

BY: M. of A. Buttenschon

COMMEMORATING the 130th Anniversary of the Jervis
Public Library in Rome, New York

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and pay tribute to institutions that enrich the civic and cultural life of the communities of New York State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 130th Anniversary of the Jervis Public Library, a vital institution founded in 1895 in the City of Rome, New York, through the vision and generosity of one of America's foremost civil engineers, John B. Jervis; and

WHEREAS, John Bloomfield Jervis (1795-1885), a native of Rome, was the leading consulting engineer of antebellum America and a pioneer in the fields of canal and railroad development, waterworks, and civil infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, John B. Jervis began his career humbly in 1817 as an axe man on an Erie Canal survey crew and rose rapidly through the ranks to become the Chief Engineer of multiple major transportation and water supply projects, including the Delaware and Hudson Canal, the Mohawk and Hudson Railway, the Croton Aqueduct-the first large-scale water supply system for New York City-and numerous other groundbreaking endeavors across the United States; and

WHEREAS, Jervis's innovations laid the foundation for much of America's 19th-century transportation infrastructure; his designs introduced numerous engineering "firsts," including the Stourbridge Lion, the first locomotive to run in America, and the "Jervis-type" locomotive, which featured the world's first free-swinging four-wheel front truck and set a new standard for maneuverability and speed; and

WHEREAS, In recognition of his contributions to civil engineering and infrastructure, the City of Port Jervis, New York, was named in his honor; and

WHEREAS, Upon his return to Rome in the later years of his life, Jervis continued to contribute to civic life by founding the Rome Iron Mills and authoring the economic treatise The Question of Labor and Capital in 1877; and

WHEREAS, Most notably, John B. Jervis bequeathed his estate, personal residence, and extensive library to the City of Rome for the express purpose of establishing a public library; and

WHEREAS, Since its founding in 1895, the Jervis Public Library has served as a lasting monument to its founder's legacy, providing public access to knowledge, education, and cultural enrichment for 130 years;

and

WHEREAS, The Jervis Library preserves and maintains John Jervis's original personal collection, including nearly 1,800 monographs, rare volumes dating from the 1670s to the 1880s, and over 600 original engineering plans and drawings, as well as manuscripts, correspondence, scrapbooks, and public documents. This archive has been recognized as one of the most comprehensive early American engineering collections in existence; and

WHEREAS, The Jervis Public Library remains a living tribute to John B. Jervis's enduring legacy of innovation, education, and public service, functioning as both a vital center for community learning and a trusted steward of rare and historically significant archival materials; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 130th Anniversary of the Jervis Public Library in Rome, New York, and to honor the enduring legacy of John B. Jervis-engineer, innovator, and public benefactor; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Jervis Public Library.