we continue to strengthen the Society’s journal and other means for advancing traditional scholarship, the new CCHS website, the Gardner Digital Library website and a renewed focus on social media will enable us to reach out in ways we never thought possible. Patrons will note increased access to collections online in the coming months and years. One example is the Carlisle Indian School focused subdomain: https://carlisleindian.historicalsociety.com, launched in 2018.

Financial viability and sustainability.

Endowment growth, an important element of the Access to History Plan, continues to be a pressing issue, as does the establishment of a CCHS Historic Properties Maintenance Fund. The completion of our Sponsorship Opportunities brochure is an important focus moving forward. Also, creating better ways to acknowledge giving will play a vital role in strengthening the Society’s financial outlook.

For-purpose, mission-driven activities.

In everything we do, mission is key. As we look to develop the interpretation of sites, collections and stories we will be true to our mission “to collect, preserve, interpret and promote research and education about the history of Cumberland County, Pennsylvania.” This means that a concerted push to expand outreach county-wide is a hallmark of the new Strategic Plan. Our county-themed bus tours, preservation activities, Carlisle Journeys conference, publications, lectures and exhibits all contribute to connecting patrons to CCHS’ mission.

Continued emphasis on people and their stories.

The mission of the Cumberland County Historical Society is strengthened by our remembrance of people through history. Every day, dedicated staff, volunteers, members, and patrons diligently work to carry on the stories and memories of those who went before us. Our new call to action of “collecting, engaging, sharing stories” is a constant reminder that history does strengthen communities and bring people together for diverse avenues of service to others. Every object, piece of paper, photograph, building and landscape has a unique story to tell, but only when their makers’ story is shared in a meaningful way.
Collections Storage.

Over the past several years, CCHS alleviated some of its most pressing storage challenges by reevaluating collections space at the Society. Yet, more climate-controlled space will become a necessity in the future. There may come a time when multiple institutions come together to collectively partner to care for our county’s vast material culture. Creativity and collaboration will allow us to explore unique strategies for collections storage in a sustainable, expandable way.

Accreditation.

According to recent statistics provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services there are approximately 35,000 museums in the United States. Included in this number are historical societies like CCHS. Just over 1000 (of the 35K) are accredited through the American Alliance of Museums. Accreditation, in a nutshell, is a rigorous process by which institutions are compelled to meet standards and best practices in the field across all departments. The process results in a mark of distinction among peers in the history and arts sector. Over the next several years CCHS will strive to position the Cumberland County Historical Society to secure Accreditation and make an application by at least 2020.

Vision Statement.

Our mission articulates what we do. Our vision helps us understand the “why” behind our mission and where we are going. The Cumberland County Historical Society’s vision “is to become a national model for demonstrating how history, story-telling, material culture and preservation promotes social well-being, service and citizen engagement with local resources.” CCHS is strong thanks to stalwart supporters over the years and a tremendous staff, board and volunteer-core. We are poised to become a “national model” for similar organizations to look to as our newly developed vision statement attests. Unified action, and a thorough understanding of how each strategy and task pushes us forward, will help us realize this vision.

We appreciate every effort you give to help preserve and promote Cumberland County’s unique history. Your ongoing support will ensure the success of this and future plans.
Goal 1
Serve as a county-wide and regional leader in history, education and preservation

Objective 1A
Establish formal partnerships with county history & arts agencies

Objective 1B
Create robust program with re-granting & resource-sharing capacity

Objective 1C
Define CCHS' historic preservation presence in the county

Objective 1D
Promote the Society's brand in traditional and social media outlets

Mission
The mission of the CCHS is to collect, preserve, interpret and promote research and education about the history of Cumberland County, Pennsylvania.

Vision
Our vision is to become a national model for demonstrating how history, story-telling, material culture and preservation promotes social well-being, service and citizen engagement with local resources.

Strategies/Tasks (1)
✓ Begin formal meetings with history and arts organizations in county
✓ Establish income stream or budget line item for (re)grants - create granting policy & procedures
✓ Creation of new CCHS website & blog
✓ Continue event-based partnerships with county entities
• Join Mechanicsburg, Shippensburg & West Shore Chambers of Commerce
✓ Expand register of historic places program and fully implement SMP preservation grant initiative
✓ Develop themed county-wide bus tours and 1 preservation oriented CCHS fundraising tour
• Development of Board approved Community Outreach Plan
✓ Create social media policy & procedures in Community Outreach Plan appendix
✓ Complete historical topics speaker list on website and promote use as an outreach resource
✓ Formalize History POPS! outreach with local history groups
✓ Formalize Preservation Roundtable activities
✓ Initiate Annual Dinner rotation schedule
• Create visitor/participant surveys & feedback mechanisms to encourage engagement, foster constructive public dialogue & strengthen outreach
• Revamp e-newsletter format & content
• Complete Phase 4 of PHC Heart & Soul Initiative
Objective 2A
Market the power of story to increase visitorship and membership

Objective 2B
Establish new education space on High Street

Objective 2C
Promote county-wide history and heritage tourism

Objective 2D
Increase access to library and photograph resources & strengthen publications & research methods

Objective 2E
Fully align HOH operations to promote mission and vision

Goal 2
Actively encourage the community and world to engage with our collections, research and programming

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Strategies/Tasks (2)

- Finish Interpretive Plan for TMH, Museum, and History on High - The Shop
- Formalize History Workshop programming
- Launch Gardner Digital Library project
- Set new benchmarks and budgets for McLain Festival, Carlisle Journeys and Golf Tournament
- Create Gardner Digital Library spotlight exhibit
- Host 1 Cumberland Pathways family history forum/conference by 2020
- Develop Acquisitions plan and grow acquisitions fund
- Increase HOH merchandise diversity and encourage themes harmonious with mission
- Create draft of CCHS records management policy with Board of Trustees approval
- Develop more efficient HOH volunteer schedule
- Create Amazon store account for publication sales
- Develop online Society collections access plan
- Join Museum Store Association
- Increase self-publishing and in-house printing including in-house journal publication
- Increase, track, & promote community storytelling (outreach and Heart & Soul Initiative)
- Make preparations in anticipation of CCHS's 150th anniversary in 2024, including possible publication related to society history
- Create online resource of significant CC collections amongst local organizations
- Create traveling exhibit of CC collections
- Open History Workshop
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Goal 3
Establish a vibrant workplace and expand personnel capacity

Objective 3A
Improve and optimize personnel duties and assignments

Objective 3B
Enhance Volunteer, Intern, Work Study, Staff communication and efficiency

Objective 3C
Optimize transparency & increase orientation towards mission and vision

Objective 3D
Streamline committee functions and roles

Objective 3E
Balance compensation packages and maximize various benefit opportunities for eligible staff

Strategies/Tasks (3)
✓ Implement Executive Committee approved Personnel and Department Structure Plan
  • Design new ed/museum “docent” combo program
  • Host at least 2 mandatory workshops for staff per year focused on historic interpretation, skills, development, vision, or engagement
✓ Install new CCHS phone system
✓ Finish visitor services procedures manual
✓ Establish rotating schedule and program for Todd Hall cases
✓ Begin quarterly staff planning meetings
✓ Streamline staff reporting & evaluations
✓ Establish IT contract for routine maintenance
✓ Executive committee to realign or consolidate current committees and responsibilities
  • Create staff and board professional development schedule- i.e. conf. attendance
  • Establish volunteer orientation & cross-training procedures
✓ Review and revamp salaried positions’ flex time policy
  • Set up viable retirement options for full-time staff
✓ Establish Community Outreach department
  • Hire part-time marketing and development assistant in Community Outreach department
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Goal 4
Prepare for a sustainable and dynamic future

Objective 4A
Increase endowment and establish growth benchmarks
90%

Objective 4B
Maintain high standards in accounting and bookkeeping
90%

Objective 4C
Increase staff participation in development, fundraising and budgeting
80%

Objective 4D
Secure Accreditation from the American Alliance of Museums

Strategies/Tasks (4)
✓ Complete design and marketing materials for planned giving & endowment
✓ Finish organizing appeal contacts into POS system
✓ Create Sponsorship Opportunities brochure
✓ Implement merit & COLA pay increase tracking forms
✓ AAM Pledge
  • Core Documents Verification
✓ Review/Update Library and Museum CMPs
✓ Complete comprehensive emergency plan
✓ Assign staff and volunteer roles and responsibilities for Accreditation
✓ Create CCHS Historic Properties Maintenance Fund
✓ Streamline membership outreach, renewal timing, and member program/benefits
✓ Set new endowment fund goal of $5.5 million
✓ Define and streamline CCHS’s special project and legacy fund accounts
**Goal 5**

Improve physical spaces to enhance visitors’ experience

**Mission**

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**Strategies/Tasks (5)**

- **Objective 5A**
  - Complete 5 Pitt demo and park installment

- **Objective 5B**
  - Optimize use of Two Mile House for programming and education

- **Objective 5C**
  - Strengthen visitor flow and interrelationship between all CCHS buildings

- **Objective 5D**
  - Implement enhanced green practices in all facilities

- Draft green-practices policy and procedures document
- Finish marketing wrap for Society bus
- Institute member, staff, volunteer buildings swipe card system for tracking and security
- New awning installed & redesigned portico at 21 N. Pitt Entrance
- Todd Hall flooring engineering study
- Complete “History Lounge” project (for staff, volunteers, and patrons)
- History on High Shop remodel feasibility study
- Create rental policy for pocket park use and maintenance procedures

Visit 50% of CCHS buildings

- 40%
- 90%
- 80%
- 60%
- 100%

- 60%
- 70%
- 30%
- 45%
- 30%
A Sustainable & Dynamic Future

Goal 4 of the Cumberland County Historical Society’s Strategic Plan calls for CCHS to “prepare for a sustainable and dynamic future.”

In 2018, the Society’s Development Committee and Board of Trustees agreed to examine the feasibility of raising the Society endowment fund from 3 million to 5.5 million, the specific amount needed for interest distributions to cover CCHS’ operating budget and position the Society for long-term financial sustainability.

The Development Committee also worked tirelessly to streamline and enhance CCHS’ special project & legacy fund accounts to communicate to donors and supporters our current needs and priorities. Planned giving is critical to the Society’s success and is a straightforward way for our supporters to choose their own giving interests. Funds designated for endowment are automatically deposited into the endowment account.

Furthermore, donations given for specific funds are also deposited into their respective designated special account(s). Appreciated stock gifts are welcome too and CCHS can facilitate the sale and deposit for Society designated accounts. In 2019 the Board of Trustees and Development Committee secured professional master planning services to formulate plans for the CCHS campus.
**Vale-Himes Park Campaign**

**Goals 2015–2018**

1. Demolish the 5 N. Pitt Street apartment building.
2. Install pocket-park, with HARB-approved decorative railing, on 5 N. Pitt Street footprint.
3. Complete lining and seal coating for entire CCHS lot.
4. Increase endowment through pocket park naming opportunity.
5. Install directional signage on entire campus including signage along Pitt Street and Dickinson Avenue to help direct visitors to CCHS parking and building access.

**Master Plan 2020 & Beyond**

1. Collections storage expansion analysis.
2. High Street building accessibility upgrades and interpretation.
3. Increase campus visibility
4. Upgrade technology
5. Finalize staffing plan
6. Enhance campus connectivity
7. Analyze strategic growth
8. Make programmatic and marketing preparations for CCHS’ 150th anniversary in 2024.
9. Grow the endowment fund.
And finally, once again ...

Our thanks.

We cannot say it enough. We are in awe of what our group of members and supporters has done in just the past few years: the pocket park, the museum renovation, digital initiatives (and all the behind the scenes tech & tech support to make it happen), and fantastic new collections. These are just some of the highlights that you have made possible. The Cumberland County Historical Society is outstanding among its peers and it’s the thriving, welcoming, engaged membership and volunteer base that makes that happen. Let’s keep moving forward together.

The Walnut Bottom Sesqui-Centennial in 1969. In front are Mark Goodhart and Casey Jones.

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CCHS Committees

Executive Committee – Chair, Ginny Mowery
Finance Committee – Chair, Tom Coolidge
Archives & Library Committee – Chair, Kate Theimer
Museum Committee – Chair, Pat Ferris
Community Outreach Committee – Chair, Linda Humes
Historic Properties Committee – Chair, David Smith
Publications Committee – Chair, David Smith
Education Committee – Chair, E. K. Weitzel
Nominating Committee – Chair, Tita Eberly
Development Committee – Chair, Ann Hoffer
Carlisle Journeys Conference Committee – Chair, Barb Landis
Awards & Scholarship Committee – Chair, Bob Grochalski
McLain Festival Committee – Chair, Lindsay Varner
Whiskey Rebellion Festival Committee – Chair, Lindsay Varner
Preservation Roundtable Steering Committee – Chair, Lindsay Varner
Golf Tournament Committee – Chair, Paul Hoch
Two Mile House – Trustee, Ann Hoffer
Front Cover:
Possibly the DeSanno family.