

---

## *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. In recognition of the efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Warner, the Library Board determined that the new library should bear their name.



*Worcester Reed Warner*

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 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



*Cornelia Blakemore Warner*

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*

---