

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.

Joseph Gunther, a Board Trustee since 2008, 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.

Angelo LaCalandra, a Board Trustee, went to Sewanaka 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.

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.

Hank Selah, a 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.