

VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION HANDBOOK

CHESTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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Welcome,

We have prepared this handbook for the volunteers of Chester County Historical Society (CCHS) to provide not only background information on CCHS and Chester County, but, also information about the Volunteer Organization. The Volunteer Organization is presently a very active group of approximately two hundred forty men and women working in every area of the museum, library, photo archives, and the archives. Our Constitution and By-Laws are included, in addition to a summary of our current projects, services and committees. Please take time to read the handbook thoroughly – noting in particular the CCHS’ *Policies and Procedures*. We think you will find the handbook very useful as you go about your various day-to-day activities, and you will find it helpful when interpreting CCHS and its work to the public.

Tom Millichap, President
Volunteer Organization

HOURS

MUSEUM

10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Tuesday – Saturday

LIBRARY

10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Tuesday – Saturday

MUSEUM SHOP

10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Tuesday – Saturday

ARCHIVES

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Monday – Friday

Open year-round.

Closed Sundays, Mondays and holidays

610-692-4800

610-692-4066

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CHESTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY A CENTURY OF STEWARDSHIP AND EDUCATION

Today's History Center is the latest chapter in a continuing story that began in 1893 when a group of prominent local citizens chartered the Chester County Historical Society for "the acquisition and preservation of property and information of historic value or interest to the people of Chester County." Dr. Joseph T. Rothrock, explorer and conservationist was elected the first president. Now we think of CCHS as a place where diverse audiences may encounter, explore, and learn about the past by visiting exhibits, using the library or participating in educational programs. But for the first forty-five years of its existence, CCHS had no "bricks and mortar" home. Meetings were held in various locations in West Chester such as the library, the Holy Trinity Church, and the State Normal School (now West Chester University). Only through the generosity of Mrs. Uriah H. Painter did the Historical Society find a home on North High Street in West Chester.

The building that first housed the Historical Society was built in 1848 for the Chester County Horticultural Society at a cost of \$6,000. The architect was Thomas U. Walter, who had already established a reputation in the Greek Revival Style, having designed the dome of the Capitol in Washington, D.C., and Girard College in Philadelphia. Walter was also responsible for other buildings in West Chester, including the Courthouse, bank, prison, and several churches. In its early years Horticultural Hall served not only as a meeting place for area farmers, but hosted meetings of the Anti-Slavery Society and the first women's rights convention in the state of Pennsylvania (1852).

In 1880 Mr. Uriah Hunt Painter purchased Horticultural Hall at a Sheriff's sale for \$2,000. Extensive remodeling transformed the building into a center for theatrical entertainments and social and cultural activities for the next fifteen years. Such noted performers as Jenny Lind and Buffalo Bill appeared on the stage of "The West Chester Opera House."

On Mr. Painter's death in 1900, his widow deeded the building to the McCall Post, G.A.R., for as long as they might need it, after which it was to be conveyed to the Chester County Historical Society and its successors forever. At that time the building became officially known as "Memorial Hall."

By 1937 the G.A.R. no longer needed the building and it was deeded to the Chester County Historical Society. Extensive repairs were needed and made over a period of five years and in 1941 the building was formally opened as the headquarters of the Chester County Historical Society. Further remodeling and expansion was accomplished in 1979.

As both collections and demand for public programming expanded, the Society quickly found itself bursting at the seams of even an expanded Horticultural Hall building. Fortunately, an adjacent building owned by the YMCA of Central Chester County became available to the Society in 1988.

The main body of the old YMCA building was built in two sections, both begun in 1907. The Sharples gymnasium was built by business entrepreneur and philanthropist P.M.

Sharples, who offered to donate it to the Y if the YMCA agreed to build an additional building on the same land. The two structures, both designed by noted Philadelphia architect Charles Barton Keen in the colonial revival style were ultimately joined by a “hyphen” or corridor.

In 1991 CCHS began a \$5 million capital campaign to refurbish the interiors of both Horticultural Hall, the society’s home for over fifty years, and the newly acquired YMCA building. The result was the 1995 opening of the History Center, two buildings linked by an enclosed bridge and designed as a lively center of activities, exhibits and facilities for studying the past. Today, the new History Center fills 50,000 square feet of space and incorporates an enlarged museum, expanded library, and dramatically increased public programming and storage areas.

This facility accommodates audiences of local residents with deep county roots, school children, professional and amateur researchers, scholars, antiques buffs and collectors, senior citizens, and a growing number of new county residents in search of a regional identity. With bricks and mortar in place, CCHS renews its commitment to be an educational leader in the history of the Delaware Valley.

CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA AN INTRODUCTION

Chester County was one of the three original counties laid out by William Penn in 1682. Named for Chester in England, the county extended westward from Philadelphia County, encompassing all of present day Delaware County and portions of Lancaster and Berks Counties. Chester County’s southern boundaries are the unique circular boundary separating Pennsylvania from the state of Delaware and the Mason-Dixon line, laid out in 1763. The latter would become an important symbolic division, separating North from South, slave from free.

Penn and most of his settlers were Quakers from England, Wales, and Ireland. The land they claimed was a vast forest of oaks and chestnut already inhabited by the Lenni Lenape Indians and small groups of Dutch and Swedes living beside the Delaware River. Other early settlers were the Germans, and Scots Irish Presbyterians. The early emphasis on religious freedom and tolerance would carry over into later issues such as abolition and suffrage, which were pronounced movements in Chester County’s history.

Chester County in the eighteenth century was primarily rural, conservative and middle class with a strong Quaker element. Farms dominated the landscape and supplied the major markets of Philadelphia and Wilmington with wheat, hay, barley, beef, butter, and cheese. In addition to the many mills that dotted the landscape early industries included furnaces, forges, and rolling mills in the northern townships.

Farmers had to be “jacks-of-all-trades,” possessing a wide variety of skills and knowledge. Due to their isolation, many farmers became craftsmen to provide for the needs of their families. Some even practiced a trade for additional profit such as cabinetry, pottery, weaving, or blacksmithing. These secondary trades gave rise to some of the county’s finest contributions to early crafts.

As a witness and participant in our nation’s history, Chester County was the scene of important events during the American Revolutionary War including the Battle of the Brandywine, the Paoli Massacre and the long, hard winter at Valley Forge.

In 1786 the county seat was moved from Chester to the small crossroads village of Turks Head which later changed its name to West Chester. The lower townships broke away in 1789 and set up Delaware County.

County residents played an important part in the great national crisis leading to the Civil War. Outspoken Quakers, especially around Kennett Square, loathed slavery and frequently served as active conductors in the Underground Railroad. Leading abolitionists spoke in Chester County and created a fervor for freedom.

During the Civil War the Phoenix Iron Works played a significant role in the North’s victory at Gettysburg supplying as many as 1,400 Griffin cannons. Iron and steel industries continued as important factors in the county’s economic growth following the Civil War. Lukens Steel in Coatesville prospered in the 1890’s and emerged from World War I as a major producer of armor plate.

Industry was also the catalyst for new population growth. Immigrants worked in the factories in Downingtown, Coatesville and Phoenixville. Earlier the Irish had arrived to dig the canals and lay the railroad beds. Now immigrants from Poland, Hungary and Italy, as well as blacks recruited from the South, helped swell the county’s numbers.

Near the turn of the century, a flourishing greenhouse industry was transformed into a highly successful mushroom industry that created another labor pool of Mexican and Puerto Rican workers.

The railroad, trolleys and superhighways that carved into the land from the turn of the century onward sowed new suburban neighborhoods and commuter suburbs, gradually changing this once rural farmland to the present-day service economy that dominates the county. The contemporary story of Chester County is one of rapid development and surging population growth. County residents today are turning their attention to the management of environmental issues and the retention of “open space” as a hallmark of the region.

COMMITTEES

Administrative Office	Gala	Membership
Adult Programs	Greens Sale	Museum Teaching Assistants
Antiques Show	Guides	Museum Shop
Archives	History Day	Newsletter
Curatorial	Hospitality	Photo Archives
Development	Library	Program
		Quaker Quilters

PROJECTS AND SERVICES

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

Volunteers assist with mailings, record keeping and telephoning assignments.

ANTIQUES SHOW

The annual CCHS Antiques Show is held at QVC Studio Park under the supervision of a professional manager. Volunteers participate in advanced planning and during the days of the show.

ARCHIVES

Archive volunteers work with staff to make the collection of historic documents accessible to the public and perform tasks designated to preserve the documents.

CURATORIAL

Curatorial volunteers participate in the care of collections and management by assisting with cataloging and the recording of data and research needs. The inventory of collections objects and exhibition preparation are volunteer opportunities for which there is mandatory training. Work assignments are under the supervision of the staff.

DEVELOPMENT

Volunteers assist with membership acquisition, mailings and record keeping for the Volunteer Organization.

GALA

This annual Gala fund-raising event, *An Evening in Chester County*, requires volunteer assistance in many areas. Volunteers assume responsibilities in the following sub-committees: Catering, Decorations, Evening Auction, Hospitality, Invitations, Music, Parking and Tent, Publicity, Silent Auction, Sponsor Letter and Addressing.

GREENS SALE

The Greens Sale Committee conducts fund-raising sales of seasonal arrangements and designs at the annual Fall Festival and the annual Christmas Greens Sale. Volunteers meet throughout the year to design and craft the natural material creations. Specialized areas are assigned as follows: Bake Sale, Inventory, Men for cutting and bundling greens, Publicity, Quality Control, Sales, and Staging.

GUIDES

The Guides Committee provides a daily staffing of docents during museum hours to greet visitors and to offer, where appropriate, an interpretive guided tour of the museum exhibits. Attendance at training and orientation sessions is required for the development of interpretive skills and techniques. Upgrading the standards for quality guiding is an ongoing commitment. Guides also assist with special events and group tours.

HOSPITALITY

The Hospitality Committee hosts the Volunteer Assembly meetings and programs by planning, preparing and presenting refreshments. They are called upon to assist in other CCHS events as needed.

LIBRARY

Volunteer service is under the direct supervision of the staff librarian and assistant librarians. The volunteers are used in a variety of tasks involving working with the collections and assisting with departmental needs. New volunteers are recruited when experienced ones leave, when new projects are begun and when a volunteer has a specific talent or expertise that can be utilized.

MEMBERSHIP

The Membership Committee assumes responsibility for maintaining files of volunteer membership applications and records of service hours and work assignments. Solicitation, orientation and assimilation of new members into the system is the primary function of this committee.

MUSEUM TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Museum Teaching Assistants (MTA's) are volunteers trained by the Public Programs Department staff to assist in and to conduct museum programs for classes of school children. MTA's are also trained to conduct historical walking tours of West Chester.

MUSEUM SHOP

The Museum Shop Manager assumes the management and operational responsibilities for the conduct of Museum Shop business. Volunteers serve as shopkeepers and assist with gift-buying, mail-order, display work, and assist with other activities necessary to maintain the appearance and integrity of the Museum Shop.

NEWSLETTER

Articles are prepared by volunteers to communicate all current information on volunteer activities, CCHS' needs and shared interest items. This activity appeals to those who enjoy writing and publishing in the vital area of communication.

PHOTO ARCHIVES

Volunteers assist with on-going and special projects as needed, under the direction of the Photo Archivist. Volunteers perform activities such as labeling and inventorying collections, cleaning glass plates and assembling albums. Volunteers are also needed with computer skills to do data entry work.

PROGRAM

The 2nd Vice President schedules programs and trips for the Volunteer Assembly. All meetings are held at The History Center unless otherwise noted. Programs are held in September, October (usually a trip), November, March, May (usually a trip), and June.

QUAKER QUILTERS

This committee serves CCHS by creating original quilts for the purpose of fundraising. These quilts benefit the annual Greens Sale, Antique Show and Gala, as well as other special projects at the request of CCHS.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

For your convenience and safety, as well as that of visitors with whom you may come in contact, it is important that you familiarize yourself with the proper emergency procedures and that you know the operational policies. Volunteers are considered a vital part of CCHS and are expected to adhere to the general policies of the institution. All activities should be planned in cooperation with staff, and none should be undertaken independently without staff awareness and approval. Please take the time to review these policies and procedures.

POLICIES

1. Read your handbook. It is your best guide.
2. Read the Constitution and By-Laws (in handbook).
3. Sign in and record your hours on the appropriate sheet located in the volunteer area where you are working. A record of hours is maintained and is used for grant applications by CCHS.
4. Wear your name tag while in the building.

5. Absenteeism exerts a strain on the system. It is your responsibility to provide for a substitute volunteer if you are unable to keep your scheduled time to work.
6. The lobby and Museum Shop are places of business and for welcoming visitors. Private conversations must be kept to a minimum to respect visitors.
7. Staff and committee chairman are our supervisors, and we all function within the structure of the policies, procedures and system of CCHS.
8. No smoking anywhere in the building.
9. Lunches, dinners and snacks may be consumed only in the staff/volunteer room (basement level). No food of any kind may be kept in offices or work areas. No food or drink may be consumed at the front desk during open hours.
10. Briefcases and bags should be placed in available lockers.
11. A full library statement is available at the front desk. Highlights include:
 - a. Library materials are for research only; they do not circulate outside the library. However, coin-operated photocopiers may be used by patrons.
 - b. Pencils only must be used when taking notes.
 - c. Microfilm reader-printers are available.
 - d. Patrons may check our CD-ROMs for use in the library.
 - e. Research by mail service is available.
12. **Care of collections is an important part of CCHS' responsibility. Volunteers are expected to set an example by not handling historic objects on exhibit.**

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Be familiar with emergency procedures.

1. Whenever you hear an alarm, move calmly and quickly to the nearest exit and remain outside the building until you are told by a staff member in authority that it is safe to re-enter. Any visitors with you should also be safely escorted to an exit. Report the names of visitors who you escorted to be checked against the sign-in book. Evacuation locations in order are:
 - a. Front sidewalk in front of Christian Science Church.
 - b. Armory across the street.
 - c. West Chester Friends.
2. If you notice a violation of security or a suspicious act on the part of a visitor, go immediately to the office to report what you have witnessed. Do not try to apprehend or reprimand the visitor.
3. If a visitor feels ill or requires first aid, notify the nearest staff member and then remain with the visitor until a staff member comes to take charge. Do not attempt to administer first aid yourself unless you are qualified and licensed to do so.
4. Follow 911 instructions

CONSTITUTION

Article I: NAME

The name of this organization shall be : “Chester County Historical Society Volunteer Organization.”

Article II: PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

- Section 1. To promote public awareness of and interest in the preservation and conservation of the region’s history through the programs of CCHS. To promote CCHS as an institution which collects and disseminates historical information for the benefit of the public
- Section 2. To support CCHS staff through volunteer service.
- Section 3. To support CCHS through staffing of the Museum Shop, guiding, fundraising, special events, public education/outreach programs, and other Society-approved activities.

Article III: MEMBERSHIP

- Section 1. Membership shall be open to all persons who have fulfilled the requirements of an interview, and completed an application. All members shall be subject to the policies of CCHS.
- Section 2. There shall be three classes of membership:
 - a. ACTIVE – Active members are encouraged to give a minimum of sixty hours service per year to CCHS. The inability to serve may, at the discretion of the President and the Executive Council, result in the automatic termination of membership in the Volunteers Organization.
 - b. SUSTAINING – The classification of Sustaining Member may be requested after ten or more years of service as volunteers and for reason of family, health, or inability to fulfill active membership requirements. This request shall be submitted to the Executive Council. No more than ten percent of the Active Volunteers membership may enjoy this privileged classification at any time. A Sustaining Member may enjoy all the rights and privileges of the volunteers.

- c. HONORARY – The Executive Council, by unanimous vote, may elect a person to this category who has rendered distinguished volunteer service to CCHS. Honorary members shall have all membership privileges.

Article IV: OFFICERS

- Section 1. The officers of the organization shall be: President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- Section 2. The officers shall serve a two-year term.

Article V: AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended at any official Assembly meeting by the vote of three-quarters of the number of members present as long as the quorum has been met. (See By-Laws Article II, Section 4). Prior to any amendment action a notice of intent and text of purpose shall be circulated once in writing not less than 30 days in advance and be read at the meeting immediately prior to the vote.

BY-LAWS

Article I: DUTIES OF OFFICERS

- Section 1. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Volunteer Assembly and of the Executive Council; shall be an ex-officio member of all committees, except the Nominating Committee; and shall perform other duties pertaining to the office.
- Section 2. The First Vice-President shall assume the duties of the President in his/her absence, and shall serve as chairman of the Membership Committee
- Section 3. The Second Vice-President shall assume the duties of the President in the absence of both the President and First Vice-President, and shall serve as chairman of the Program Committee.
- Section 4. The Secretary shall keep minutes of all meetings of the Volunteer Assembly and of the Executive Council, and shall transact correspondence as determined by the President.
- Section 5. The Treasurer shall review and report on organization funds. The Treasurer shall participate in the preparation of the budget.

Article II: GOVERNANCE

- Section 1. Chester County Historical Society Volunteer Organization shall serve as an extension of staff in a supportive service capacity under the jurisdiction of CCHS' President as approved by the Board of Trustees.

- Section 2. The basic governing body of the volunteers shall be the Volunteer Assembly of which all volunteers of good standing are members.
- Section 3. The Volunteer Assembly shall hold a minimum of four meetings yearly, one of which shall be an annual meeting. The purpose of the annual meeting shall be to review the programs and activities of the past year, plan for the coming year, elect and install new officers, and approve the budget. Additional meetings as needed may be called by the President.
- Section 4. Meetings shall be conducted according to *Roberts Rules of Order* which require that a quorum be present for the transaction of business. One-third of the active volunteers shall constitute a quorum.
- Section 5. Between the meetings of the Volunteer Assembly the Executive Council shall conduct meetings for the purpose of administrative business.

Article III: COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

- Section 1. All volunteer activities, programs and special events shall be conducted through a committee system. There shall be two committee categories: Standing and Special. In addition, certain aspects of CCHS activity shall be served by individual representatives of special areas who shall function as committees-of-one. Committee chairmen and representatives shall be appointed by the President.
- Section 2. Standing Committees:
Standing Committees shall serve an administrative function by conducting the basic on-going activities of the volunteer program.
 - a. Executive Council
The Executive Council shall conduct the business of the volunteers between meetings of the Volunteer Assembly. The Council shall consist of the President, the immediate Past-President, First and Second Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, all committee chairmen and representatives of special areas. Ex-officio, non-voting members of the Executive Council shall be CCHS' Director, or his designate.
 - b. Guides Committee
The Guides Committee shall ensure that there will be guides on duty during the hours that the museum is open to the public. In addition, committee members shall assist the chairman in organizing training sessions for volunteer guides.
 - c. Hospitality Committee
The Hospitality Committee Shall:
 - 1) prepare refreshments for meetings and receptions as needed
 - 2) provide flower arrangements for the museum facility and special events.
 - d. Membership Committee

The Membership Committee shall:

- 1) maintain an updated list and file of the three categories of members;
- 2) assist in the process of interviewing prospective members;
- 3) maintain a record of task assignments and areas of interest;
- 4) record monthly volunteer hours in each area of service;
- 5) conduct all inquiries and notices pertaining to fulfillment of membership requirements.
- 6) Volunteer application review if qualifications or behavior raises questions or concerns effecting CCHS standards and policies.

e. Museum Shop Committee

The Museum Shop Manager assumes the management and operational responsibilities for the conduct of business of the Museum Shop.

f. Program Committee

The Program Committee shall arrange programs for meetings of the Volunteer Assembly and special meetings, and organize trips.

Section 3. Special Committees

Special committees are **ad hoc** committees formed as needed by the CCHS administration, the CCHS Volunteer President and the Volunteer Executive Council in response to special needs of the volunteer program.

a. Greens Sale Committee

The Greens Sale Committee shall prepare and organize the sale of greenery and related materials for the committee's special seasonal events. The committee will be assisted by a group of volunteers who design and craft the sale items.

b. Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee, working closely with CCHS' Director, Volunteer President, and the Executive Council, shall prepare the slate of proposed officers to be voted on at the annual meeting of volunteers.

Section 4. Representatives of Special Areas

Representatives shall individually carry out committee-like responsibilities relating to certain special CCHS and volunteer activities. These change from time to time and might include the following: Archives, Library, Publicity, Visitation, and the *Volunteer Voice*.

Article IV: NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

- Section 1. Nomination of officers shall be made by a Nominating Committee composed of five member volunteers in good standing and appointed by the Executive Council in February. There shall

- be one staff representative on the Nominating Committee appointed by CCHS' Director in February. No one shall be nominated whose consent has not first been obtained. No participating member of the Committee is eligible for nomination
- Section 2. The slate of proposed officers shall be presented at the April Volunteer Assembly at which time any member in good standing may be nominated from the floor. The officers shall be elected and installed at the annual meeting.
- Section 3. Special elections due to an occurring vacancy in office shall be conducted by the Executive Council and one staff representative appointed by CCHS' Director serving as a nominating committee. Members of the Executive Council may be eligible for nomination providing the nominee withdraws from the proceedings. The nomination shall be read and presented as a ballot at the next Assembly meeting. Installation shall take place immediately following the election.

Article V: BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

- Section 1. The annual volunteer budget shall be prepared by the President and Treasurer to be approved by the Executive Council. The budget must be approved by CCHS' Board of Trustees and shall be presented at the Volunteer Assembly in September.
- Section 2. Approval for specific expenditures within the basic budget categories shall be delegated to the Volunteer President and Volunteer Executive Council and given final approval by CCHS' Director.

Article VI: AMENDMENTS

The By-Laws may be amended at any official Assembly meeting by the vote of two thirds of the number of members present as long as the quorum has been met. (See Article II, Section 4). Prior to any amendment action a notice of intent and text of purpose shall be circulated once in writing and read at the meeting immediately prior to the vote.

VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION PRESIDENTS

1960-63	Berenice Ball	1975-76	Margaret Ramaley
1063-64	Louise Jones	1976-80	Grace Winthrop
1964-66	Peggy Sepella	1980-82	Jo Aldridge
1967-68	May Sharp	1982-84	Grace Winthrop
1968-69	Grace Miller	1984-86	Phyllis Copeland
1969-70	Betty Marrick	1986-87	Chelsa Prutzman
1970-71	Meg Robinson	1987-88	Anne Congdon
1971-72	Ruth Hagy	1988-90	Ann Diaz

1972-73 Bea Gilpin
1973-74 Betty Haney
1974-75 Judy Spencer

1990-98 Glenn Stroud
1998-2004 Reese Davis
2005- Tom Millichap