

## *The Lamplight*

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

Winter 2022

### **Mission Statement**

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 of Collections Services**

The Library & Museum continues to operate with specific guidelines in place for visitors and researchers. These guidelines are found at: <https://nymasoniclibrary.org/re-opening/>

In addition, we are pleased to report that a comprehensive inventory of the Masonic artifact collection at our Library's Utica site is now complete. With Ratirat Osiri's professional expertise, we were able to fully catalog 70 significant artifacts in the Utica collection.

August marked the departure of Joseph Patzner as the Librarian of the Livingston Masonic Library. Joseph started as our full-time Librarian in 2017, and was a familiar face to all Library patrons. During his tenure as Librarian, Joseph was also instrumental in helping to implement the Odilo e-resources platform for the Library, which has allow patrons to access Masonic books digitally during the Covid-19 pandemic. The staff of the Library will miss Joseph, and we wish him well on his future professional endeavors.

In November, the Livingston Masonic Library welcomed Michael LaRocco as the Library's new Executive Director. The staff looks forward to working with Michael on Library projects and initiatives.

Stay tuned for the next issue of *The Lamplight*, which will be circulated in March 2023.

Fraternally yours,

Bro. Alexander Vastola, Director of Collections Services

## From the Library Trustees

Dear friends and patrons of the Livingston Masonic Library,

It is always a pleasure to be a part of the latest issue of *The Lamplight*. Whatever the season, reading through the articles as we prepare for publication is always enlightening in a number of ways. We see the way Library staff help to shape our mission by the topics and images that make the final cut. We learn something with each new issue. We develop keener insights on ways and means of spreading Masonic Light.

I am also very pleased to announce a new addition to the Library's family: V.W. Michael LaRocco has joined us as Executive Director. Many will already be familiar with Bro. Michael as one of our Lecture presenters. His knowledge, enthusiasm and desire to bring the benefits of Library to the Brethren will help us advance our educational and cultural mission. Welcome aboard, Bro. Michael.

At the same time, we have an additional change: our Librarian, Joseph Patzner, took advantage of a new and challenging career opportunity at one of the City of New York's libraries. To say he will be missed is an understatement. Joseph was instrumental in getting our E-book library up and running. He spent hundreds of hours digitizing the record of our Annual Proceedings. Most recently, he was the host of our virtual lecture series. Joseph improved the quality of every program he touched. I enjoyed working directly with Joseph on projects. His professional insights, experience and enthusiasm were always invaluable. I wish him good luck and continued professional excellence. I am sure you will join me in extending those good wishes.

I hope you enjoy receiving *The Lamplight* as much as we enjoy bringing it to you. Please visit the Library's website ([www.nymasoniclibrary.org](http://www.nymasoniclibrary.org)) to keep abreast of our comings and goings. There is always something happening at your one stop venue for every kind of Masonic learning.

Thank you, and see you around the Jurisdiction.

Fraternally yours,

R.W. Stephen S. King

President, Livingston Masonic Library Board of Trustees

## From the Executive Director

Greeting, Brethren,

I am Michael LaRocco, the new Executive Director for our world-renowned Library. Some might remember me from my lectures at the Library over the years.

My goal is to bring the operations of the Library back to a sense of normalcy, with promoting the reading courses, the history projects, the e-book programs, along with the lecture series. An initial step towards these goals will be my visitations at lodges. These lodge-presentations will promote Library resources available to the Brethren, all the while underscoring the historic and cultural riches our institution possess. One such event is lecturing on M.W. Charles W. Smith's (1913) ivory gavel at Hebron Lodge No. 813. Though the date of the presentation has not been secured at the time of this newsletter, when details are finalized, I invite all Brethren to attend and support Hebron Lodge and your Library.

If the Library can be of service to you or your lodge, please contact me at: 212-337-6620 or [mlarocco@nymasoniclibrary.org](mailto:mlarocco@nymasoniclibrary.org)

Sincerely and fraternally,

V.W. Michael LaRocco

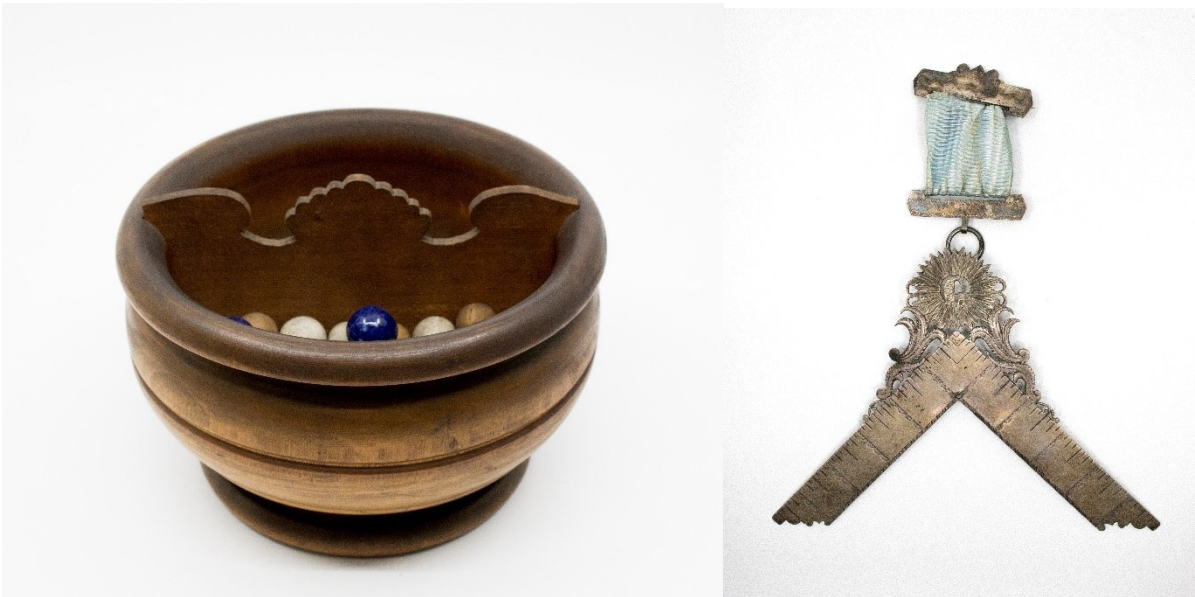
Executive Director, Livingston Masonic Library

## **Masonic Artifacts from the Library's Utica Site Now on the Online Museum**

### **By Ratirat Osiri, Museum Technician**

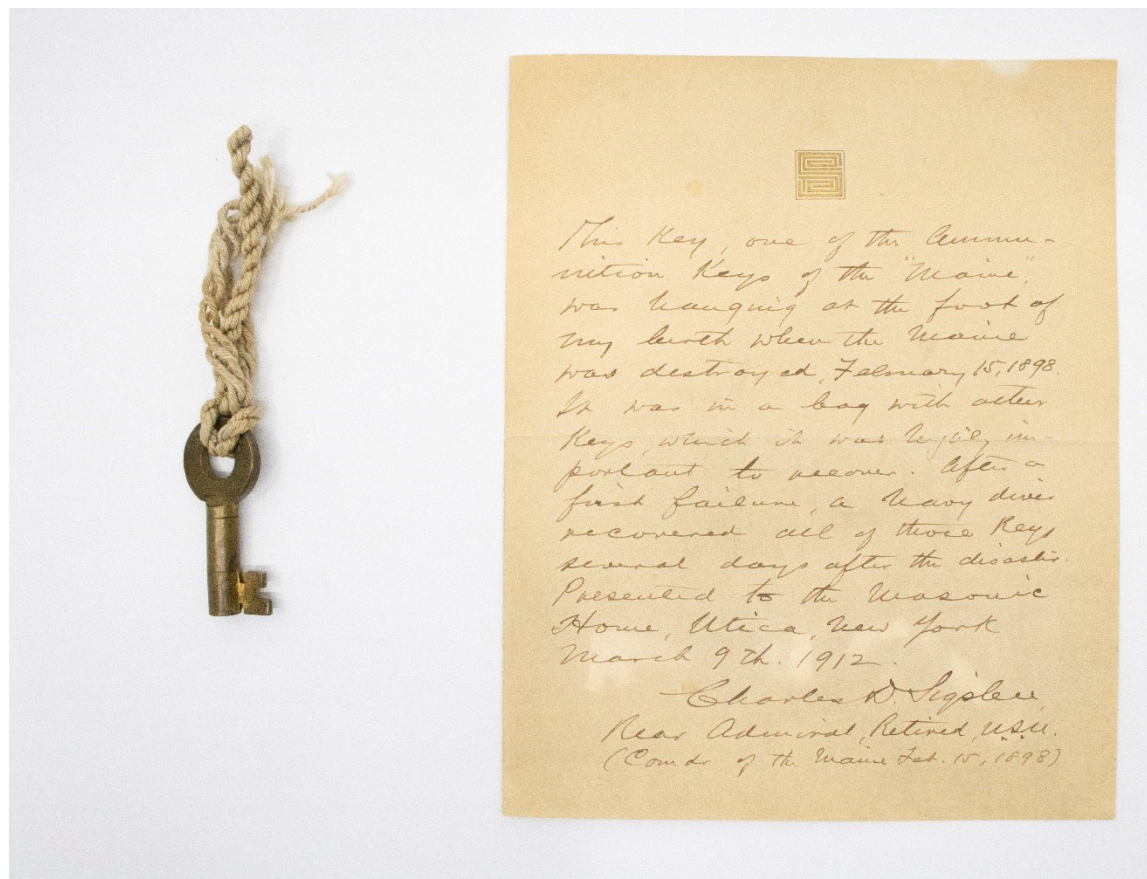
We are pleased to announce that selections of artifacts from the Library's Utica site at the Utica Masonic Temple are now available on the online Museum.

The new additions include the Masonic relic collection from Central City Lodge No. 305, which is now Fayetteville Central City Lodge, No. 305. In the Central City collection are the first set of lodge officer jewels - dating back to 1850s. Additionally, in the Lodge's collection, is a ballot box.



*The ballot box of Central City Lodge No. 305 (Left) and the Lodge's Master's jewel (Right)*

Another artifact that is available via the online Museum is the 'ammunition' magazine key of USS Maine. In 1898, the USS Maine exploded in Havana harbor in Cuba, which eventually led to the Spanish–American War of 1898. Rear Admiral Charles Dwight Sigsbee, who was captain of the USS Maine at the time, personally presented the magazine key to the New York Masonic Home.



*The ammunition magazine key of the USS Maine with a letter signed by Rear Admiral Charles D. Sigsbee, captain of the USS Maine*

Another treasure trove of Masonic artifacts that are available on the online Museum are the collection of Utica trowels. Many of these trowels were used to lay the cornerstones of the buildings throughout the history of the Masonic Home (Masonic Care Community).

For more information about these and other Utica trowels, read the blog post by Ratirat Osiri on the Robert R Livingston Masonic Library website: <https://nymasoniclibrary.org/blog-2/>





*The engraved trowel from the 1891 cornerstone ceremony of the New York Masonic Home*



*The engraved trowel from the 1896 cornerstone ceremony of the Children's Building at the New York Masonic Home*

## 2023 Virtual Library Lectures

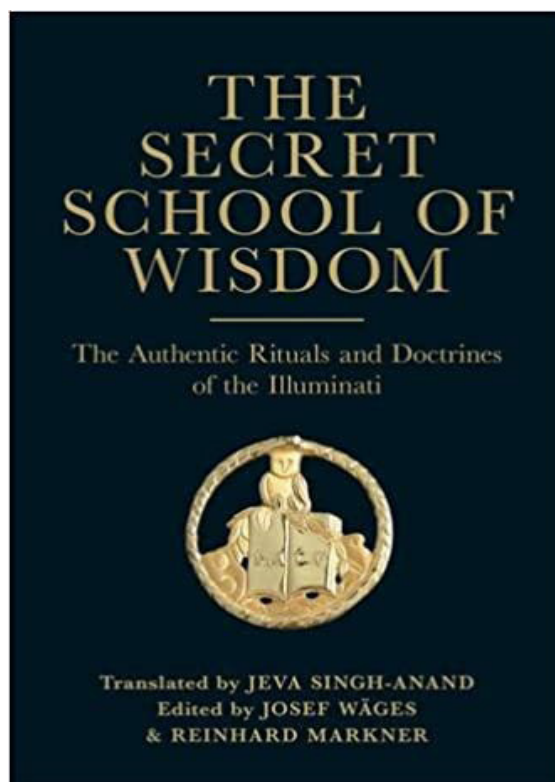
Thursday, March 23, 2023 – Curator’s Lecture: “Salon de Rose Croix”, Tony Crisos

Thursday, September 28, 2023 – “The History of the 4th Manhattan Masonic District”, Philippe R. Hiolle

*Thank you to the 4th Manhattan District Square Club for their sponsorship of the Virtual Library Lectures!*

## New Acquisitions

**By Alexander Vastola, Director of Collections Services**



(Courtesy: Ian Allan Publishing)

It has been well-over two centuries since the suppression of the Illuminati in Germany, yet they still are the subject of elaborate and sinister conspiracy theories. Conspiracy theorists have accused them of devil worship, blood sacrifices, and trying to take over the world and establish a New World Order. This book, however, originally published in 1893 and now available in this English translation, provides a more accurate picture of the real Illuminati, founded by Adam Weishaupt. Instead of focusing on conspiracy theories about the Illuminati, this text aims to show the actual rituals and doctrines of the secret society. *The Secret School of Wisdom* is a necessary read for researchers seeking to obtain a more accurate understanding of the workings of this infamous secret society.

## Notice About the Library's Odilo E-Resources Platform

The Livingston Masonic Library offers several Masonic books and periodicals through Odilo, our e-resource platform: <http://nymasoniclibrary.odilo.us/>.

To set up an Odilo account, email Alexander Vastola at: [Avastola@nymasoniclibrary.org](mailto:Avastola@nymasoniclibrary.org)

## Additional Library Resources

### Masonic Reading Course

The Library offers 17 reading courses. Information about the Library's Masonic Reading Course is available at: <https://nymasoniclibrary.org/reading-course/>

### Genealogy Research

The Library provides Masonic information on Master Masons, within the New York Grand Jurisdiction. Information about the Library's Masonic genealogy research services is available at: <https://nymasoniclibrary.org/research/>

### Research Requests

For non-genealogy Masonic research requests, email Alexander Vastola at: [Avastola@nymasoniclibrary.org](mailto:Avastola@nymasoniclibrary.org)

## 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. Second is through the Brotherhood Fund Campaign portal on the Grand Lodge webpage (<https://www.nymasons.org/>).

**The Chancellor Robert R Livingston Masonic Library**  
**71 West 23rd Street, 14th Floor New York, N.Y. 10010**  
**Telephone: (212) 337-6619**  
**[www.nymasoniclibrary.org](http://www.nymasoniclibrary.org)**



## Staff Directory

Michael LaRocco, Executive Director  
Email: [MLarocco@nymasoniclibrary.org](mailto:MLarocco@nymasoniclibrary.org)  
Phone: (212) 337-6620

Alexander Vastola, Director of Collections Services  
Email: [Avastola@nymasoniclibrary.org](mailto:Avastola@nymasoniclibrary.org)  
Phone: (212) 337-6619

Ratirat Osiri, Museum Technician  
Email: [Rosiri@nymasoniclibrary.org](mailto:Rosiri@nymasoniclibrary.org)  
Phone: (212) 337-6618