



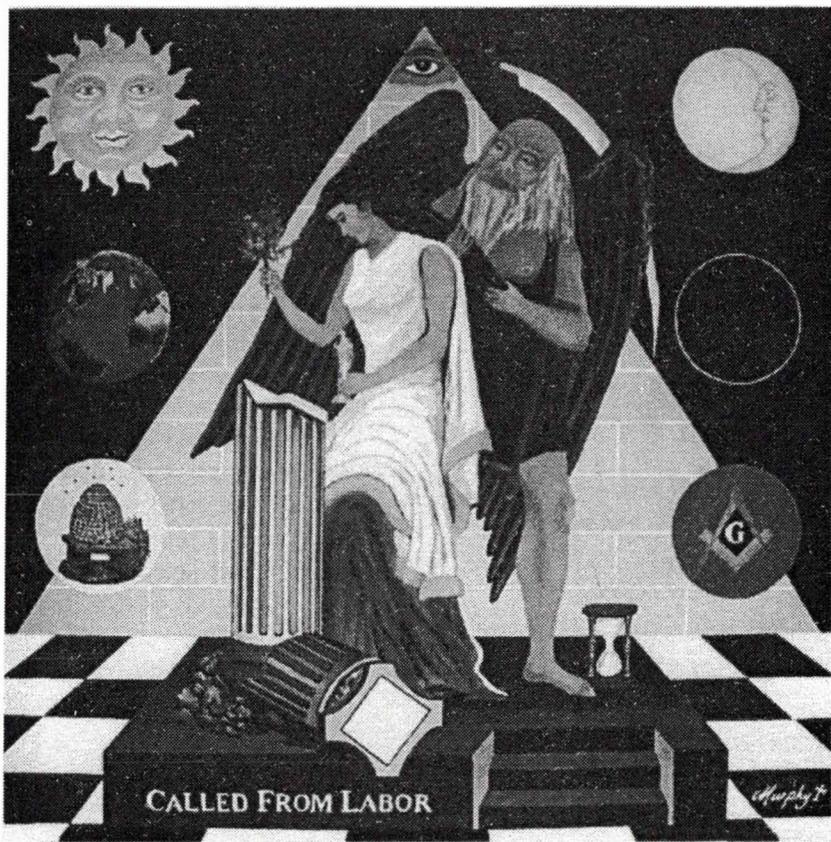
The Masonic Philatelist

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August 2013

NO. 3



**Celebrating our 80th Anniversary
& Remembering our Departed Brethren**

**The Masonic
Philatelist**

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**Dr. Allan Boudreau
Editor & Publisher**

Art by Murphy Cover

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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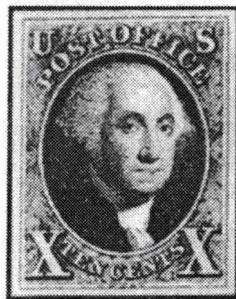
History & Legacy of The Masonic Stamp Club of New York

On January 13, 1934, a group of Freemasons gathered in the Grand Lodge Library and Museum on 23rd Street in New York City. However, it was not for Masonry alone that they had assembled, all had another interest in common—they were philatelic enthusiasts.

Dr. Charles H. Johnson, Past Grand Master of New York, current Grand Secretary, and member of The Collectors Club, was in the Chair. Over 40 brethren were in attendance.

It wasn't long before the original group was joined by many more Brethren, and the Masonic Stamp Club of New York was well on its way. The Club meetings were for the purpose of friendly discussions on the subject of postage stamp collecting and postal history. Of particular interest to all was the fact that many eminent Freemasons were (and continue to be) depicted on postage stamps. It certainly did not go without notice that the first two postage stamps issued by the United States showed Benjamin Franklin and George Washington, both highly distinguished Freemasons. Furthermore, numerous other stamps could be considered Masonic-related, as they showed works created by a Freemason, or celebrated events in which Freemasons played a major role.

An informal communication to members on philatelic subjects and Club activities found its way to lodges in the United States, Canada, and other countries, resulting in membership requests beyond New York City. One request was from President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, a noted Freemason, ardent stamp collector, and even a stamp designer.



America's first two postage stamps.

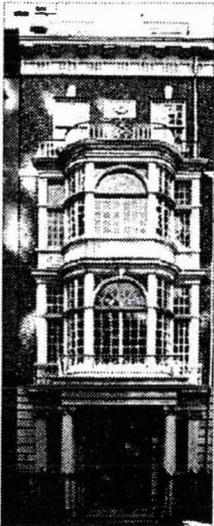


Washington Inauguration issue petitioned by the Club.

Late in 1938, the Club petitioned President Roosevelt to issue a commemorative stamp honoring the 150th anniversary of the inauguration of George Washington as the first President of the United States. The following year the stamp (shown above) was issued. When it became known that the stamp would be released, the Club prepared a special first day cover envelope as a Masonic souvenir. On the day of issue, April 30, 1939, the covers were sold to Club members all over the world for the sum of ten cents each. The proceeds of this initiative were contributed for the support the George Washington Masonic Shrine (old dwelling seen on the right) at Tappan, New York. The quaint little house was built in 1700 and it was often visited and occupied during the Revolutionary War by our distinguished Brother, George Washington. The Grand Lodge of New York maintains the shrine.



George Washington
Masonic Shrine at Tappan,
New York.



The Collectors
Club, New York
City.

In time, the Club outgrew various meeting rooms at the Grand Lodge of New York building on 23rd Street. As a result, in 1944 it asked the Collectors Club on 35th Street (seen on the left) for accommodations. This request was granted and meetings were held there through the courtesy of the Collectors Club, and continued to be held at this location up to the present time.

During the early 1940s, many famous men depicted on postage stamps were determined by Club members to have been Freemasons. It was this condition that led to the term "Masonic Philately." Indeed, finding new stamps of this nature was (and still is) very gratifying. We need to keep in mind that it would be some 18 years (1958) before William Denslow would complete his epic tome *10,000 Famous Freemasons*, so determining Masonic memberships was a bit of a chore for our early stamp collecting brethren.

In March 1944 publication of *The Masonic Philatelist*, a monthly journal, commenced. This journal is now a quarterly periodical which is

highly respected in the field of philately and enjoyed by Club members all over the world.

The first Masonic topical stamp collection to win a major prize was the Masonic Philately Exhibit provided at the May 1947 Centenary International Philatelic Exhibit (CIPEX) held in New York City.

Interest in the Masonic area of philately has grown to the extent that Masonic Philately is now a fully recognized stamp specialty by the American Topical Association, American Philatelic Society, and the British Thematic Association. Masonic-related collections are exhibited at many major stamp shows. The Masonic Stamp Club of New York continues its long-standing practice of participating in the major American Stamp Dealers Association events in New York City.

Over the years the Club has sponsored many first day covers, as well as other cachets honoring Freemasons and Masonic events. Some of the most popular cachet issues were: George Washington, Fiorenzo La Guardia, Harry S Truman, and the St. John's Lodge No. 1 (New York City) Bible—used at George Washington's inauguration. Many of these attractive mementos are given away and serve to develop a positive interest in Freemasonry. All proceeds from the donations received are directed to charitable organizations.

The Club has encouraged the formation of other Masonic stamp clubs, and a source of Club pride was the establishment of George Washington Chapter No. 1 (Washington D.C.), now the George Washington Masonic Stamp Club.

Throughout the last 80 years, numerous distinguished brethren have contributed to the success of the Club with both the provision of researcher material and administration. The Club presidents were as follows:

Bro. Arthur W. Deas
Bro. Henry W. Holcombe
Bro. Dr. George Camnitzer
Bro. Samuel Brooks
Bro. Russell Roans
Bro. Dr. Irving M. Yarry
Bro. Shelton W. Osterlund
Bro. Joseph Nathan Kane
Bro. Dr. Allan Boudreau
Bro. George Wettach
Bro. Nicolas Batalias
Bro. Christopher L. Murphy

Of course, as with all organizations of this nature, the primary publishing work is done by the Club editors and publishers. The following brethren have served in these capacities.

Bro. Hermain Kerstein
 Bro. Leo Passon
 Bro. Norman Sehlmeier
 Bro. Dudley Hilborn
 Bro. Roy T. Ketcham
 Bro. Dr. Erwin M. Yarry
 Bro. Dr. Allan Boudreau

All of these brethren, save Bro. Boudreau and Murphy have passed on the Grand Lodge Above. It is with fondness and admiration that we remember them.



Bro. Joseph Nathan Kane

One of our most notable members, and past president, was Bro. Joseph Nathan Kane, the author of *Famous First Facts* (H. W. Wilson Company, 1981) and several other highly regarded reference books. In addition, Bro. Kane was the authority and writer for the television program *Break the Bank*, which ran for 18 years. Furthermore, he supplied the questions for the television show, *The \$64,000 Question*. He even had his own show; *Famous Firsts*, provided by Mutual Broadcasting.

The Masonic Stamp Club of New York, and other Masonic stamp clubs that were essentially brought about by it, have identified several thousands Masonic-related stamps. The stories of such stamps issued by the United States and Canada were compiled by Bro. Chris Murphy in his book *Postage Stamps and Freemasonry: Guide & Compendium, United States & Canada*. (Carlton Press Inc., New York, N.Y., 1988). Bro. Murphy was inspired to write the book after he was given a large collection of back issues of *The Masonic Philatelist*. He then acquired copies of other Club journal back issues (most notably *The Philatelic Freemason: Journal of the Masonic Study Unit*, edited and published by Robert A. Domingue, Andover, Massachusetts). The combined knowledge in these publications was indeed astounding and highly worthy of a proper book.

The Masonic Stamp Club of New York, Inc.

The Masonic Stamp Club of New York was highly supportive of Bro. Murphy's endeavor and the book served to reinforce Masonic Philately as a valid part of topical stamp collecting.

With the support, encouragement, and confidence of Bro. Boudreau, in 1990 Bro. Murphy authored a work, *Masonic Philately: The United States of America & Canada*, for the Masonic Service Association, Silver Spring, Maryland.

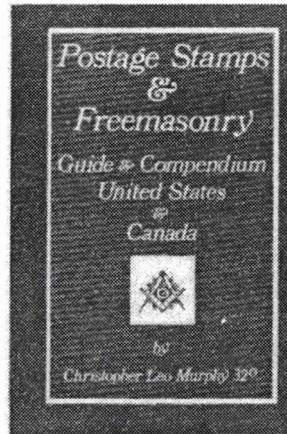
Over the next five years, with the cooperation of the Masonic Stamp Club of New York, Murphy published his serialized *Masonic Specialist* which expanded upon the same subject (inclusion of more "related" stamps).

In 2001, Bro. Murphy worked with Bro. Boudreau to produce an official handbook of the Masonic Stamp Club of New York covering US and Canadian stamps that depict a Freemason. The work was published by the American Topical Association (ATA) as Handbook No. 141).

The following year, the two produced another official handbook, *Masonic Philately: Government Issue Masonic Stamps*. This work was also published by the ATA (Handbook No. 145).

The extent, quality and source of inspiration of the material published by the Club in its journal, *The Masonic Philatelist*, over the last 80 years is in itself a permanent tribute to the many brethren who formed the Club, and those who followed to both support and move forward with research. It is also a tribute to the Masonic Order and all the wonderful Freemasons in every walk of life who are depicted on, or connected with, postage stamps.

Our front cover of this commemorative issue of the *Masonic Philatelist* features a tracing board showing the "Weeping Virgin" and other age-old Masonic symbolism. Its relevance to all Freemason, both with us and departed, is explored and explained in the next section.

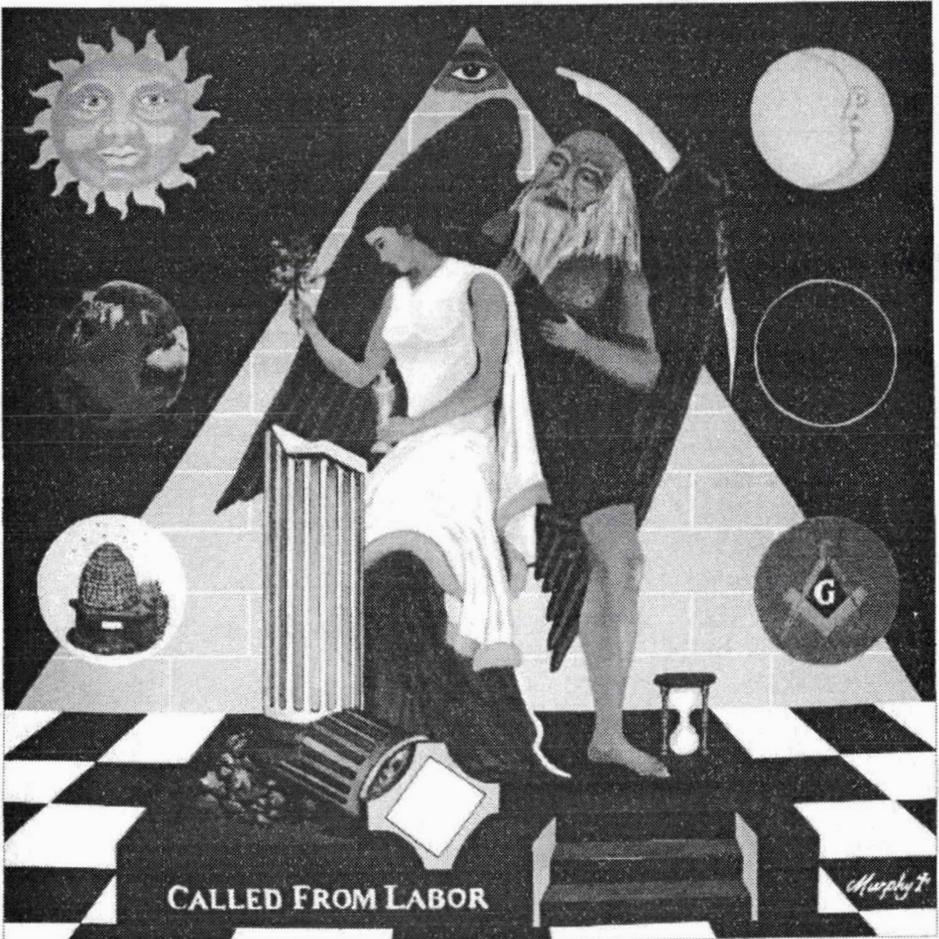


Inspired by the Masonic Stamp Club of New York, Murphy's book has become part of the Club's legacy. The book was obtained by libraries of every nature (Masonic, private, public) right across North America.

The Masonic Philatelist

The Weeping Virgin
A Masonic Tracing Board & Treatise

by
Christopher L. Murphy, BF

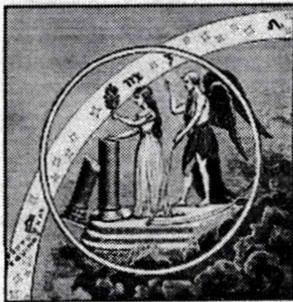


Acrylic on panel, 48 inches by 48 inches (a perfect square) by Christopher L. Murphy.
(Photo: Bro. Barry Blount)

The Masonic Stamp Club of New York, Inc.

The Masonic “Weeping Virgin” (monument to Hiram Abiff) symbolism has intrigued me since I became a Freemason in 1973. Of late, I decided to do my own painting of the subject, and incorporate other Masonic symbolism, thus creating a Masonic tracing board which effectively sums up some of the most important Masonic teachings.

Some of the various depictions of the “Weeping Virgin”(drawings or paintings) down through the ages are interesting and are shown here:



These images are not in date order, however the first (1819) introduced a broken column. I am a little surprised at one image (sixth) which shows the winged man (Time) not looking at the lady’s (virgin’s) hair. The last illustration, which appears somewhat contemporary, is what I used as the model/inspiration for my “tracing board”—with due respects—I have not been able to find out the name of the artist for this work.



The first person to suggest a monument to Hiram Abiff and provide a design (as shown here) was Thomas Johnson in 1782. Johnson included several symbols, including the sun, moon, and the square and compasses. The inscription reads:

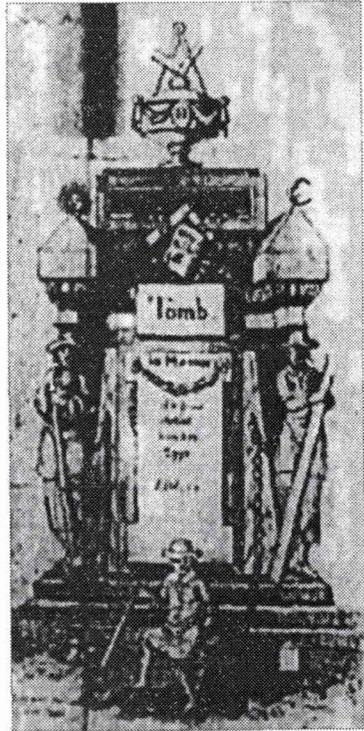
**In Memory of a Great Artist
Born A.M. 2995, Etat 47.**

I believe the word "Etat" is from the phrase, "Coup d'etat" which means to overthrow, strike against, or strike down. I will guess that the number 47 means "in his 47th year."

It does not appear Johnson's design received very much attention; however, the idea of a monument "took root." In 1817, John Barney introduced a monument design with a weeping virgin, Time, and a column -- but not a broken column. Two years later (1819), Jeremy Cross introduced a broken column (first image previously shown). However, Cross' rather shattered column apparently gave way in subsequent artwork to just a single broken piece, thus we arrived at the basic image we now have.

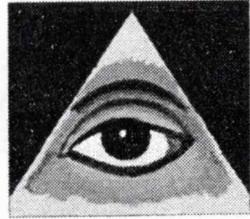
As I have mentioned, I used the last image shown for my design. However, I made Time less handsome, and dressed the virgin in a white over-garment rather than one that is off-white with a pattern (which appears very odd to me).

I am sure most Freemasons will immediately recognize and associate with the various symbols in my tracing board, including that of the "Weeping Virgin" theme; nevertheless all are explained as follows. Please keep in mind that the interpretation of Masonic symbols can vary and may include personal judgement.



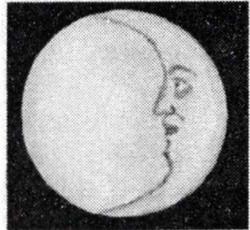
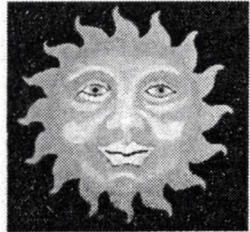
Monument to Hiram Abiff by Thomas Johnson, 1782.

All-Seeing Eye: This essentially symbolizes that nothing in life goes “unseen” and Freemasons must therefore guard their words and actions at all times. For certain, this is far more applicable now than even 20 years ago. With the internet, a photograph or words can be made available to over a billion people within a few seconds.

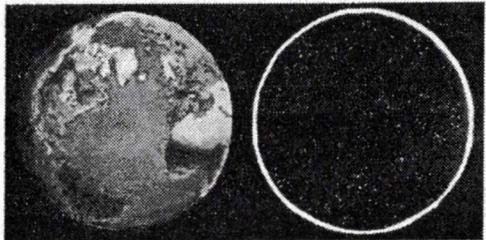


Pyramid: Freemasons symbolically construct a “temporal building” throughout their life. As a pyramid is the perfect “building,” I elected to show one in the background. A pyramid cannot essentially be tipped over, and can withstand the forces of nature. For these reasons, the Egyptians and many other ancient cultures built pyramids. I wish to stress that the pyramid belongs to the world. By its use, I am not implying any connection to ancient cultures.

Sun and the Moon: These symbolize the need to be regular and trustworthy. We can always count on the sun to bring us a “day,” and the moon will always be there according to its schedule. One might question why Freemasons put a face on each of these heavenly bodies. From my own perspective, this is simply to provide “character.” It has nothing to do with sun or moon worship or have any occult inferences. As children, we might recall always putting faces on both the sun and moon in our drawings—it is simply just a natural tendency, especially when such are used as symbols.



Terrestrial and Celestial Spheres: These are symbols of “wonder.” The wonders of the earth and the universe are so vast they can never be “exhausted.” As such, they are a “gift” which Free-

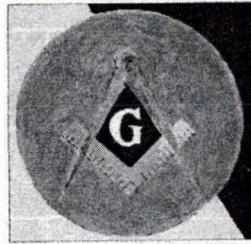


masons are encouraged to explore, in every sense of that word (geometry, navigation, astronomy and the arts dependent on them). There can be no reason for a person to lose interest in life when we have so much to interest us. The terrestrial globe also denote the universality of Masonry. It might be noted that the stars and planets in the Celestial Sphere are correctly placed.

Beehive: This is a symbol of industry. It urges the Freemason to keep busy and always seek new frontiers. It also encourages activity—not to be lazy and complacent. Furthermore, it connotes “sharing” and “cooperation.”

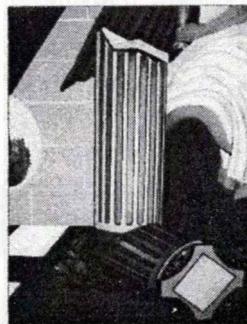


Square and Compasses with the letter “G”: This symbol is fully familiar to all Freemasons. The square is a symbol of morality, and the compasses of “due bounds.” One envisions a circle and keeps his desires and passions within permitted bounds. The letter “G” symbolizes a “Supreme Being.” It can stand for Geometrician (of the Universe), or God. However, I need to mention that use of the “G” is not applicable in all countries.



We now come to the central part of the painting which is comprised of many symbols forming a “theme.” The direct reference of the theme is the death of Hiram Abiff (with whom all Freemasons are directly connected through the ritual of the Third Degree) and incompleteness of the temple that Hiram Abiff was in charge of constructing. In effect two (2) temples remain uncompleted: the physical temple, and the “temporal” building or temple of Hiram Abiff himself. In this latter sense, the virgin is weeping over the death of every Freemason who has passed on to the Grand Lodge Above, and will allegorically weep for you and I when the time comes. Keep in mind that every Master Mason is, in a symbolical sense, the embodiment of Hiram Abiff.

Broken Column: Symbolizes the death of a person. It carries the message that a person has been “cut down” by death. A column is a beautiful architectural feature, and to see one broken evokes sadness. A broken column is often used on graves in cemeteries. Furthermore, in the full context of the Third Degree legend, it represents non-completion of the physical temple (construction has been “cut off,” as it were).



Book on the Column: Symbolizes the book of one’s life. In other words, an account of all of one’s deeds and virtues—in a narrow sense, those of Hiram Abiff; in a broad sense those of every deceased Freemason.

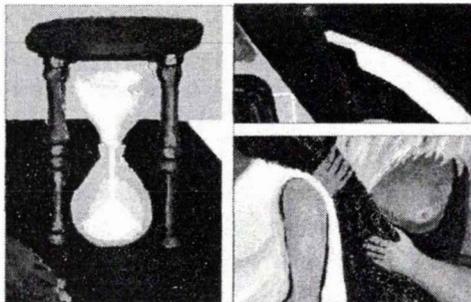


Young Lady (Weeping Virgin): A symbol of sorrow. She is reading from the book of one’s life. She holds an urn in her left hand that contains ashes of the person who has died. In her right hand she holds a sprig of acacia, which is a symbol of life, or the life hereafter. Keep in mind the significance of the acacia plant in the ritual of the Third Degree. The urn is a little controversial in the context of the ritual as bodies were not cremated in the religion of Hiram Abiff. This being the case, the urn is said to contain the tears of those who mourned. I will mention here that “memorial paintings,” whereby a small amount of ash is mixed with the paint, were (and still are) commissioned. Mixing ash of a departed brother in the paint used for the urn in this type of painting would be ideal in a Masonic sense.



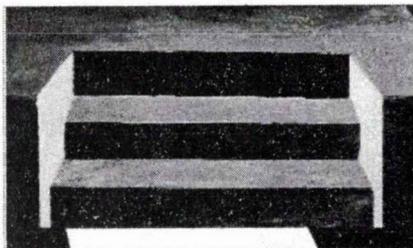
Winged Man: This figure is a symbol of “Time.” An hour-glass is seen next to his left foot. He has a scythe which is a symbol of death. In this case, Time is death as time eventually catches up with everyone. His left

breast (position of one's heart) is bare which has ritual significance. He is holding the young lady's long hair which is in ringlets. What he is doing is untangling the ringlets, which is a symbol of patience and perseverance. The lesson is that with these qualities one will



accomplish all things. (Actual text says that Time is "unfolding" the ringlets, but I am not sure if this is possible, unless it means separating one series of ringlets from another series.)

Platform: I have put the figures on a raised platform with three steps representing Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft, and Master Mason. The steps can also be symbolizing youth, middle age, and advanced age (seniors).

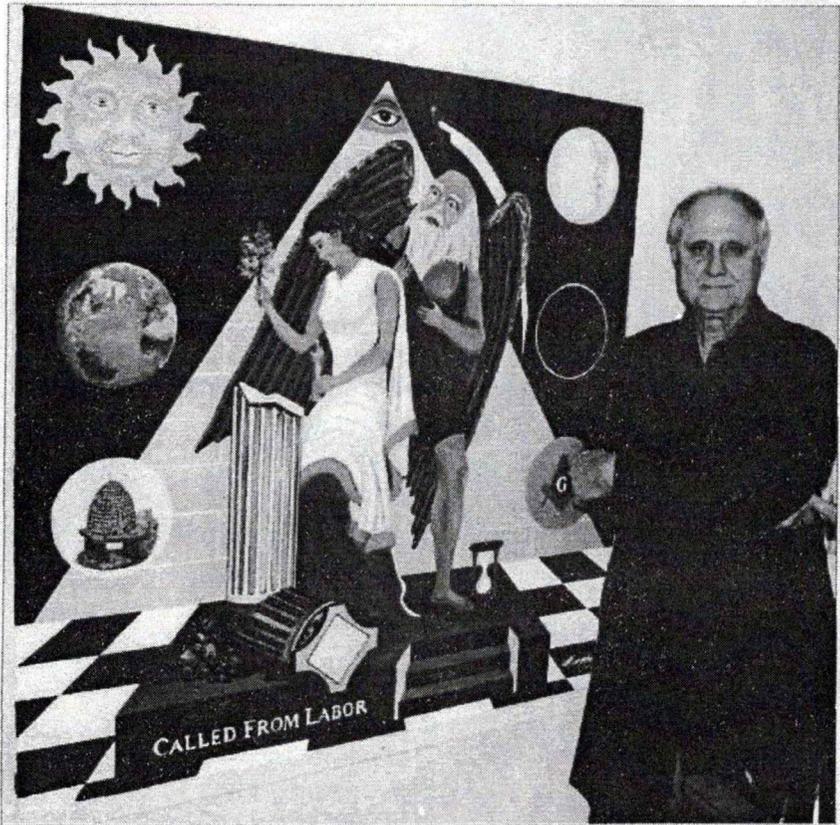


Checkered Floor (Mosaic Pavement): This symbolizes life which is checkered with good and evil.

Term: "Called from Labor": In Masonic terms, life is labor, and when one is "called from labor" he has gone to the Grand Lodge Above.

Our early Brethren gave a lot of thought to the symbolism of the "Weeping Virgin." Indeed, everything in Freemasonry is exceedingly well thought-out. Although one needs to sort of "get into it," many of the "veiled" messages are really quite astounding.

As I mentioned at the outset, interpretation of Masonic symbolism varies, and I am sure some eminent brethren will have different opinions on the "Weeping Virgin" theme. Whatever the case, it is a highly intriguing composition, and in my opinion is the "most Masonic" rendering in the world of Masonic art.



Brother Murphy with his acrylic painting. He started oil painting in earnest in the early 1970s, but after about 8 years drifted into other interests. In 2010, now ages 69, he again took up the hobby. Although acrylic paint was reasonably available in the 1970s, it was not preferred by many artists. At this time it is widely available, and superior to that of the early years. It is also safer to use, and more environmentally friendly.



The Masonic Stamp Club of New York, Inc.

YOUTH STAMP CLUB

Sponsored by
the Collectors Club
of New York

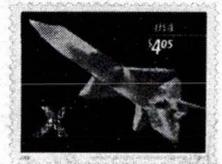
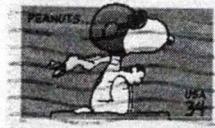


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Saturdays, 10-11:30am

- September 28
- October 19
- November 16
- December 14
- January 18
- February 15
- March 15
- April 12
- May 17



For information or to register:
EMAIL collectorsclub@verizon.net
or CALL 212.683.0559
Early registration is encouraged
as space is limited.

THE COLLECTORS CLUB
22 East 35th Street New York, NY

Plan Now to Attend

George Washington Masonic Stamp Club

Annual Meeting

Saturday, February 23, 2014

At the George Washington National Masonic Memorial
Arlington, Virginia

The George Washington Masonic Memorial was built in the 1920s
By the more than two million American Freemasons who wished to:

*"express in durability and beauty the undying esteem of the
Freemasons of the United States for him in whose memory
It shall stand throughout the coming years."*

Receive The Master of Philately Degree

Enjoy a special tour of Freemasonry's Most Famous Monument
And Memorial Honoring Brother George Washington

For a Life Membership Application,

John R. Allen, Secretary & Past President
George Washington Masonic Stamp Club
2831 Swanhurst Drive
Midlothian, VA 23113-2278
gwmsc.tripod.com
gwmsc1956@gmail.com

Membership Applications will be balloted upon at each meeting,
And require a completed application, payment of the \$20.00 Life
Membership fee, and evidence of current membership
in a recognized blue lodge (photocopy of 2011 dues card,
or letter from the Lodge Secretary on Lodge letterhead.)

Masonic Stamp Club of New York, Inc.



GRANDE ORIENTE D'ITALIA
ASSOCIAZIONE ITALIANA DI FILATELIA MASSONICA

Rome, 01.10.2012

Masonic Stamp Club of New York
One Washington Square Apt.2A
New York , NY 10012-1601
USA

Mon très cher Frère ,

Je vous remet les dernières émissions publiées par notre Association philatélique du Grand Orient d'Italie ; émissions du 3^e trimestre 2012.

En particulier :

Rito Simbolico Italiano Gran Loggia 2012
San Galgano : Solstizio d'estate 2012
Gubbio Montefoce : Solstizio d'estate 2012
Roma :XX settembre 2012

Je reste a votre disposition et celle des vos Amis philatélistes .
Avec mon triple fraternel salut.

Massimo Morgantini
Secrétaire AIFM-GOI

Massimo Morgantini
AIFM- Grande Oriente d'Italia
Via San Pancrazio 8
00152 Roma – Italia

Email: filatelia.massonica@grandeoriente.it



Grande Oriente d'Italia

Associazione Italiana di Filatelia Massonica



R. L. Fede e Lavoro n. 459 - Or. di Perugia

Celebrazione del Solstizio d'Estate 2012

Gubbio, Monte Focce - 23 giugno 2012



Grande Oriente d'Italia

Associazione Italiana di Filatelia Massonica



.. Oriente di Siena ..

Celebrazione del Solstizio d'Estate 2012

San Galgano (SI) - 22 giugno 2012



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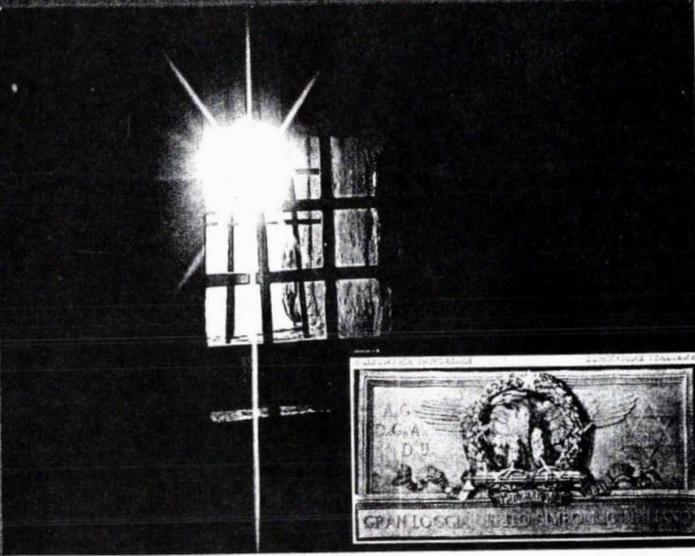
IL CITTADINO CHE NON C'È





XX settembre 2012 - Equinozio d'Autunno
Convegno: "Il cittadino che non c'è"
Roma, Villa Il Vascello - 22 settembre 2012

I ♥ EMILIA









Gran Loggia Annuale del Rito Simbolico Italiano - 2012

The Collectors Club

22 East 35th Street

New York, New York 10016

Email collectorsclub@verizon.net

Website: www.collectorsclub.org

Program & Calendar of Events

Social Hour at 5:00 PM – Exhibits open 6:00 PM -

Meeting 6:30 PM

Dutch Treat Dinner nearby @ 8:00 PM

September 11, 2013

Tibet – Stamps and Postal History

Alan Warren

Exton, PA

September 18, 2013

Canadian pioneer Airmail 1918 -1922

Ray Simrak

Maidstone, Ontario, Canada

October 2, 2013

The Origin and Evolution of
America's First Express Company

Harden's Express

Roland H. Cipolla II

Fountain Hills, AZ

October 16, 2013

Under Six Flags – Expanding the
Mail Service in Texas 1801-1865

Vince King - Denton, TX

*The Masonic Stamp Club of New
York, Inc.*

The Masonic Philatelist

November 6, 2013

Collectors Club

Annual One-Frame Competition

November 20, 2013

New York Foreign Mails 1870-1878—An Update

Nicholas Kirke

Prague, Czech Republic

December 4, 2013

World Rarities and Uniquities:
Sharing a Lifetime Accumulation
of Wonderful Philatelic Material

John Hotchner

Falls Church, VA

December 11, 2013

Board of Governors' Open House

January 8, 2014

117th Annual Meeting

Election of Officers

January 22, 2014

The Westtown Local &
Rattlesnake Island Local Post

Bill Schultz

West Chester, PA

February 5, 2014

Tibet - Stamps and Postal History

Alan Warren

Exton, PS

*The Masonic Stamp Club of New
York, Inc.*

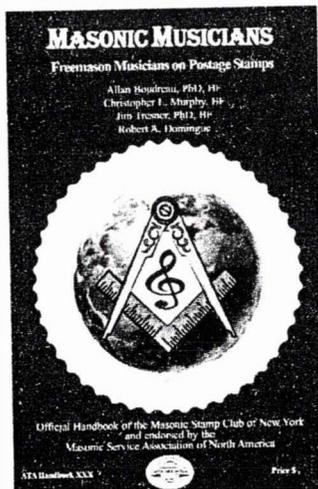
February 19, 2014
Postmarks from Paradise:
The Postal History of Tahiti
Ralph DeBoard
Oklahoma City, OK

March 5, 2014
CSA
The Story of a Postal Service
Dan Warren
Gloucester Point, VA

March 19, 2014
"The History of the Square-rigged Sailing Vessels"
A story-telling philatelic display/program
Jonas Hallstom
Skovde, Sweden

Masonic Musicians – ATA Handbook

We are continuing our work towards publication of *Masonic Musicians* by the American Topical Association (ATA). The work has now been endorsed by the Masonic Service Association of North America and we are still hopeful that it will be available by year end. We don't have any other details at this time. Full information will be provided in the December 2013 edition of the *Masonic Philatelist*.



*The Masonic Stamp Club of New
York, Inc.*

The Masonic Philatelist

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Please Take Note!

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