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**Historic Bethlehem Museums & Sites Announces Leadership Changes to Support World Heritage Nomination**

The Board of Trustees of Historic Bethlehem Museums & Sites has named Charlene Donchez Mowers the Senior Advisor to Historic Bethlehem Museums & Sites as of March 1, 2022. She currently serves as the President of HBMS. The board also announced that LoriAnn Wukitsch, VP/Managing Director, will become President and CEO of HBMS.

The shift in leadership permits Donchez Mowers to focus on the critical next steps leading to Historic Moravian Bethlehem being designated a World Heritage Site. There are only 1,154 in the world with 24 in the United States. Donchez Mowers currently serves as President of the Bethlehem World Heritage Commission of the City of Bethlehem.

Donchez Mowers initiated and spearheaded the campaign to have Historic Moravian Bethlehem designated a World Heritage Site in 2003. This journey is now in the last stage before a final determination by the international World Heritage Committee. In her new role, she will travel to Herrnhut, Germany; Gracehill, Northern Ireland/UK; and Christiansfeld, Denmark to meet with her counterparts in the Moravian Church Settlements Transnational Working Group which is preparing the nomination dossier for submission to the World Heritage Committee.

Donchez Mowers is well-suited for her new role, having been appointed Executive Director of the Moravian Museum of Bethlehem in 1994. The Moravian Museum joined Historic Bethlehem Museums & Sites in 1999. In 2000, she was named President of the organization.

A Bethlehem native, Donchez Mowers has been involved in preserving and interpreting the history of this community for almost 30 years. She is widely recognized for her efforts in gaining National Historic Landmark District status for Historic Moravian Bethlehem and, most recently, for her work on the transnational serial nomination of Historic Moravian Bethlehem to the World Heritage List.

During her tenure, Historic Bethlehem Museums & Sites has expanded significantly. Donchez Mowers directed the restoration of the 1758 Nain-Schober House, the addition of the Collections Resource Center at the Kemerer Museum of Decorative Arts, construction of the Blacksmith Shop on its original foundation, re-siting a mid-1800s bank barn to Burnside Plantation, restoration of the Waterwheel in the 1762 Waterworks, and development of the Historic Bethlehem Heritage Trail. HBMS also became an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution.

She serves on the Discover Lehigh Valley Board of Directors and the Bethlehem Council of the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce, and has served as the U.S. representative to the International Moravian Heritage Network. She has been a guest speaker at preservation and
museum-related conferences, including PA Museums, Preservation Pennsylvania, Smithsonian Institution, and Moravian Heritage Network Conferences in Northern Ireland, South Africa, and Denmark. Mowers Donchez has also written mystery novels, set among Bethlehem’s historic sites.

She has a B.A. from Arcadia University, an M.A. from Temple University, and an Honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters from Moravian University. She is a Distinguished Alumna of Moravian Academy. She and her husband reside in Bethlehem.

*Historic Bethlehem Museums & Sites is a not-for-profit institution that brings to life three centuries of American history. Historic Bethlehem tells the story of a small town of great influence, home to some of our nation’s early settlers, to the first pumped municipal water system in the American colonies, and to one of the world’s greatest industrial companies. Historic Bethlehem is located in eastern Pennsylvania, only an hour’s drive north from Philadelphia and 2 hours west of New York City. Historic Bethlehem is an Affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution and part of a National Historic Landmark District - a designated site on the US World Heritage Tentative List. HBMS is proud to be a part of the effort to bring World Heritage Site status to Historic Moravian Bethlehem. We are pleased to share that as of Spring 2021, HBMS will be working in tandem with international Moravian Sites – Herrnhut, Germany and Gracehill, Northern Ireland to prepare a joint serial nomination to the World Heritage List – a first for the United States.*