

**Chancellor Robert R Livingston  
Masonic Library of Grand Lodge  
Annual Report for the year 2008**

**Mission Statement**

The mission of the Chancellor Robert R Livingston Masonic Library of Grand Lodge is to collect, preserve, interpret, and make available for education and research, to both members of the Fraternity and others, such materials as relate to the history, philosophy, culture, and organization of Freemasonry, in its social and historical contexts, with a special emphasis on Freemasonry in New York State.

**Processus Contra Templarios**

In October 2007, the Vatican announced the publication of the *Processus Contra Templarios*, a collection of facsimile documents copied from material filed in the Vatican Archives, dating to 1308 CE. These documents included testimony from members of the Knights Templar, taken during questioning by a Papal tribunal conducted by Clement V, following the 1307 arrest of the Order by Philip IV of France. The announcement started a discussion among members of the Library Board of Trustees and the Director as to the viability and propriety of acquiring the *Processus* for the Livingston Library.

The debate centered around the historical and thematic connection between the Knights Templar of the Crusades and contemporary Freemasonry. Many popular reports and speculations assert a link between the two groups while providing no valid historical documentation of any connection. Based on historical analysis alone, there seemed little reason to place the *Processus* in our collection of Masonic material. However, our collections include material relating to legends, philosophy, and thematic aspects of Freemasonry, not only history. We interpret our mission to include providing resources for areas of inquiry expressed by our patrons and researchers, many of whom study the Knights Templar of the Crusades and possible Masonic roots.

A final consideration was funding, which was answered by a targeted endowment left to the Library by past Trustee R.:W.: Edward J. Scheider, intended for use in the acquisition of rare or unique Masonic texts. R.:W.: Scheider's bequest allowed us to acquire the *Processus* without diverting funds from existing operating expenses. After much debate, the decision was made to obtain one of the 799 published copies, and the *Processus* arrived at our Manhattan branch in March 2008.

The *Processus* includes twelve synthetic reproductions of 1308 parchments of the Templar testimony. The facsimiles go so far as to re-create the mildew stains, tears and folds, and other imperfections of the original documents. The original text was hand written in Latin, and verified with seals of the Inquisitors from Clement's tribunal. The contents of the parchments are transcribed in Latin in a bound volume, which is supplemented with historical commentary by Vatican historian Barbara Frale, printed in English and Italian.

We've experienced a very positive response to the acquisition. Masonic and non-Masonic visitors are fascinated and intrigued by all components of the *Processus*. A display of the material at St. John's weekend in Utica convinced the Board to bring the *Processus* to more Brothers across the state, and prompted the development of a cross-state, week-long trip of exhibitions and lectures with the *Processus*.

From October 19-October 25, R.:W.: William Thomas, Trustee, and R.:W.: Thomas Savini, Director, accompanied by R.:W.: Thomas's wife, Susan, travelled across New York State, stopping at a different Masonic location each day. Each stop included a two-hour program of viewing, lecture, and questions relating to the *Processus*, the Knights Templar, and speculative Freemasonry. The tour started in Wappingers Falls; advanced to Troy; continued to Cooperstown; moved on to North Syracuse; drove west to Great Valley; and concluded with two stops in Buffalo, just in time to attend the banquet honoring M.:W.: Edward G. Gilbert, Grand Master of Masons in the State of New York, on October 25. At each stop, audiences of local Masons, historians, antiquarians, history buffs, conspiracy theorists, and other diverse attendees, discussed and debated the issues

surrounding the Knights Templar and the claims of links to Freemasonry. We also met new friends and Brothers, while having the chance to re-connect with old friends and Brothers and their families along the way.

A highlight of the tour was a day-long exhibition at the Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society, and accompanying press coverage in the *Buffalo News*. This forum provided an opportunity to show the public that Freemasonry provides an important and under-studied component of the study of general history, and expands on our understanding of the past and the people who lived it.

The Board wishes to thank the following Brothers and others along the way who made the tour possible: R. W. Steven Koch; R. W. James Leske; R. W. Howard Lasker; R. W. Alan Valente; R. W. Thomas Pullyblank; R. W. Peter Deysenroth; R. W. Richard Vang; R. W. Manfred Liehs; R. W. Richard Powell; R. W. William Vassily; W. Frank Milks; W. S. Marlon Gayadeen; W. Dennis Januchowski; Ms. Robie Carmina; Marc and Karen Whitelaw.

### **Strategic Plan**

The Board of Trustees of the Library completed its 2-5-10 Year Strategic Plan, which was approved in November 2007. The Plan includes components which evaluate our progress in several areas, and set goals and objectives for development in securing financial stability; establishing institutional integrity; codifying policies and procedures of operation and Board functioning; collections development; personnel development; patron service delivery; and identifying logical and necessary areas of growth.

During 2008, the Board focused on the development of policies governing the artifact collection. The Library received a grant from the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), administered through the American Association of Museums, which facilitates participation in the Museum Assessment Program (MAP). The MAP component chosen for the Library highlights artifact collection development. This year-long process, involving Board, staff, the Grand Lodge, and our patrons, will lead to the

development of a comprehensive, written policy governing the philosophy, contents, exhibition, study and storage of the artifact collection. This step is vital to the development and growth of our institution, as we clarify and define our educational mission, our responsibilities as stewards of Masonic culture, and our duties as an educational institution.

Other sections of the Strategic Plan include quantifiable goals for the book collection; artifact collection; archival collection; Utica branch; exhibits, both on site and off site; and board development. We welcome input from our patrons and supporters. Future editions of this Annual Report will focus on specific areas of development mapped out in the Strategic Plan.

### **Reading Courses**

Another immediate goal of the Strategic Plan was the review and revision of the existing Reading Course program. The Courses last received a minor revision in the mid 1990s. The time since then has seen the publication of many important titles which study the history, philosophy, symbolism, and other important factors relating to Freemasonry. Trustee William Thomas and Director Thomas M. Savini spent the summer of 2007 revising the Reading Course program. The revision saw the addition of several Courses focusing on topic areas requested by existing Library patrons. The average number of titles on each Course was reduced to 5, and titles were selected to represent a cross section of thought and study relating to each topic.

The revised Reading Course program is described in detail in the booklet *Pathways to More Masonic Light*, which was distributed to each Brother in an issue of the *Empire State Mason*. The revision has received a tremendously positive response. At the close of 2008, over 400 Brothers across the state had enrolled in or completed a revised Reading Course.

The revised Courses are:

### ***The Ground Floor***

1. **Who Comes Here?** First course, featuring what we believe are the “read first”, most

expository books available on vital Masonic topics.

#### *The Middle Chamber, part 1*

2. **Through a Porch**, the course comprising classic works of Masonic writers.
3. **Between Two Pillars**, a more in-depth look at Masonic origins and history.
4. **Up Three Steps**, a course crafted around Freemasonry in the State of New York.
5. **Up Five Steps**, a course featuring an in-depth study of Masonic symbolism.

#### *The Middle Chamber, part 2*

6. **Up Seven Steps**, Freemasonry in American History.
7. **Through an Outer Door**, Biographies of Prominent Freemasons.
8. **Through an Inner Door**, the Esoteric Course.
9. **Into the Middle Chamber**, the Comparative Religions Course.

#### *The Sanctum Sanctorum*

10. **From Labor to Refreshment**, the Warden's Course.
11. **From the East**, the Master's Course.

#### *Beyond The Blue Lodge*

12. **The Tabernacle Near the Ruins**, the Royal Arch Course.

13. **The Secret Vault Under the Tabernacle**, the Cryptic Mason Course.

14. **The Commandery**, the Knights Templar course.

15. **The Valley**, the Scottish Rite Course.

#### *Grand Lodge Development*

16. **Follow Your Conductor**, the District Staff Officer's Course.

17. **Worthy and Well-Qualified**, the District Deputy Grand Master's Course.

Brothers in good standing may also enroll by visiting our website at [www.nymasoniclibrary.org](http://www.nymasoniclibrary.org), and following the instructions posted there.

The Reading Courses serve as initial steps in Masonic education. Brothers are encouraged to use the books in the Courses to help them to focus their areas of interest, and to review the Library's selection of books outside the Courses to expand their knowledge and take their interests in further directions. The staff of the Library is always willing to assist brothers in taking the next steps on the path of Masonic education.

#### Website

The Library's website, [www.nymasoniclibrary.org](http://www.nymasoniclibrary.org) serves as the primary means of displaying the strides made in the integration of digital technology into our service delivery at our Manhattan branch. These advances have improved our levels of operation, resulting in a 50% increase in the number of visiting patrons, and the same percentage increase in patrons accessing book circulation through our online catalogue. The number of "unique" visitors to our website in 2008 numbered 46, 853, with a monthly average of 3,905 unique hits.

Anecdotal evidence provided by the staff tell of an

increase in patrons accessing our online library catalogue, as requests to borrow books outside the listings available on the Reading Course program increased by large numbers in the year 2007, and continued to develop throughout 2008. Additionally, an influx of non-Masonic scholars has passed through the doors of the Library's Manhattan branch, arriving with call numbers in hand, searching for books they found on the Library's online catalogue.

We have had great interest in our library collection among our out-of-state Brothers and non-Masonic patrons as well. Not a week goes by in the Library when the staff does not gather over a book of particular beauty or rarity from our collection. We have found that non-Masons, who may be unfamiliar with the Craft and its literary heritage, are amazed at the depth and richness of the books in our care. Although our circulation policy limits borrowing to Brothers under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of the State of New York, we know that non-borrowing patrons will benefit from the information available in the catalogue, and from knowing that they can visit the Library and see the books that catch their interest.

The Library's virtual museum makes use of the ContentDM© software contracted through the Online Computer Library Center, and continually funded by a donation from the Fifth Manhattan Masonic District Association Endowment Fund, Inc. This software allows us to post a selection of images of an artifact, so that visitors can enjoy several different views of an object, and gain an accurate impression of the artifact. ContentDM© allows us to establish data fields and enter information relating to the composition of the artifact, biographical information of its creator, the artifact's importance in Masonic history, and donor information. The system functions as a search engine with cross references, allowing viewers to search out artifacts relating to subject, medium, or key word entries. Additionally, non-public fields allow us to use ContentDM© as a cataloging and inventory system, providing more accurate tracking of items in our care.

Visitors to the Library's website will, over time, be able to view more items from our collections than even

visitors to our Manhattan and Utica sites are able to see on display. The virtual museum allows browsers to select single items, categories of artifacts (for example, Masonic aprons or artwork), and artifacts associated with particular Masons. The data fields provide more information than is practical to display in our museum exhibit cases, providing researchers with abundant resources for their own use. The images enable viewers to enjoy the beauty of our artifacts whenever they care to see them, not limited by our open hours or visitors' schedules.

### **Public Programs and Institutional Cooperation**

We were pleased to lend to the New-York Historical Society one of the 19<sup>th</sup> century tracing boards from our collection, for inclusion in the exhibition *French Founding Father: Lafayette's Return to Washington's America*. The staff of the NYHS felt that the tracing board best represented Lafayette's Masonic activities during his visit to America in 1824-1825. We commend the NYHS for including the Masonic aspect of Lafayette's life in this comprehensive and fascinating exhibit. The exhibition opened in Autumn 2007 and ran through November 2008.

The Trustees hosted a second annual dinner/lecture at La Petite Auberge on Manhattan's east side, on December 8, 2008. The lecture focused on Freemasonry and the Arts, and was organized by R.:W.: William Thomas. Lecturers for the evening were Brother Ari Roussimoff, who presented one panel of an original Masonic triptych, oil on canvas [the complete work will hang on display in the Library beginning in 2009]; R.:W.: Robert L. Barrows, who spoke on Freemasonry and Music; and a paper prepared by Brother Robert G. Davis, Guthrie, OK, presented by Brother Marcus Fuller, on the subject of Freemasonry and the Theatre Arts. Brother Trevor Stewart, Secretary of Quatuor Coronati Lodge no. 2076, UK, spoke as a surprise guest. The program included a probing discussion session which included insights from the audience.

The Board announced that our bi-annual Journal Dinner and Dance will take place on Sunday, April 26, 2009, honoring M.:W.: Richard P. Thomas, PGM, President of the

Trustees of the Masonic Hall and Home.

The Library continues its association as a member of the Metropolitan New York Library Council (METRO); the Special Librarians Association; the American Association of State and Local History; and the American Association of Museums. These organizations provide opportunities for the Library staff to continue to develop ideas and strategies that keep pace with similar institutions, and to serve as a resource for other Masonic libraries across the world. We also maintain membership in more than ten domestic and foreign research lodges.

### **Personnel**

The Library operates under the direction of R. W. Thomas M. Savini. Brother Savini oversees the day to day operations of the Library, develops and oversees the implementation of the digital conversion, coordinates purchase of new titles and acquisitions, processes incoming additions to the Library's archival and historical files, answers reference and genealogy questions from Masonic and non-Masonic patrons, and assists electronic patrons and visiting researchers and tourists at the Library's Manhattan site. Additionally, Brother Savini coordinates the Library's ongoing efforts to organize its files, archives, and artifacts collection, so that Masonic history is accessible to researchers.

Georgia Hershfeld, Library Cataloguer, continues to perform exceptional work in the creation and refinement of the MARC records that comprise the library catalogue. Ms. Hershfeld's hours of research, refinement and data entry have made the Library's catalogue an invaluable tool for the Masonic researcher. Scholars studying non-Masonic subjects have also used the catalogue to gain access to books in our collection which coincide with their areas of research, notably architecture, general history, and design studies. It is a testament to Ms. Hershfeld's skill and expertise that our patrons are able to use the subject headings and other information included in the catalogue to find books that fulfill their research needs. We have received overwhelming positive feedback regarding the Library's online catalogue from other Masonic and non-Masonic librarians; Masonic

librarians in particular rave about our catalogue, and we humbly accept their praises, giving the lion's share of the credit to Ms. Hershfeld.

Catherine Walter, Curator, has dedicated many hours to the research, planning and installation of exhibits in the Library's Manhattan branch, and at points throughout Masonic Hall. Her curatorial skills are also well-applied to work that the regular patron cannot see, namely, the stabilization and housing of artifacts in storage. Ms. Walter has developed a logical, stable system for the thousands of artifacts in our care, ranging from two-ton stone commemorative markers to miniscule button pins. Of equal importance, and much more visible to the public, is her work involving the photographing and cataloging of artifacts in the Library's virtual museum. Her talent as a photographer and her skill as a curator show in the beautiful images and detailed information available to our online visitors. Her daily additions to the online museum ensure that frequent visitors to the Library's website always have new artifacts to view and appreciate.

Mrs. Roseann Huschle continues her position as Library Receptionist. She coordinates the circulation of loaned books, processes newly acquired and catalogued material for shelving, and welcomes and assists visitors to the Library's Manhattan site. Mrs. Huschle has developed a strong familiarity with the circulation functions of the Athena system, which now allows the tracking of circulating books through the use of a laser-scanning barcode reader. Her welcoming smile and knowledgeable assistance make visitors to our Manhattan branch feel at home.

### **Manhattan Volunteers**

Barbara Shelley volunteers hours each week in assisting Catherine Walter in the photographing and cataloging of artifacts, and in placing large numbers of artifacts into the online Virtual Museum. Ms. Shelley's design background and high level of interest in the artifact collection have brought new insight to our development of the Virtual Museum, and we are grateful for her continued work with us.

Daniel Jeon began volunteering several hours each

week in the late autumn of 2007, working with our exiting intern Scott Jobson on the development of a spreadsheet detailing the establishment, chartering, and merger of each lodge under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of New York from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century until today. Brother Jeon completed that spreadsheet in mid 2008, and moved on to the formidable task of creating records for items in the Library's pamphlet collection.

R.:W.: William Stris of Valley Stream, NY, donates hours of time toward the organization and scanning of newspaper clippings from the lodge historical file collection. This work ensures the survival of information on the activities of New York State lodges, which is literally crumbling because it was printed on newsprint.

### **Utica Branch**

The Utica branch of the Library continues to thrive under the care of Trustees R.:W.: Charles J. Haskin, R.:W.: Ronald White, and R.:W.: Manfred Liehs. Our mid-state Brothers report a steady stream of visitors to the Library, particularly Brothers and their families who are visiting the Masonic Care Community in Utica. The Utica branch houses several beautifully restored Masonic tracing boards, and a large collection of Masonic regalia and memorabilia. Brother Haskin and the Utica volunteers maintain regular cleaning and rotation schedules for the artifacts at Utica.

R.:W.: Edward Gille continues in his role as Assistant Curator at Utica, and we are grateful for the time and effort he devotes to maintaining the exhibits and coordinating visitors and tours of the facility.

Our thanks go forth to our volunteers at Utica:

D. Ardelle Tuckerman, Branch Secretary  
Beverly White, Hostess  
Dr. Hermine Williams  
R.:W.: Richard Eades  
R.:W.: Frederick DeLaFleur  
V.:W.: Michael Berardino  
R.:W.: Norman M. McKnight  
W.: Richard Hadley

Bro. Paul D'Ambrosio  
Bro. Lyman Christensen

### **Board of Trustees**

The Board welcomed R.:W.: Joseph R. Leo and R.:W.: Richard Powell, who bring important perspectives and opinions to the ongoing development of the Board and the Library.

R.:W.: William L. DuPree accepted appointment as Trustee Emeritus after years of dedicated, active service to the Board. M.:W.: Edward G. Gilbert honored Bill with a Certificate of Appreciation at our St. John's weekend meeting. We expect Bill to continue as a familiar face and welcome voice at Board events.

Upon his election as Senior Grand Warden, R.:W.: W. Bruce Renner resigned his position as Library Trustee, in accord with Constitutional requirements. M.:W.: Edward G. Gilbert, Grand Master of Masons in the State of New York, appointed Bruce as a Consultant to the Library. We congratulate Bruce and welcome his continued input in his new status.

Under the guidance of Treasurer R.:W.: Aldo Ghirarduzzi, the Board developed and approved an investment policy in the winter of 2008. A sub-committee comprising R.:W.: Mallah, R.:W.: Rosson, R.:W.: Deveney, R.:W.: Liehs, and R.:W.: Powell were assigned to work with the Director, Cataloguer and Curator in the completion of Stage 1 of the Museum Assessment Program.

### **Acquisitions**

R.:W.: Howard J. Lasker, Wadsworth Lodge 417, Albany, NY, donated a collection comprising over 4,250 Masonic postcards, which he assembled over the past fifty years. We are honored to receive this collection, which Howard has organized and documented with a strong attention to detail.

The Library received donation of artifacts from: William H. Ash, IV in honor of Eugene Frost; Neal Bidnick; William S. Burkle; John Caroli; Bill Gibbons; Victor Gillen,

PGM, Grand Lodge of Luxembourg ; Grand Lodge of New York; Harry S Truman Lodge 1066, New York, NY; Marco Henry; Theodore (Ted) Jacobsen; Catherine Fox Jewett in honor of W Walter Knapp; La Fraternidad Lodge No. 387, NY; Howard J. Lasker; Berniece Levy; C. C. Reilly; Laureano P. Rico; Gilbert Savitzky; Service City Geba Lodge No. 1009, NY; Sam Shapiro; Robert Stack; Stuart Sturges; Charles Van Etten; West Star Lodge No. 413, NY.

### Acknowledgements

The Trustees of the Masonic Hall and Home provide regular, ongoing and generous support to the Library, and allow us to continue to develop our mission and expand our services to Brothers across the state, and to researchers across the world. We are deeply grateful to the Trustees for their dedication to Masonic education and to the Library. We applaud their longstanding mission toward the care of Brothers and their families and to the health and well-being of so many others at the Masonic Care Community.

We are grateful for the continuing support shown to us by the Grand Lodge of the State of New York and the Office of the Grand Secretary.

The Fifth Manhattan Masonic District Association Endowment Fund, Inc. continues to promote educational endeavors by providing generous support to ongoing Library projects, particularly making possible the hosting of our online catalogue and virtual museum. We salute the Endowment Fund and express our deepest gratitude for their commitment to Masonic education and the Library's mission.

St. George's Lodge 6, Schenectady, NY, has become a steadfast supporter of the Library, donating generously toward our development of facility and services at the Utica branch.

Generous support was provided by the Paul Schoeck Trust, and we are grateful for their confidence in the work we do.

Additional support was received from: Richard W. Bateman; Severo Diaz; Peter Finke; the estate of Kenneth T. Gibbons; Charles J. Haskin; Fred G. and Eleanor Hickein; Claude Horstmann; Willifred S. James; Manfred Liehs;

Michael Loweth; Edward L. and Gail B. Morris; Sven R. and Vivian Mossberg; Rex Niswander; Neil Rodgers; Michael A. Rosas; Ralph Rosenthal; William G. Vassily; 2004-2006 Metropolitan District Deputy Grand Masters Association; Bunting Charity Lodge 727, New York, NY; Cannon Temple Association, South Seaville, NJ; Franklin Lodge 195, New York, NY; Fraternal Lodge 155, West Chazy, NY; George Washington Lodge 285, New York,; Maimonides Marshall Lodge 739, New York, NY; Pleasantville Hiawatha Lodge 434, Pleasantville, NY; Queens Masonic Association, Inc.; Queens Purple Circle; Shakespeare Lodge 750, New York, NY; Sixth Masonic District Association of Manhattan; Utica Lodge 47, Utica, NY; Washington Lodge 21, New York, NY.

The Trustees and staff extend deepest gratitude to all the Brethren who supported the Library through contributions to the Masonic Brotherhood Fund. These contributions go directly to the Library's operating budget, and help us to continue our efforts to make Masonry's history and physical heritage accessible to Masons across the State of New York.

Respectfully submitted,  
Barry Mallah, *President*

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|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Michael L. Rosson, <i>1st V.P.</i> | Charles J. Haskin, <i>2nd V.P.</i> |
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