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CENTER CITY'S MASONIC TEMPLE HONORS FREEMASON JOHN WANAMAKER WITH DISPLAY OF WANAMAKER ARTIFACTS FROM ITS MUSEUM COLLECTION

PHILADELPHIA - (March 12, 2025) -- In conjunction with the closing of the Macy's store in Philadelphia's Wanamaker building this month, the Masonic Temple Library & Museum in Center City is displaying a special collection of John Wanamaker artifacts for the next year.

The Masonic Temple is located at One North Broad Street and is open Wednesday through Saturday for tours. In 1876, Freemason John Wanamaker, a member of Friendship Masonic Lodge No. 400, founded the Wanamaker Department Store, one of the first to be constructed in the United States.

Located within the Masonic Temple are numerous references to Wanamaker, including the John Wanamaker Resource Center, founded in 1908 and home to one of the most extensive collections of books and artifacts for the study of Freemasonry in the country.

The library houses over 85,000 volumes covering all aspects of Freemasonry and its history, philosophy and contributions to civil society, as well as other topics such as art, architecture, etc. Additionally, there is a John Wanamaker Room located in the basement of the Masonic Temple and used for meetings and lodge dinners.

The Temple's museum and exhibit hall is home to over 30,000 artifacts spanning centuries in age. It provides a stunning perspective into the history of Freemasonry and America.

The more than 20 Wanamaker items highlighted for the museum display include books; a program from the dedication of the old Masonic Temple in Jenkintown, PA, presented by Wanamaker to his fraternity on Jan. 11, 1913; a trowel (stone mason's tool) gifted by Wanamaker to Freemason George Orlady, associate justice of the Superior Court of Pennsylvania in 1909; and more. ***(See attached list of items, descriptions and images; high res images are available)***

"John Wanamaker was a staple in Philadelphia for his Wanamaker Department Store, as well as his engagement with the Masonic Temple for well over a century, so it makes sense

to display these items in conjunction with the closing of the Macy's store in the Wanamaker building," said Carly Sewell, museum archivist.

The Macy's store on Market Street is set to close at the end of this month, the retailer and Philadelphia officials announced in January. The 12-story building was built between 1902 and 1910 on the site of the Wanamaker Grand Depot. It's long been the home of the Wanamaker Organ, which John Wanamaker purchased for the store in 1909. It's the largest fully functioning pipe organ in the world and has been played free for the public twice a day since 1911. The organ has over 28,000 pipes and is expected to be preserved in some capacity to be determined.

Masons from William Penn Harmony Masonic Lodge No. 52, Philadelphia, have worked tirelessly for years with Macy's and The Friends of the Wanamaker Organ to maintain and preserve the pipe organ.

One-hour tours of the Masonic Temple are offered Wednesday – Saturday, 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 1 p.m., 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. No tours on Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays and major holidays, or when Pennsylvania Masonic functions or special events are happening. For more information, visit. Pamasonictemple.org

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A National Historic Landmark in the heart of Philadelphia, the Masonic Temple at One North Broad Street is home to the Masonic Library and Museum and the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania. The building features a Norman-style exterior which ushers visitors inside, where stylistic references to the Middle Ages give way to a fantasy of Renaissance-inspired neoclassicism in the corridors and stairs and to 19th century "eclectic revivalism" in the lodge rooms. The Masonic Library and Museum, which maintains and preserves the Masonic Temple, supports the Academy of Masonic Knowledge and the John Wanamaker Resource Center, as well as the preservation of buildings and monuments dedicated to Freemasonry. ONE North Broad, housed inside the Masonic Temple, is a wedding and corporate events venue that utilizes all the magnificent spaces in the building.