

Past Trustees & Officers
Valley Stream Historical Society

James Buckley, *Chairman Emeritus*, grew up in Valley Stream, attending Brooklyn Avenue and Central High, where he was an active member of the school's alumni association. A purchasing agent for the Hendrickson Brothers Construction Company, Buckley served for 15 years as Chairman of the Society, starting his term in 1992, when the Restoration first opened. In 2008, Buckley was named "Person of the Year" by the Valley Stream Herald. As Curator and Record Keeper, Buckley kept the Pagan-Fletcher Restoration's historical records in meticulous order and often presented his "Then and Now" slide show of the community to various local organizations. Buckley, who passed away in August 2015, and his late wife Anita, have six children.

Constance Doherty, *Board Trustee*, has been a resident of Valley Stream since 1979. Doherty, a real estate agent with Douglas Elliman is also a member of the Knights of Columbus Ladies Auxiliary Oceanside chapter. A mother of two, Doherty enjoys traveling and helping out at historical society events.

Anthony (Tony) Gicala, Jr., *Board Trustee*, moved to Valley Stream in 2001. He is employed at the NY State Department of Transportation (DOT) as a civil engineer who inspects bridges. He is also a member of the NY State Public Employees Federation (PEF). Prior to working for DOT, Gicala was a draftsman at Lambda Electronics. A graduate of CCNY, Gicala received his Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial Arts and Education. His past times include swimming in the Valley Stream Pool, jet-skiing, and practicing his aim at the rifle range.

Joseph Gunther, *Board Trustee* since 2008 until his passing in , was born in Jamaica, Queens, and moved to Valley Stream in 1925. A 1942 graduate of Central High School, [who also played in the band] he met his wife Florence at the high school and they married in 1949. A skilled carpenter by trade, he worked in New York City and Long Island, and he built his home on Benedict Avenue in 1953! In the 1990s, Mr. Gunther contributed his carpentry talents and helped restore the Pagan-Fletcher Restoration. An accomplished trombonist, Mr. Gunther currently plays in 3 bands, in addition to having his own band for 15 years.

Jaclyn Kunz, *Board Trustee and Archivist*, Jaclyn is a native Valley Streamer who attended Wheeler Avenue School, Memorial Junior High and Central High School. Kunz earned her B.A. degree in Social Work from Fordham University and in 2008 she received her M.L.S from CUNY Queens College. Working with children and families became her passion during her stint as a librarian trainee at the Hempstead Public Library. Since 2007, she has been employed at the Henry Waldinger Memorial Library, first as a trainee and then assuming the Children's Librarian position. Kunz is also president of the Children's Services Division of the Nassau County Library Association. Although no longer a trustee, Jaclyn continues to support the historical society by spearheading, participating in, and crafting our event posters.

Angelo LaCalandra, *Board Trustee*, went to Sewanhaka High School in Elmont and graduated from the School of Visual Arts, where he majored in Advertising, Photography and Design. In the late 1970s, LaCalandra joined the Pagan-Fletcher Restoration Committee and helped rehabilitate the building. LaCalandra created a pencil drawing of how the Pagan-Fletcher house would look after its restoration and a colleague of LaCalandra's, another artist, created a mechanical line rendering with Higgins ink, from LaCalandra's original pencil sketch. The pen and ink rendering of the Pagan-Fletcher House is proudly displayed on the second floor hallway of the Restoration. A photo of the rendering can also be found on the "The Arts" link of this website. After moving to Valley Stream in 1977, LaCalandra embarked on an advertising/art career in New York City. He worked for notable agencies such as Della Famina and Young & Rubican and held various positions of increasing responsibility. LaCalandra, an associate art director, currently works for Averett Free & Ginsberg. His pastimes include fishing, photography, painting, carpentry and antique restoration.

Claire Lenz, *Board Trustee* since 2015, grew up in East Meadow and moved to Valley Stream in 1986 with her husband Hank and their three children. Her youngest child, Cynthia, graduated from Central High School. Lenz graduated SUNY Oneonta (B.S. in Elementary Education), received her master's degree from SUNY Stonybrook, a Professional Diploma in Administration from C.W. Post and an Ed.D. from St. John's University (Instructional Leadership), where she also was President of Phi Delta Kappa. A teacher, administrator, and college professor, who has also published articles and a book, Lenz retired in 2015 as the Director of the Graduate Program in Literacy and Cognition, St. Joseph's College. Lenz is a member of the Valley Stream Library Book Club and St. John's Lutheran Church in Lynbrook. With more time in retirement, she plans to volunteer at South Nassau Hospital and

the Interfaith Nutrition Network (INN) in Hempstead. She enjoys auditing courses, reading, attending Broadway theater, ballets, and concerts. Other hobbies include traveling and gardening.

Grace Agnes Libath, *Corresponding Secretary*, was also a charter member since 1973, when the society was first formed. Before her position as Corresponding Secretary, Ms. Libath served as Board Trustee, and at one time was in charge of Sunday tours at the Restoration. Born and raised in Virginia, Ms. Libath moved to Valley Stream in 1945 as a newlywed, when her husband, Theodore (Ted) Libath, a native Valley Streamer, was stationed overseas. Her busy career included a 29-year position as a librarian at the Henry Waldinger Public Library and a volunteer at Franklin General Hospital. A long-standing member of Grace Methodist Church, Ms. Libath faithfully contributed her energy, talents and knowledge to the historical society. Her husband Ted (1918-2003), served as Chairman of the Pagan-Fletcher Restoration Committee from 1977 to 1992, where he successfully saw the project through completion. The meeting room on the second floor is named after him, where a portrait in oil is displayed in his honor.

Robert Presbrey, *Board Trustee*.

James Score, *Board Trustee* since 2017, moved to Valley Stream in 2002. Jim is a member of the American Legion and the Valley Stream Central High School Alumni Association. He enjoys equestrian sports.

Hank Selah, *Board Trustee* (now serving his third term), moved to Valley Stream in 1972. Selah, a past historical society president, received his bachelor's degree from Marist College. A pressman for the "New York Times" and the "New York Daily News," Selah was a Democratic Deputy Zone Leader, president of the Donahue Civic Association (now defunct), and a member of the Nassau County Democratic Committee. He participated in various political campaigns, alongside his wife, Karen. Other hobbies include computers, technology, fishing, running, and reading.

Karen (Vitale) Selah, *Secretary and Events Co-Chair*, moved to Valley Stream in 1956. Selah attended Central High School and the C.W. Post Campus of Long Island University (now known as LIU Post). Other positions that Selah has held within the society include president, vice president, and trustee (currently serving her fourth term). Selah started the annual Halloween costume contest at the Restoration and she and Co-chair Esposito originated the annual Pagan-Fletcher Candlelight Tour. Selah has been involved in many national and local governmental campaigns – presidential, congressional, senatorial, school board, mayoral and village trustee elections. Other affiliations and memberships that Selah enjoys included the Nassau County Democratic Committee and the Holy Name of Mary Religious Education program. History, reading, and spending time with her husband, Hank (past historical society president), are her other pastimes and favorite things to do.

Margaret Martino Swansig, *Board Trustee*, moved to Valley Stream in 1999 (also from 1959-1969). Swansig attended community college and worked for the Tilles Investment Company in Woodbury until 2005. Nowadays, she enjoys watching classic movies, going to the theater, and studying dance, yoga and Zumba.

Amy Vacchio, *Trustee*, is the director of the Town of Hempstead Rock Hall Museum. In addition to leading daily tours, she assists in the creation and implementation of the museum's educational program. She is also responsible for maintaining the archives, has participated in several archaeological surveys, is instrumental in developing and designing exhibitions, and provides consultation and support for the development of public programs. As a researcher, she continues to expand the historical narrative of Rock Hall and published "The Banisters and McNeills of Rock Hall Rediscovered" in the 2019 Nassau County Historical Society Journal. Vacchio received her B.A. in History from Hofstra University and an M.A. in Art History from Queens College. In 2023, Amy, and her colleague Matt Longo, completed a permanent map for St. George's Cemetery, detailing the locations of the "first families" that once resided in Hempstead. A mother of three, Vacchio has held several PTA positions at the Walter S. Boardman Elementary School and Oceanside Middle School, including President and Vice President of Fundraising. As Vice President of Cultural Arts, Amy also organized various educational programs.