



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
Thursday, March 30, 2023**

**Mercer Museum & Fonthill Castle,  
Operated by Bucks County Historical Society,  
Welcomes Five New Members to Board of Trustees**

**DOYLESTOWN, PA** – The Mercer Museum & Fonthill Castle, operated by the Bucks County Historical Society, is pleased to announce that five new members have joined its Board of Trustees: Michael Aratan, Jerry Fritz, Susan Lonergan, Sarah Peters, and Joe Phillips.

“We are thrilled to have such a talented group of leaders join our Board,” says Linda B. Hodgdon, Bucks County Historical Society Board Chair. “Their collective strengths in business, arts and culture, and philanthropy will allow us to continue to thrive as an organization serving both local residents and guests who visit our treasured National Historic Landmarks in Bucks County from around the globe.”

The five new members of the Bucks County Historical Society Board of Trustees are:

Michael Aratan is the current President & CEO of Sterling Drive Ventures, LLP and the former head of the Central Bucks Chamber of Commerce.

Jerry Fritz is president of Jerry Fritz Garden Design, Inc., located in Ottsville, PA and founded his garden design company 34 years ago. Fritz holds a BS in Ornamental Horticulture from Delaware Valley University, and has appeared on Martha Stewart’s TV Garden Show ‘Martha Stewart Living’ numerous times. Recently Fritz has lead international garden tours to Jamaica, the Cotswolds in England, France, Italy and Spain.

Susan Lonergan, a Summa Cum Laude graduate of DeSales University with a B.S. in Accounting, is Director of Middle Market and Specialized Banking for Fulton Bank’s commercial sales and lending teams. Sue has more than 30 years of banking experience and has regularly appeared on Bloomberg, MSNBC, WSJ and The Street.com. Lonergan serves on the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors for the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce along with the Board of Directors for The Committee of Seventy and Turning Points for Children. She also served on the Gala Host Committee for United Way Women’s Way in 2018 and 2019, is a

member of the Corporate Advisory Board for the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), and a member of the Forum for Executive Women. She formerly served on the board of the Trenton Business Assistance Corp.

Sarah Peters is the owner and team leader of Sarah Peters Team with Keller Williams Real Estate. Her team is among the top 1% of Realtors, serving both Bucks and Montgomery Counties. At Keller Williams, she serves on the Board of Directors, the Technology committee, and Growth committee. Peters taught American History and served in leadership at two school districts for 15 years before retiring to focus on real estate and other passions. She serves on Heritage Conservancy's Business Advisory Panel and volunteers as a Lifeline Partner to Kin Wellness & Support Center for Bucks County's cancer patients.

Joe Phillips is owner and principal of Phillips & Donovan Architects, LLC since 2014, and received his Bachelor of Architecture from Temple University. Phillips’s architectural career began in 1986 when he joined George J. Donovan AIA & Associates. Phillips is a LEED Accredited Professional, a Certified Sustainable Building Advisor, a Home Efficiency Consultant, and is the Architectural Historic Officer for the City of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania's Historical Architectural Review Board. In addition to the Bucks County Historical Society Board of Trustees, Phillips is a member of the Board of Directors for Central Bucks Chamber of Commerce, Bucks County SPCA, and Kent Attainable Housing. He is a member of Main Street Chestertown’s Façade & Lighting Grant Committee and is the President of the Bucks County Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

These five new members of the Bucks County Historical Society Board of Trustees join the current members: Linda B. Hodgdon (Board Chair), Gustavo I. Perea (Vice Chair), Thomas Hebel (Vice Chair), Maureen B. Carlton (Secretary), William R. Schutt (Treasurer), Pamela Butkus, Peter Chiovarou, Kelley Cwiklinski, David L. Franke, Tracy Jackson-Benson, Susan E. Kane, Charles T. McIlhinney, Jr., Brian R. McLeod, Sean Newman, Lisa Pretecrum, Ryan Putman, Michael B. Raphael, Jonathan Reiss, Susan J. Smith, Ron Strouse, Patricia Tagliolini, alongside Trustees Emeriti Elizabeth H. Gemmill and Tom Thomas.

The Mercer Museum & Fonthill Castle, operated by the Bucks County Historical Society, educate and engage its many audiences in appreciating the past and to help people find stories and meanings relevant to their lives—both today and in the future.

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### **About the Mercer Museum & Fonthill Castle**

Located in Doylestown, Bucks County, PA, the Mercer Museum and Fonthill Castle are historic castles celebrating the legacy of Henry Chapman Mercer (1856-1930), American archaeologist, anthropologist, ceramicist and scholar. Both sites are operated by the Bucks County Historical Society (BCHS).

The Mercer Museum, one of Bucks County's premier cultural attractions and a Smithsonian affiliate, features both local and national seasonal exhibits as well as a core museum collection of over 50,000 pre-Industrial tools. This permanent collection offers visitors a unique window into pre-Industrial America through sixty different crafts and trades and is one of the world's most comprehensive portraits of American material culture. The museum also features a research library that is a center for local history related to Bucks County and the surrounding region, with its roots dating back to the founding of the Bucks County Historical Society in 1880.

Fonthill Castle was built between 1908-1912 and was the home of Henry Chapman Mercer. Mercer built Fonthill Castle as his residence and showplace for his collection of tiles and prints. The castle serves as an early example of reinforced concrete and features forty-four rooms, over two hundred windows, and eighteen fireplaces. Fonthill Castle's interior features Mercer's renowned, hand-crafted ceramic tiles designed at the height of the Arts and Crafts movement.

The Mercer Museum is located at 84 South Pine Street, Doylestown, PA, 18901. Fonthill Castle is located at 525 East Court Street in Doylestown, PA, 18901.

The Mercer Museum & Fonthill Castle are open Tuesdays – Sundays from 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. For up-to-date ticket and schedule information, please visit [mercermuseum.org](http://mercermuseum.org).

### **For additional information, please contact:**

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