

The Lamplight

The Quarterly Newsletter
of the Chancellor Robert R Livingston
Masonic Library of the Grand Lodge of New York
nymasoniclibrary.org
(212) 337-6619

Winter 2021-2022

The Chancellor Robert R Livingston Masonic Library serves as the central research library of the Grand Lodge of New York. The Mission of the Library is to collect, preserve, interpret, and support the research and education for a community of scholars, including Freemasons, academics, undergraduate and graduate students, and the general public. Our institution features the foremost collections of the history, philosophy, culture and organization of American and International Freemasonry, with an emphasis on Freemasonry in New York State.

From the Director

As we approach the end of the year, the Library & Museum continues to operate with specific guidelines in place for visitors and researchers. A guideline (adopted at the end of the summer) requires proof of vaccination to enter the Library & Museum. These guidelines are found at: <https://nymasoniclibrary.org/re-opening/>.

The Library & Museum staff is hard at work on various projects. Ratirat Osiri, our Museum Technician, has completed cataloging and digitizing our collection of postcards of New York Masonic buildings. Joseph Patzner, our Librarian, has obtained permission to host the complete Transactions of the American Lodge of Research on our Odilo e-resources platform.

My own work, in addition to running the Library & Museum, is focusing on projects that will bring greater visibility to our vast collections. For example, I am currently working on a comprehensive inventory of our framed artifact collection. Further, I am also planning a virtual Masonic artifact presentation, which will allow the Brethren from all corners of the state to view our impressive curated collections. If your Lodge is interested in this virtual presentation, please email me at Avastola@nymasoniclibrary.org.

Stay tuned for the next issue of The Lamplight e-newsletter, which will be circulated in the Spring.

Fraternally yours,
Bro. Alexander Vastola, Director/Curator

From the Library Trustees

To our Friends and Patrons:

It is a pleasure to welcome you all to our fourth edition of The Lamplight. We are grateful to have this forum to spread the word of The Chancellor Robert R Livingston Masonic Library's activities, accomplishments, and aspirations. The Trustees and staff of the Library are committed to bringing the Library to you. The Lamplight is only one facet of this goal. We are proud of our new online Library as well. We have recently added several volumes of interest. Our plan is to enhance the online collection, both through purchasing licenses for additional materials and eventually digitizing works from within our own collection. The aim of all this is to make your Livingston Library a one-stop-shop for your quest for more Masonic Light.

Perhaps the most exciting news about the Library's expansion of services is that we will be sharing documents and publications of the American Lodge of Research (ARL) through our online reading system, Odilo. We very much look forward to sharing this material through the Odilo platform and we are equally happy to have this new long-term partnership with ARL. If you are not yet signed up for the Odilo program, please do so. The instructions are available on our website at Nymasoniclibrary.org/digital-library/

Thanks again for your continuing interest, support, and words of encouragement.

Best of the Holiday Season to all!

Most fraternally,
Steve King, President
Livingston Library Board of Trustees

Expansion of Digital Resources

Joseph Patzner, Librarian

I am proud to announce the Library has recently started a partnership with The American Lodge of Research (ALR), which allows us to share digital copies of back issues of their Transactions. The Transactions are a wealth of Masonic scholarship. Patrons will be able to access these books through our digital library on Odilo. Please note, future issues will be available as a physical copy in the Library for five (5) years before being made available on Odilo.

Additionally, I am working with Masonic publishers to gain further access to fraternal publications that are not currently available to our patrons.

To request access to Odilo*, make book suggestions, or if you have any questions, please contact me at: Jpatzner@nymasoniclibrary.org.

***Please note borrowing privileges are granted to Entered Apprentices Fellowcrafts, and Master Masons who are members in good standing of a lodge under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of State of New York.**

From the Museum Collection

Digitizing the New York Masonic Temples and Masonic Home Postcard Collection

Ratirat Osiri, Museum Technician

We are delighted to announce that our New York Masonic Temples and Masonic Home postcard collection is now digitized and available for viewing on our online museum. This impressive online postcard collection would not be possible without the generosity of RW Howard J. Lasker, a member of Wadsworth Lodge No. 417. His incredible collection of Masonic postcards consisting of 4,250 items was donated to our Museum in 2008, and they have contributed exceptionally to our valuable collection.



Postcards of the Masonic Temple in Brooklyn, New York

Being a member of fraternal organizations was highly popular among men in the late 19th century to the early 20th century, and this resulted in numerous Masonic Temples being erected and dedicated to accommodate the members. Around the same time, the popularity of postcards was at an all-time high. Architecture was one of the popular subjects published on millions of postcards covers, and Masonic architecture across the country was no exception. However, as the membership declined in later years, many Masonic buildings went through changes and renovations, changed ownership, or were demolished. The images of Masonic buildings published on postcards by various publishers have, unintentionally, preserved the visual history of Masonic architecture in America in its prime.



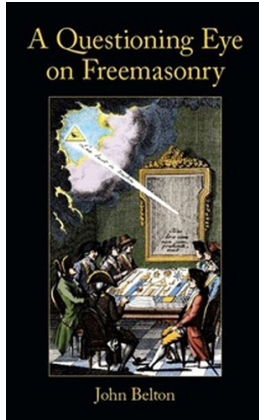
Postcards of the Masonic Temple in Utica, New York

Our New York Masonic postcard collection primarily consists of colorful lithographic postcards and black and white photographic postcards of Masonic temples across New York State and the Masonic Home from various angles. Please visit our website for more information:

<https://nymasoniclibrary.org/new-york-masonic-temple-postcards-collection/>

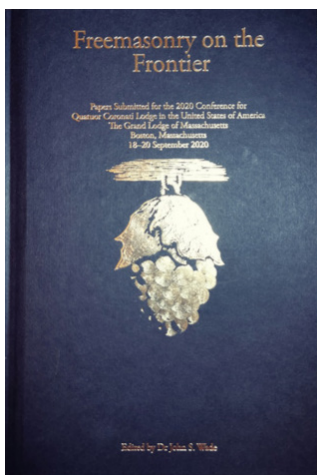
New Acquisitions

By Alexander Vastola



A Questioning Eye on Freemasonry by John Belton

This book contains a collection of well-researched articles that explores several curious Masonic topics in terms of their historical context and their relation to society at large. Some examples of the articles contained in this book are: how the English supported Garibaldi; what is the place of the Royal Arch within the context of Ancient Masonry; the Scottish Freemason who was the inventor of the concept of the Savings Bank; and the 1813 reunion of the Antient & Modern Grand Lodges in England.



Freemasonry on the Frontier Edited by John S. Wade

This book has a collection of 17 manuscripts written by several prominent academic and Masonic researchers that trace the development of Masonry in America from the colonial era and the original 13 colonies to the beginnings of Masonry on the American pacific coast. Two notable publications in this anthology of Masonic writings are “The American Frontier: The Foundations of American Freemasonry: Americas First Provincial Grand Masters,” by Ric Berman, and “The Higher Degrees in the United States, 1730-1830,” by S. Brent Morris.

2022 Virtual Library Lectures:

January 27 – “A History of Calendars,” Christophe P. Lobry-Boulanger

February 24 – “A New Perspective on the Old William Morgan Affair,” Mark D. Isaacs

March 31 – “Sicilian Builders: Beyond Roman and Etruscans,” Ivan Boluarte

April 28 – “English Fraternal Support for Garibaldi 1848-1870: London to the Italian Risorgimento,” John Belton

May 26 – “Brother Thomas Smith Webb and his Contribution to Freemasonry,” Tom Jordan

June 30 – “Astro-theology,” Micah Dank

October 27 – “The History of the 4th Manhattan Masonic District,” Philippe R. Hiolle

Thank you to the 4th Manhattan District Square Club for their sponsorship of our lecture series!

Staff Directory

Alexander Vastola, Director/Curator
Avastola@nymasoniclibrary.org

Joseph Patzner, Librarian
Jpatzner@nymasoniclibrary.org

Ratirat Osiri, Museum Technician
Rosiri@nymasoniclibrary.org

Additional Library Resources

Odilo E-Resources Platform

The Livingston Masonic Library offers several Masonic books through Odilo, our new e-resources platform: <http://nymasoniclibrary.odilo.us/>. To register for an Odilo account please e-mail Joseph Patzner, Jpatzner@nymasoniclibrary.org.

Masonic Reading Course

The Library offers 17 reading courses. Go to <https://nymasoniclibrary.org/reading-course/> or email Jpatzner@nymasoniclibrary.org for more information.

Genealogy Research

The Library provides Masonic information on Master Masons who were raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason within the New York Grand Jurisdiction. Go to <https://nymasoniclibrary.org/research/> or email Joseph Patzner, Jpatzner@nymasoniclibrary.org for more information.

Research Requests

For non-genealogy Masonic research requests, email, Joseph Patzner at: Jpatzner@nymasoniclibrary.org

Library Hours (Open by appointment only)

Monday: 9:00 AM-5:00 pm
Tuesday: 12:00 PM-8:00 pm
Wednesday: 9:00 AM-5:00 pm
Thursday: 12:00 PM-8:00 pm
Friday: 9:00 AM-5:00 pm

To Our Loyal Patrons

We hope you continue to support our mission to advance the understanding of, and appreciation for, Masonic history and culture in New York State. There are two ways that donations can be made. First, checks can be made out to “Livingston Masonic Library” and sent to our mailing address below. The Second is through the Brotherhood Fund Campaign portal on the Grand Lodge webpage, <https://nymasons.org/>.

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