

Warner Library

A Community Treasure



121 North Broadway
Tarrytown, NY 10591
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Serving the Villages of Tarrytown and Sleepy Hollow

www.warnerlibrary.org

In the late 1970s, an addition to the building more than doubled the Library's original size. Designed by architects Yarosak & Shepard, the addition was funded through a grant obtained from the Federal Government's Housing and Urban Development Program. This enlarged area provided for additional shelving, an inviting new area for children's services, meeting rooms, and a tutorial area for the local chapter of the Literacy Volunteers.

Spread over three floors on the western side of the original structure, the newer portion of the Library is enclosed within a limestone-sheathed exterior complementing the original architectural style. A ramp entrance from the parking lot and an interior elevator serving all floors make the building accessible to the disabled.

A 1998 remodeling project, funded through community resident donations, created a new Reference area complete with computer terminals that are connected to the Westchester Library System's LAN network system for Internet access.

The Library's Children's Room renovation project was completed in February 2002. With bright colors, new story room, picture book area and computer stations, large numbers of local children from babies to sixth grade hear stories, read books, play games, enjoy craft projects, and complete homework projects at the library.

In 2007, *Connections*, a book nook for young adults, funded by the Friends of the Library, opened. Featuring comfortable chairs for reading and relaxing, a work/study section for group projects and three computer stations, the new area provides teens with their own special space.

The Warner Library continues to provide materials and services designed to assist Tarrytown and Sleepy Hollow residents in obtaining information that meets their personal, educational, and professional

needs. The trustees, director, and staff members remain committed to the Library's original mission as expressed by Worcester Reed Warner, "*The measure of any community's culture ... is the books it has and reads. Therefore, helpful books should be made accessible to all.*"



has been described as "... the purest example of classical Grecian architecture in the community." The Library's original 9,800 square-foot structure has been designated a local historic architectural landmark.

The Library is constructed of Vermont limestone in a Neo-Classical Revival style with formal symmetry. Other interesting architectural details are intricate scrollwork around the outside of the building, a stone front porch with a triangular pediment, ionic columns, and the fifteen-foot windows.

Two finely sculptured Greek urns are noticeable on either side of the wide front steps of the Library. The front door features an ornate bronze panel, which was once part of the estate of a wealthy Florentine family, and which the Warner family purchased from an antique dealer in Florence and had shipped to Tarrytown. The carvings depict the legendary Coronation of Venice as Queen of the Adriatic, as well as Poseidon and the sea nymphs. The door, which weighs over a thousand pounds, swings easily on hinges that Mr. Warner, an inventor of fine precision instruments, designed specifically for this door. Mr. Warner also designed the globe encircled by the twelve signs of the zodiac that illuminates the Library's front entrance.



Urn at front of library

A Modern Institution...

To the left of the entrance hall is the Reading Room, which features a fireplace, comfortable chairs, and floor lamps. Portraits of three Warner family members, Worcester, Cornelia, and their daughter Helen are located in this room. Contributions from many community members, the Friends of the Warner Library, and matching corporate grants made possible the redecoration of the Reading Room in 1996. Installation of appropriate lighting and muted wall treatments simulate the lighting of the original décor.

The Birth of a Library...

The Warner Library became a reality because of the generosity of local residents Worcester Reed Warner and his wife, Cornelia Blakemore Warner. In the late 1920s they undertook to have a library built as a gift to the community. Since a house already occupied the site they preferred, at the corner of Broadway and Wildey Street, Mr. and Mrs. Warner persuaded the Village of Tarrytown's Board of Trustees to have the house moved to the western limit of the property. That building later became the Tarrytown Village Hall. Mr. and Mrs. Warner engaged architect Walter Dabney Blair to design the library building and construction began in 1928.



While construction progressed, the library's first Board of Trustees was organized, with several prominent local residents serving as charter members. An application for the library's charter was sent to the New York State Board of Regents, which issued the charter on January 15, 1929 for the free use of the residents of Tarrytown and North Tarrytown. In recognition of the efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Warner, the Library Board determined that the new library should bear their name.

Accordingly, on February 22, 1929, the Warner Library held a dedication ceremony. Many citizens of Tarrytown and North Tarrytown (now Sleepy Hollow) attended the formal ceremony. Mr. Warner died later that same year, while traveling in Germany with his wife. After his death, Mrs. Warner and their daughter, Helen Blakemore Warner, continued their interest in the Warner Library and remained active as benefactors of many community causes.

The architect of the Warner Library, Walter Blair, also designed the public Library in Charlottesville, Virginia, several buildings on the grounds of the University of Virginia campus, and the bathhouse at Kingsland Point Park in Sleepy Hollow. The Warner Library

