

## **2023 Board of Trustees Biographies**

**(President) Carmen James** was born in Carlisle and raised in Mount Holly Springs, PA. After beginning her banking career in Philadelphia, PA as a teller in 1972, she retired in 2005 with the corporate title of Senior Vice President. After returning to Mt. Holly Springs, Carmen and her husband, Edward, built their retirement home next to the home she grew up in. This Redmond family home was purchased in 1951 and built c. 1878 and was listed on the Cumberland County Register of Historic Places in 2018. Carmen loves working in her yard and her flower gardens. She is a very active member of the Mt. Tabor Preservation Project, having attended Mt. Tabor church as a child. The seven (7) USCT veterans buried within the Mt. Tabor cemetery are a proud part of the Preservation Project. Carmen is also a Board member of the Amelia S. Givin Library.

**(Vice President) Pat Ferris** is a Chicago native who adopted Cumberland County as her home 30 years ago. She moved to Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania for business purposes, and worked in human resource and marketing for that business. She really learned to appreciate her adopted surroundings, though, through Irwin Richman's American Studies Master's program at Penn State. This study led her to the very fine Cumberland County Historical Society, and she is still learning every day from this wonderful organization. Pat is currently on the Harrisburg Symphony Association board serving on the Personnel and Education committees. She is president of the Mechanicsburg Area Community Fund Advisory Committee, and is an elder on Session for Silver Spring Presbyterian Church. Pat previously served for six years on the Board of CCHS as the chair of the museum committee, and is honored to be asked again to serve on the Board.

**(Secretary) Tom Coolidge** is a lifelong resident of Cumberland County. Today, he is pipeline and gas utility industry solutions manager at Esri, Inc., the world's leading provider of geographic information system software. Prior to joining Esri, Tom for more than 26 years played key leadership and management roles at Stoner Associates and its successor business units. In his community, Tom is a former chair and member of the Partnership for Better Health (the former Carlisle Area Health and Wellness Foundation), former president and board member of the Carlisle Area School District, former president and board member of the YMCA of Carlisle, former secretary and board member of Carlisle Hospital and Health Services, former secretary and board member of Cumberland Crossings Retirement Community, former chair and member of the Borough of Carlisle Zoning Hearing Board, former member of Session and Trustees of Second Presbyterian Church, and member or participant in numerous other community activities. Tom graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Public Communications degree from Syracuse University. He also completed the (Senior) Executive Program at the Darden Graduate School of Business Administration, University of Virginia.

**Treasurer) Jim Lisk** was born and raised in Tazewell County Illinois. After graduating from Western Illinois University with a Bachelor's in Business he began a 30-year career in the transportation industry moving to Rockford, Cleveland, Baltimore, Coatesville, Lewistown, and finally Carlisle PA in 1994. With his wife Michelle he raised 3 children; all them graduating from Carlisle High School, and finishing at Millersville, James Madison, and Widener University ('we hope'). Jim serves on the board of directors of Mid Penn Homecare LLC, the IASHF Investment Fund Trust, and is a past Chairperson of the Carlisle Borough Municipal Authority. Jim joined the CCHS in 2013 when Rude DeFrance "scolded" him for not being a member. Since then he has enjoyed the fellowship of the society as much as learning about the rich history of Cumberland County.

**Colonel (retired) Charles D. Allen** culminated a 30-year Army career as Director, Leader Development and is currently the Professor of Leadership and Cultural Studies in the Department of Command, Leadership, and Management at the United States Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA. A 1978 graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point, he had overseas assignments in Germany, Honduras, and South Korea. His areas of interest are Strategic Leadership, Creativity and Innovation, Organizational Change, and Civil-Military Relations. He is a contributor and member of the "On Leadership" panel of The Washington Post. He is also Vice Chairman for the Board of Directors for Project Share, a local Carlisle Food Bank. He served as the committee co-chair for the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration in Carlisle.

**Judge Kevin Hess** and his wife Connie have been residents of Cumberland County since their days as students at Dickinson College in the late 1960s. Following his graduation from the Dickinson School of Law in 1972, Kevin served as an Assistant District Attorney and was also engaged in the private practice of law concentrating in family law and civil trial work. He was elected county Judge in 1985 and after 30 years on the Bench and a period of time as President Judge of the County he has assumed the role of Senior Judge in semi-retirement. Kevin has served on several Boards including Cantate Carlisle, the Carlisle Theatre and Big Brothers Big Sisters. He has been a member of the adjunct faculty at the Dickinson School of Law and is the author of a single volume textbook on Pennsylvania Civil Practice. He retired from the Pennsylvania Army National Guard at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He has served on the Vestry of St. John's Episcopal Church and has been a member of the choir there since college days. He and Connie spend much of their time traveling including visits to their 3 daughters and six grandchildren who now live in various parts of the United States. [Kevin's interests include gardening and bird watching. His weekly attempts to 'break 100' on the golf course have been unsuccessful.

**John Lyter** was born and raised in Carlisle- Graduate of CHS and Lycoming College-Retired after 35 yrs as a claims representative in the insurance industry. Married to Karen 40 plus years. We have twins (JR and Becca) Hobbies include Golf, visiting historic places and homes, antiques and working out. Board member of Historic Carlisle (former President) and have served on the YMCA Board on two occasions. Have been on the museum committee at CCHS for 35 plus years.

**Tad Miller** hails from Saginaw, MI. He earned a Physics degree from the University of Michigan - Ann Arbor, and following graduation he joined the US Air Force. He trained as a communications officer and served at a number of locations in the eastern United States. He also had overseas duty in Italy and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He is a combat veteran of the Persian Gulf War. Following his retirement from the Pentagon in 2004, he began volunteering as a docent at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, a position he continues to this day. In 2006 he, and his wife Eileen, moved to Hopewell Township and reside in an 1829 stone house next to Ramp's covered bridge. Both of them began volunteering at the historical society within a month of their arrival, and jointly won the honor of Volunteer of the Year in 2015. Tad has worked in nearly all of the departments of the historical society, but focuses on the Library and Education departments.

**David Park** was first introduced to Cumberland County's history as a U.S. History Major at Dickinson College. His studies at Dickinson brought him to learn more about the County's rich history through primary sources in the Dickinson College Archives, as well as through his efforts with Dickinson College's House Divided Project, where he enjoyed cataloguing primary sources regarding the events leading up to the Civil War primarily for use as teaching and research aids for middle and high school teachers. David looks forward to an opportunity to learn more about the history of the place he and his wife have chosen to make their home along with their two children, Zoe (6) and Xander (4), and, perhaps, to learn a talking point or two to reference in a future discussion with Jeff Wood at Whistlestop.

**Alison Ross** is an architectural historian who has practiced in the field for 20+ years. She works as a consultant for environmental and engineering firms and specializes in doing Federal compliance of historic preservation law. She has done compliance work for numerous clients such as private developers, state transportation agencies, and the military, researching and writing about a variety of architectural buildings and structures. She has volunteered with the Cumberland County Historical Society for the past five years on several committees, most recently for the organizing committee of the McLain Festival. Alison is greatly looking forward to her new position on the Board.

**Don Paul Shearer** was born in Harrisburg and moved to Wormleysburg in Cumberland County as a teenager in 1956 and has lived in Cumberland County since that time. A graduate of Cedar Cliff High School and Dickinson College. A licensed real estate broker, state certified general real estate appraiser, certified real estate instructor, and has earned the MAI designation from the Appraisal Institute. Has appraised all type of properties in (36) counties in Pennsylvania and is a

recognized real estate expert having given expert witness testimony in (22) Pennsylvania counties and in various Federal Courts. A Past State Chairman of the Young Republicans of Pennsylvania, Past Chairman of the Cumberland County Young Republicans, and served has served as Campaign Manager for the late U.S. Congressman George A. Goodling (1968), the campaign for Governor of former State Senator Henry Hager (1978), and as Statewide Director for the campaign of Pa. Supreme Court Justice Thomas W. Pomeroy, Jr. (1969). Selected as one of the Outstanding Young Men of America (1968). A Past President & Realtor of the Year of the Greater Harrisburg Association of REALTORS, and a State Director of the Pa. Association of REALTORS. He is the President of the West Shore Historical Society representing the Townships of Hampden and Lower Allen & the Boroughs of Lemoyne and Wormleysburg. A past Treasurer & Director of the Camp Hill Jaycees. Former Director of Operations of the Pride of the Susquehanna riverboat & Director of the Harrisburg Riverboat Society, and served on the boards of various other community association boards.

**Julie Mowery Young** was born and raised in Central Pennsylvania. She attended Camp Hill High School (2001) & graduated from Gettysburg College (2005). She resides in Camp Hill Borough with her husband, Nat and daughter, Amelia. Julie is community orientated and believes you can only make a difference if you are involved. In 2019, she ran for Camp Hill Borough Council, although she was 6 votes shy of winning a seat at the table, she remains involved within the community. You can most likely find her on the softball or field hockey fields coaching. She has been involved with Executive Women International, an organization that focuses on women in the workplace and providing community-based events that promote literacy and development. Also, she is a 2019 graduate of Leadership Harrisburg. Professionally, Julie has worked at Capital BlueCross for 10 years and has been involved in new business, producer relations and account management since joining the sales team in 2011. She currently is responsible for a team that handles employer groups that have 51-500 employees that either are fully insured and self-funded. Before entering health insurance, she worked as a teacher's assistant at the Vista School, a school for moderate to severe autistic children. When Julie isn't volunteering or working, she enjoys traveling, skiing and being with friends and family.

**Merri Lou Schaumann** is a long-term supporter of the Society. She has served on the board previously and was President of the Board for one year. Her efforts in promoting local history are legendary. She has received the Milton Flower Historian of the Year award in addition to writing numerous books about local history including ones on Cumberland County Taverns, Cumberland County Cabinet Makers, A History and Genealogy of Carlisle, and several others. Recently she participated in writing the society published "Water Powered Mills of Cumberland County Pennsylvania." Most recently she coordinated the committee to publish, "Remembering Lost Cumberland County Pennsylvania." Merri Lou chaired the committee for the celebration of the 250th Anniversary of Cumberland County in 2000. She recently completed a PHMC Grant to process 18th century records for the Cumberland County Archives.

**Alvin Blitz, Esq.**, Since 2001, Alvin has served as the Chief Gift Planning Officer for the Masonic Charities of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania where is responsible for oversight of the Gift Planning Office with a focus on complex charitable planning. Prior to working for the Masonic Charities, Alvin was in private practice where he concentrated in estate and trust law. Attorney Blitz holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Scranton, a Master of Arts degree from Fairleigh Dickinson University, and a Juris Doctorate from Dickinson School of Law. He is a member of the PA Bar. A member of Carlisle Lodge No. 260. He lives in Carlisle with his wife, Diane. He has a son, Thomas, living in Arvada, CO and a son, Paul, living in Pittsburgh, PA.