

PREFACE

“Material for the history of a school [district] accumulates in time, and should be carefully put on record. Experience has abundantly proven that matters seeming to be of no significance when recorded, have in after years, been of great value. Little things increase in importance as time passes.”¹

At the December 17, 1996 meeting of the Valley Stream Union Free School District Thirteen (hereinafter, “District Thirteen”) Board of Education, the following resolution was unanimously approved.

WHEREAS, this District is in receipt of a grant for records management in the 1996-97 school year, and

WHEREAS, our Records Management Clerk has uncovered a list of material which might be of interest to outside groups such as the Valley Stream Historical Society, etc., and

WHEREAS, we are mindful of the historical records maintained by the District, and

WHEREAS, the Valley Stream Union Free School District Thirteen Board of Education has appointed a Records Advisory Committee and Trustee William P. Stris is a member of that Committee,

THEREFORE, be it resolved that Trustee Stris be authorized to:

- a. review the material held in the District Records Room and any material under control of the District Clerk, including board minutes, for the purpose of seeing if a short history of District 13 can be produced², and*
- b. review these materials and prepare a recommendation for the Board of Education concerning material which might be donated and/or borrowed by the Valley Stream Historical Society; and*
- c. prepare a draft history of Valley Stream Union Free School District Thirteen to be presented to the Board of Education.³*

¹ A History of Public School 75 by William S. Mills, Columbia University Archives, New York, N.Y. (New York City Public School Collection).

² Once the project had commenced, I also solicited materials from the Valley Stream community at large. See e.g., Volume V of this text: Public Education in Valley Stream, New York During the 20th Century, William P. Stris (2005) (hereinafter, “Public Education in Valley Stream”) District Thirteen Newsletter, It’s Elementary Fall 1999 at 5 (“Please check Your Attic for History”) and It’s Elementary, Fall 2000 at 11 (Notice: The district is looking for copies of the following Closing Exercise Programs:) Volume II District Thirteen Scrapbook at 3,778 to 3,782 (Material requested). (Volume XVI District Thirty Scrapbook at 447 (“Information Requested”) – See also Public Education in Valley Stream, supra note 2, Volume XXII VSCHSD History – Appendix XVII Panorama Newsletter, February 1997, September 2004 and November 2004. Throughout this text – which encompasses twenty-seven [27] Volumes, cross-citations to particular pages will take the form of Public Education in Valley Stream, supra note 2, Volume #, Description of Text at # (referring to page number).

With the passage of this resolution, I began conducting research for a book entitled, “The History of Valley Stream Union Free School District Thirteen.” As my research continued over the years that followed, the scope of my project expanded.

The Valley Stream Union Free School District Twenty-Four⁴, (hereinafter, “District Twenty-Four”) the Valley Stream Union Free School District Thirty,⁵ (hereinafter, “District Thirty”) and the Valley Stream Central High School District⁶ (hereinafter, “High School District”) each ultimately passed Board resolutions similar to the resolution passed by District Thirteen in 1996. These additional Board resolutions provided me access to the Board minutes of all the Valley Stream school districts as well as to historical materials.⁷

³ See Public Education in Valley Stream, supra note 2 Volume II District Thirteen Scrapbook, at 2,441 to 2,443. (These pages are copies of minutes of district 24 allowing Trustee Stris, “to review the minutes of Valley Stream UFSD 24 for purposes of providing a history of Valley Stream.”) District 13 Board minutes Book, November 16, 2004 at 1. The board accepted one complete set of *Public Education In Valley Stream New York During the 20th Century*, to be housed in the Board Room, “and Volume I entitled VSUFSD Thirteen History to be housed in each school library.”

⁴ For the text of the District Twenty-Four resolution, see THE DISTRICT 24 BOARD MINUTE BOOKS of December 17, 1998. See Volume II District Thirteen Scrapbook at 3,750 for letter accepting history.

⁵ For the text of the District Thirty resolution, see THE DISTRICT 30 BOARD MINUTE BOOKS of January 25, 1999 at 4. The District 30 Board of Education made it very difficult to obtain their minute books. When it was pointed out that they were public records accessible under the Freedom of Information Act the Board relented and granted me access to one book at a time. There were over 36 books. See also Public Education in Valley Stream, supra note 2, Volume II, District 13 Scrapbook, at 2,443 (Letter from District 30 to research their archives for historical and educational research.), 2,833 ((Letter from District 30 to borrow one minute book at a time for a period of one year) and 3,805 (Letter from District 30 accepting history of their district).

⁶ For the exact text of the High School District’s resolution, see VSCHSD BOARD MINUTE BOOKS of February 14, 1997 at 4. See VSCHSD Board Minute Books, December 14, 2004 for resolution accepting history and “one copy will be placed in each school library and one complete set will be housed in the office of the Superintendent of Schools.” See also Public Education in Valley Stream, supra note 2, Volume II, District 13 Scrapbook, at 3,772.

⁷ In addition to material provided by the districts, I also consulted numerous other resources including local newspapers, the archives at State Education Department in Albany, the PTA archives in Albany and each local unit, the archives of the Town of Hempstead, the Long Island Studies Institute at Hofstra University, Queens Borough Public Library (See Volume II District Thirteen Scrapbook at 3,795), the Queens County Clerk’s Office (See Volume II at 4,121 & 4,122) the incorporated Village of Valley Stream (See Volume II at 4,123) the Valley Stream Historical Society, and the Valley Stream Henry Waldinger Memorial Library including their Oral Tape collection (hereinafter, “Waldinger Memorial Library”).

The title of my book changed from “The History of Valley Stream, Union Free School District Thirteen” to “Public Education in Valley Stream New York During the Twentieth Century.”⁸ The final text is comprised of twenty-seven [27] Volumes. Most of these Volumes are comprised of reproduced primary source material (i.e. photographs, yearbooks, newsletters).⁹ These documents chronicle the history of the Valley Stream school system as well as the early history of the Valley Stream community.

Four [4] of the twenty-seven [27] volumes are made up of narrative chapters that I have written. Each of these Volumes (I, VIII, XV, or XXII) is a short history of one of the four [4] Valley Stream Districts. In preparing these four [4] Volumes, I relied principally upon the minutes of board of education meetings of the various school districts in Valley Stream.¹⁰ My

⁸ See VSCHSD Board Minute books July 11, 2006 at 2 for donation resolution. It reads: “Whereas, this district and the elementary school districts in Valley Stream previously passed resolutions allowing trustee Stris access to material in order to compile a history of each district, Whereas, the VSCHSD Instructional Service Center (I.S.C.) has assisted in reproducing copies of these histories and additional primary source material, Whereas, five sets entitled ‘Public Education in Valley Stream New York During the Twentieth Century’ will be produced by I.S.C., Therefore, be it resolved that one complete set be donated to the following institutions:

Hofstra University – Long Island Studies Institute
Valley Stream Historical Society
Valley Stream Henry Waldinger Memorial Library
Valley Stream Union Free School District Thirteen

Therefore, be it further resolved that one volume of each School District History be donated to their respective school library.

⁹ Because “a picture is worth a thousand words,” I have included photographs related to the schools and old Valley Stream. I also included many student enrollment graphs. I wish to thank my brother-in-law, Stephen D’Onofrio, for compiling these graphs.

¹⁰ Valley Stream Union Free School Districts Thirteen, Twenty-Four, Thirty and the Valley Stream Central High School District Board Minutes are quoted exactly as written. Spelling and grammar have not been altered. I have used brackets [] for clarification. I have used the short form in citing school district minutes in footnotes (i.e. District 13 Board Minute Books for Union Free School District Thirteen minute book and VSCHSD Board Minute books for Valley Stream Central High School District). Local papers are liberally cited throughout the work. The Outlaw Newspaper was published in Valley Stream in 1923. (See Volume IX District Twenty-Four Scrapbook at 37 to 47 and 741 to 748 for some copies of the Outlaw newspaper.) It became the Valley Stream Mail and Gibson Herald Newspaper in 1925, the Valley Stream Maileader Newspaper in 1963 and the Valley Stream Herald Newspaper in 2000. For a short sketch of “Early Newspapers” in Valley Stream consult the Valley Stream Maileader Newspaper, June 10, 1976 at 62.

primary goal in preparing these four [4] Volumes is to present these minutes in an organized and accessible fashion. Towards this end, I have done three things.

Initially, I have synthesized material from numerous volumes into areas of general interest. For example, if one were curious about busing in the district, one could simply turn to Chapter Five entitled “Transportation.” Secondly, I have included within the books a number of articles written by other authors. Written during various time periods, they should make it easier for the reader to put the history of the school districts in perspective. Finally, I have included within the Volumes many notes and references to other sources. For those truly interested in learning about the evolution of the Valley Stream districts, these notes and references may prove to be an especially useful starting point for future research.

Of particular importance in these volumes are the primary source material¹¹ on Valley Stream and its public school system, which is assembled in one convenient place. I hope it will be of assistance to future students in understanding our local history.¹²

Although official minutes provide a wealth of information about the history of a school district, these documents have inherent limitations. Minutes, by definition, reveal only the

¹¹ Take note of the difficulty in deciphering early handwritten documents. See Public Education in Valley Stream supra note 2, Volume I District Thirteen History, Chapter Two at 20 to 33.

¹² At the present time the fourth grade curriculum in New York State includes local history. For more information on how to incorporate local history into the curriculum, I recommend an excellent book entitled Consider the Source—Historical Records in the Classroom, 1995, The University of the State of New York- The State Education Department-State Archives and Records Administration, Albany, NY 12230. See also Public Education in Valley Stream, super note 2, Volume IX District Twenty-Four Scrapbook at 645 to 718 for early newspaper references to Valley Stream.

official actions of an organization (here, the School Board).¹³ While they include the official votes of the trustees on all motions, they do not and cannot give a complete explanation of how that vote was reached, nor how much discussion preceded such votes. The following is an example: for three consecutive years, 1994-97, the minutes of the District Thirteen Board of Education indicate that the School Board presidency in that district was decided by a unanimous vote. While this was true of the public vote, the presidency was, in reality, decided in an executive session (i.e., closed meeting) on a 4-3 split decision.¹⁴

I would like to offer a few words on the format, which I have chosen for the four [4] narrative Volumes. As I intimated earlier, I have divided most material in these Volumes into sections of general interest (e.g., consolidation, land & buildings, the Valley Stream State Park, boundary lines, transportation, etc.). Within these sections I have attempted to follow the minutes chronologically beginning in the nineteenth century.¹⁵

¹³ The minutes of the boards of education of the various Valley Stream school districts are more comprehensive than most. Even superficial reading reveals the effort taken by numerous trustees to insure that these documents reflect events as they actually transpired.

¹⁴ I know this to be fact since I was the losing candidate on all three occasions.

¹⁵ I wish to thank Mr. James E. Buckley, chairman of the Trustees of the Valley Stream Historical Society for allowing me to use the institution's collection. He was "Person of the Year '08" – Valley Stream Herald Newspaper, December 25, 2008 at 1 & 2. The Valley Stream Historical Society's Collection, housed (as of this writing) in the Pagan/Fletcher House located at 143 Hendrickson Avenue, Valley Stream, NY 11580 (Tel: (516) -872-4159) has an extensive collection on the High School District. I also recommend viewing their photo collection. See Volume I District Thirteen History, Introduction at 68 and 69. I also wish to thank the Instructional Service Center (I.S.C.) staff of the Valley Stream High School District for the reproduction of these Volumes. This includes supervisor Edward Eagan, James Burke (See Volume I District Thirteen History at i and Volume II District Thirteen Scrapbook at 2,342, 2,444 and 3,137.) I think it will be interesting for future generations to know that Volume I – District Thirteen History, and XXII – VSCHSD History, were created with the use of a typewriter. The author did not become computer literate until the end of the project. Originally, Volume I was given to the I.S.C. office at the High School to type. As it became too burdensome to add new material, I retyped Volume I from scratch.

Of course, the reader will gain considerably more insight into the history of Valley Stream schools if (s)he keeps the occurrence, time and significance of external events in mind (e.g., World War I, The Great Depression, World War II, the advent and proliferation of private schools in the community, etc.). In short, read between the lines. Even statistics and lists of names can be more meaningful than immediately apparent. An example of this is the change, over time; in the way PTA presidents' names were recorded in official documents (e.g., Emilie Stris, instead of, Mrs. William Stris). This can probably be viewed as a consequence of the influence of the Women's Rights Movement on the Valley Stream Community.¹⁶

Volume V contains an index of all names that appear in District Thirteen newsletters (which, over the years, has gone by various names). The same is true for Volume XII which contains District Twenty-Four newsletters. Volume XXV A & B contains an index of all names that appear in the High School newsletter (called The Observer).¹⁷ The compilation of these indices was particularly arduous and time consuming.¹⁸ I believe, however, that these indices will be extremely helpful for future genealogical research.

¹⁶ The official change in Union Free School District Twenty-Four didn't occur until 1977. See District 24 Minute Books (June 29, 1977) (Letter of June 29, 1977 from Valerie Guido, a resident of the district, questioning the inclusion of the husband's first name, and stating her preference for the designation Ms. Mary Smith. Ms. Guido is to be advised that her suggestion has been received and that in the future the PTA will have the further option of the designation 'Ms.' on the form we provide them.)

¹⁷ Old copies of the Observer Newsletter were removed from the closet in which they were improperly stored. Volume XXVA & B – VSCHSD Newsletter – The Observer, contains reproductions of these past issues. VSCHSD Board Minute books (June 10, 2003 at 23) (“The Board agreed to have the original Observer editions sent to I.S.C. to be placed in archival folders.”)

¹⁸ This was also true for Volume XXII VSCHSD History, Appendix XI – Athletic Awards and Academic Scholarships.

Ultimately, five [5] full sets were produced and donated to the following institutions:¹⁹

- The Long Island Studies Institute of Hofstra University.
- The Valley Stream Historical Society.
- The Valley Stream Henry Waldinger Memorial Library.
- The Valley Stream Central High School District's Superintendent's Office.
- The District Thirteen Office.

One copy of the applicable school history (Volume I, VIII, XV or XXII) was donated to each school library in the various Valley Stream districts.²⁰ For example, District Twenty-Four received one copy of Volume VIII for each of their three school libraries. One copy of Volume Zero, with DVD's of the entire project was donated to every School Library in Valley Stream. Most original papers were donated to the Long Island Studies Institute.²¹

¹⁹ On January 19, 2000 I requested that District Thirteen finance a large portion of this project. My request was denied at this committee of the whole meeting by a 4 to 3 vote. Trustee Dinkoff, Subbiondo, Viggiano and Chase indicated that this "expense was not necessary" and voted no. In addition to me, trustees Chiachiere and Clerico voted to proceed. Trustee Chiachiere then proposed that District Thirteen pay to print at least one copy of Volume I. This proposal was rejected by the same vote. Ultimately, I decided to personally bear the expense of producing these Volumes and received some financial assistance from the Valley Stream Central High School District.

²⁰ Each public Valley Stream School District library received the following binders to maintain updated 21st Century material. District 13 Volumes III, IV, V, and VI – District 24 Volumes X, XI, XII, and XIII – District 30 Volumes XVII, XVIII, XIV and XX and VSCHSD Volumes XXIII, XXIV, XXV, and XXVI. See Volume II_District Thirteen Scrapbook at 3,497 and 3,508.

²¹ The PTA newsletters of District Thirteen, one incomplete set of Volume III (yearbooks of District Thirteen), and one original set of Volume IV (calendar of events for District Thirteen), most photos in Chapter four of Volume I, one incomplete original set of Volume III, one Volume of VA – 1954 to 1979 newsletters, one Volume of VB – 1980 to 2000 newsletters and one assorted Volume V Newsletters were returned to District Thirteen. Most photographs in Chapter Four of Volume I (History of District Thirteen) were donated to the Valley Stream Historical Society.

The PTA newsletters of District Twenty-Four along with Volume XII (District Twenty-Four Newsletters) and one original set of Volume XIV (Closing exercise programs for District Twenty-Four) were donated to District Twenty-Four.

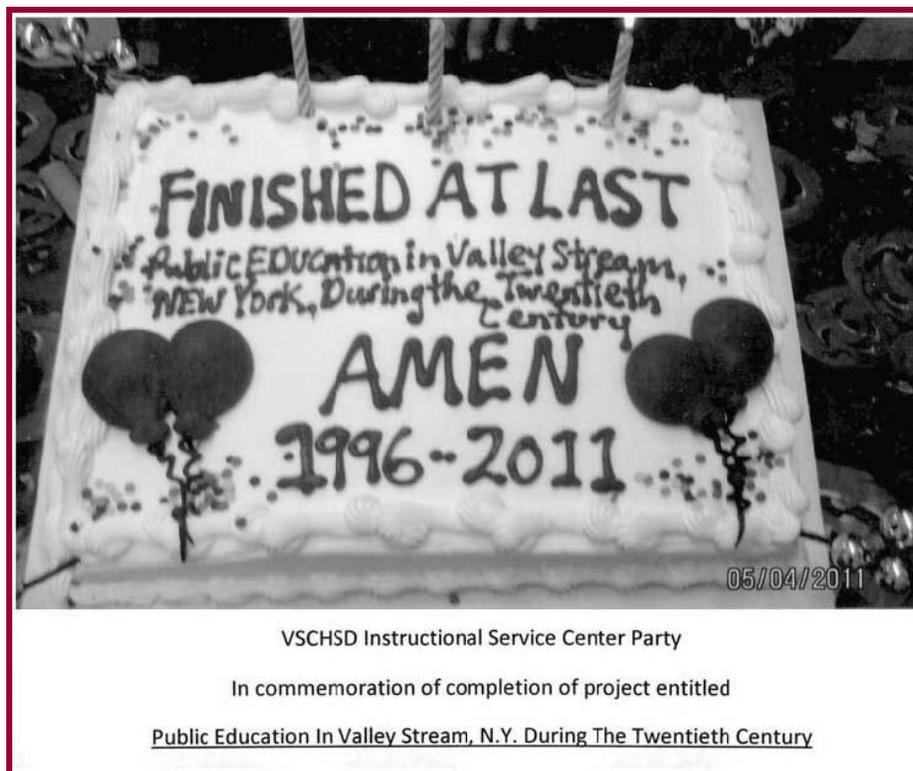
The PTA newsletters of District Thirty, most photographs in Chapter Four in Volume XV (History of District Thirty), one incomplete original set of Volume XVI (Scrapbook of District Thirty), one partial set of Volume XVII (yearbooks of District Thirty), one original set of Volume XVII. One original set of Volume XVIII (Calendars of District Thirty), one original set of Volume XIX A & B (Newsletters of District Thirty), one black bound Volume XIX, with subject index from 1957 to 1983, Volume XX (PTA Newsletters to each school) and one original set of Volume XXI (Closing Exercise Programs of District Thirty) were returned to District Thirty.

The High Districts' School PTA Newsletters, Volume XXIII, (Central, North and South Graduation Programs) were donated to the three schools.

It is my sincere hope that in the future someone will write, “Public Education in Valley Stream New York During the Twenty-First Century.”²² To this end, I have enclosed the blue pages (in the VSUFSD Thirteen set)²³ to continue the original format if desired.

Finally, I thank God, “The Great Architect of the Universe,” for giving me the health, time, strength and ability to complete this project. As always, I take complete responsibility for any errors in this presentation.

William P. Stris
December 31, 2000
Valley Stream Historical Society Life Member



²² This would be an excellent opportunity to add material to the original project and correct any errors.

²³ As of this writing the set is contained in the glass show case directly to the right of the entrance to the Elsa Dickerson Auditorium at the James A. Dever School.

BOARD TRUSTEE GOES BACK IN TIME

BY JENNIFER GUTTMAN

Board of Education Trustee Bill Stris is busy going back in time to 1927 Valley Stream, after a resolution was passed at the December board meeting allowing him to go through the archives of District 13's minute books.

"History is today," said Stris, a Valley Stream resident since 1978. "I have always enjoyed history, and I have had experience in writing history."

Stris is the co-author of the "First One Hundred Years of Reliance Lodge #776 F. & A. M 1877-1977," the history of his fraternal organization, Reliance Lodge #776 Free & Accepted Masons.

He has also compiled a short history of the Parkwold community, where he lives with his wife and son. The book captures the history of the area from 1930 through the present.

Stris put together pictures of the houses and facts about the neighborhood as a gift to newcomers to the vicinity.

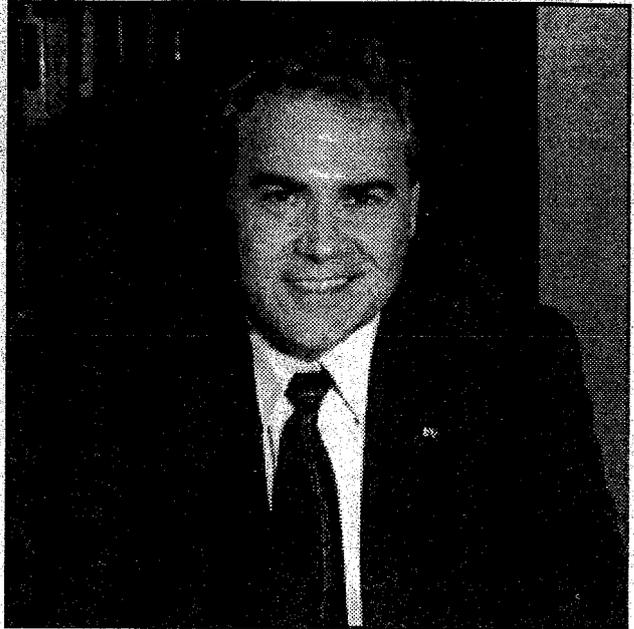
Aside from being a history buff, Stris has been a teacher at PS 75 for 30 years, where he found a complete history of elementary schools since the turn of the century in their archives.

Stris has served as a Trustee on the District 13 Board of Education and the High School Board throughout the past 15 years. He first started to get involved when he, along with his wife and other parents, inquired about creating a gifted and talented program in District 13. Since then, Stris became involved in many other issues, including BOCES and a committee for AIDS instruction.

Over the past 15 years he has seen many changes within the district, including the advancement in technology. "Schools have to be on the cutting edge," he said.

Stris said money in the district is tight, placing a burden on taxpayers, "[you get] the bang for your buck in the elementary schools in District 13, but I don't think it's true for the high schools," he said, adding the high schools need a tremendous amount of work and repairs.

Stris said that one of the issues for the future is centralization, which would create a common school district for kindergarten through 12th grade, and permit overcrowded elementary schools to send sixth graders to the junior high school. Eventually, this may lead to separating the Junior and Senior High Schools to create more room.



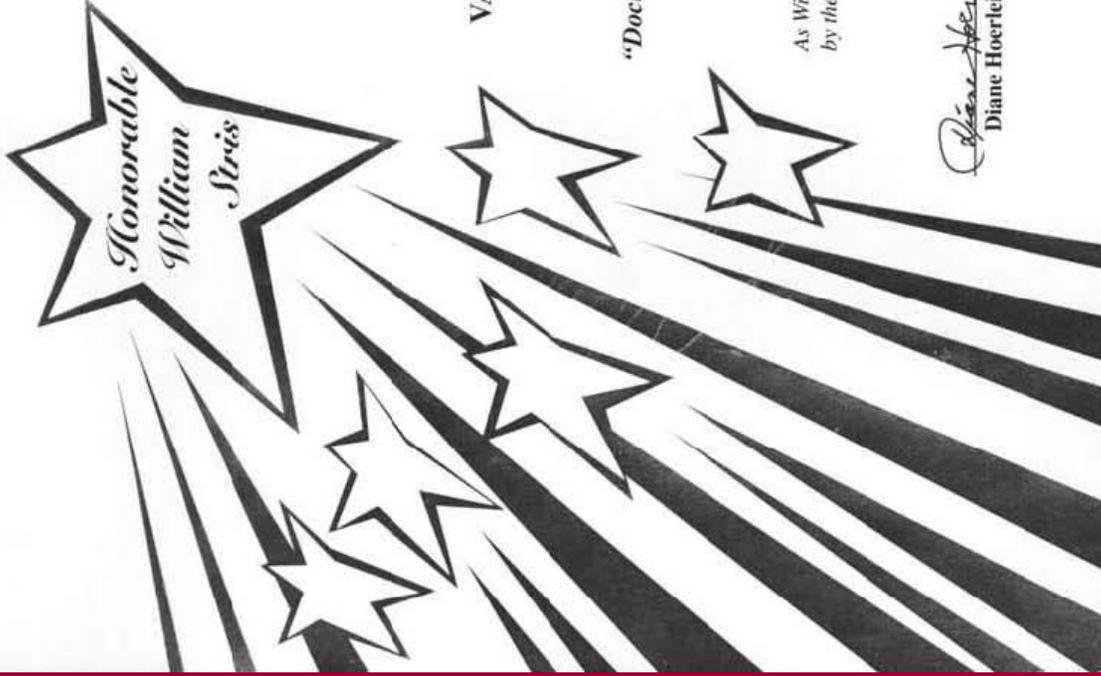
William Stris

The feasibility of consolidation is being looked at, but "it will be up to the taxpayers," Stris said "to decide whether this idea is passed or not."

Stris found the present the perfect opportunity to compile a history. The PTA just celebrated 100 years along with the New York State School Board Association. This summer Stris was diagnosed with Guillain-Barré syndrome, and he had to take a leave from teaching for a year. Using the time wisely, Stris decided to "take a negative and make a positive, and have something to show for it," he said.

Once Stris has finished researching the history of District 13, he plans to have a copy in each of the school's libraries.

The archives only contain minute books beginning in 1927, and Stris is missing any prior historical facts. If anyone has or knows anyone with information from 1927 or earlier about District 13, send it to the School District Offices, James A. Dever School 585 N. Corona Ave., Valley Stream, N.Y. 11580 or Bill Stris at 41 E. Parkwold Drive, Valley Stream, N.Y. 11580.



*Honorable
William
Stris*

INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES CENTER

of the

VALLEY STREAM CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
for

The Supreme Accomplishment of the
“Documentary History of the Valley Stream Central High School District”
while enduring difficult and extremely diverse circumstances
and severe scrutiny of and within the
Instructional Services Center Environment.

As Witnessed and Presented this date of May 5, 2011
by the ISC Staff Members:

Ed Eagan
Ed Eagan

James Burke
James Burke

Diane Hoerlein
Diane Hoerlein

Undine Kaufman
Undine Kaufman

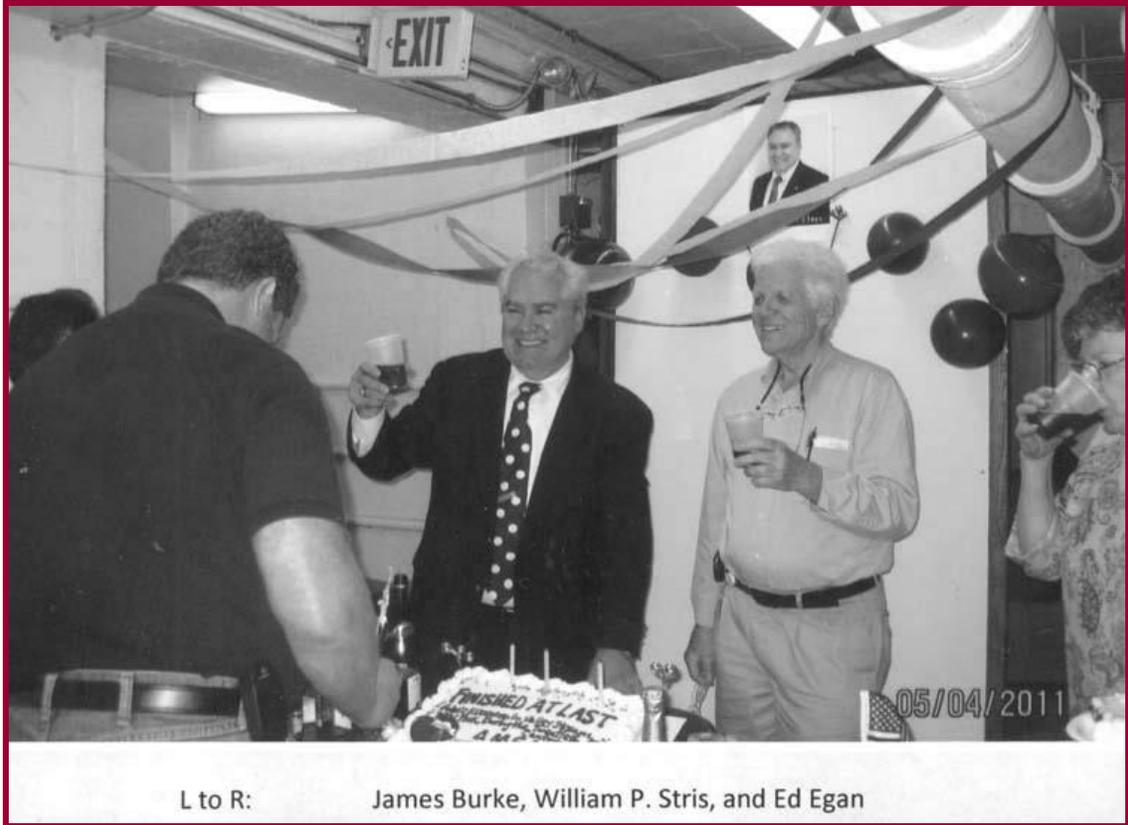
Lorraine Tucci
Lorraine Tucci



Diane Hoerlein, Undine Kaufman, William P. Stris, Lorraine Tucci,
James Burke and Ed Egan



L to R: Diane Hoerlein, Undine Kaufman, Lorraine Tucci, William P. Stris,
James Burke and Ed Egan



L to R: James Burke, William P. Stris, and Ed Egan

DRAFT
MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE
VALLEY STREAM CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
HELD IN THE BOARD ROOM
DISTRICT OFFICES
ONE KENT ROAD, VALLEY STREAM, NEW YORK
APRIL 14, 2011

Board Members Present: Elise Antonelli, Dr. Frank Chiachiere, Kenneth Cummings, Jeanne Greco Jacobs, Anthony Iadevaio, Carolyn Pean, William Stris, Lawrence Trogel, Ian Wraith

Board Members Absent: n/a

Officers of the Board and Administrators Present: N/A

Meeting Opened

Board President Cummings called the meeting to order at 9:00 p.m.

Discussion

Trustee Stris asked his fellow Board members if they would object to moving the books depicting the history of the District out of the Superintendent's office and putting them in the Board Room. Some of the Board members felt it would be better in the library however Trustee Stris felt that this was a history of the District and that the Board Room would be the best place for them. The consensus of the Board was that it was appropriate to move the books to the Board Room.

Motion to Enter Executive Session

Upon motion of Trustee Stris, seconded by Trustee Jacobs and carried unanimously, the Board entered into Executive Session at 9:10 p.m. for the purpose of discussing candidates for the position of Superintendent with just the Board of Education present.

At 9:59 p.m. the Board came out of Executive Session and entered into Public Session.

Motion to Adourn

On motion of Trustee Jacobs, seconded by Trustee Pean and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Submitted by:

Mary E. Colgan, District Clerk

April 14, 2011 Special Meeting