

SEH 00L



BELMONT LIBRARY

A library has been in existence here for seventy-five years or more and was at first known as a Mechanic's Institute. Around fifty years ago, however, a Belmont Public Library Board was organized and has been functioning ever since and now has a yearly circulation of over three thousand books. The library has an exchange of three hundred books every three months from Elgin County Co-op, which gives a good supply of books.

Grants are received from the village, the county, as well as a yearly government grant.

The library property and building is owned and governed by a Library Board whose chairman is Chairman of the village trustees, two members are appointed by the School Board, two members by the village trustees; the secretary, treasurer, and librarian are appointed from the Board.

The Board granted permission to the Second Thursday Club to use the library property for a Children's Playground, and they were to furnish the equipment.

BELMONT PUBLIC LIBRARY

Belmont Public Library was first known as the Mechanics Institute and was established January 8, 1887. On May 15, 1893 a Public Library was established and governend by business men until 1937.

We do not know when the library came to the small tin covered building on the south side of John Q. Campbell's property (Main and Copeland) and almost on the lot line with Fred Yorke. (In fact it was said that the eaves dripped on the Yorke hedge!), It had also served as a temporary bank and veterinary office but is recalled as the "First Small Library."

On December 5, 1921 the Women's Institute was asked to send two members to serve on the Board of Directors, and also to give financial aid toward the purchase of a new Public Library Building. This was a house on the East side of Main Street midway between Washburn and Church Streets. The Institute co-operated at once and the building was purchased and renovated for a Library. Each year the Institute gave a substantial donation until this building now known as the Belmont Public Library was paid for. The mortgage was cancelled March 2, 1937.

Meanwhile the "first small library" was sold in 1929 to Elgin Middlesex Farmers Ltd. after their fire. It served as their office until a few years ago and is now part of the garage of Belmont Farm Supply Ltd.

The first Belmont Public Library Board was formed February 1, 1937. Officers were: Chairman - Fred Garton; Secretary - Mrs. W. C. Barons; Treasurer - Mrs. William Willsie; Librarian - Mrs. Hector Stewart. Other members - Mrs. Fred Yorke, Mrs. William Campbell.

Permission was given April 29, 1954 to the Second Thursday Club to use the Library property as a Children's Playground, the club to furnish the equipment.

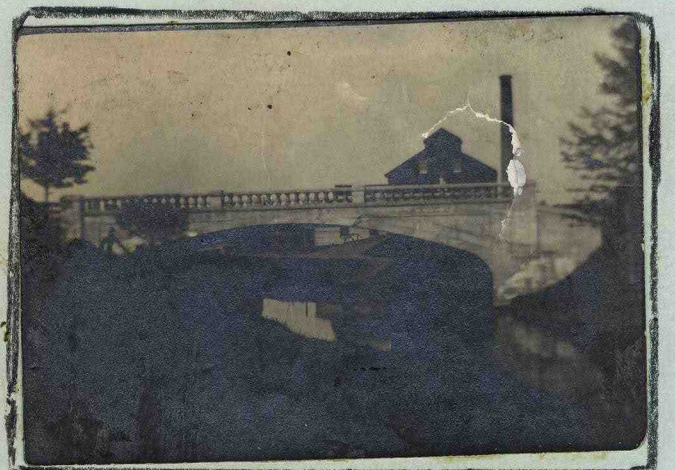
The Library was supported by various grants and donations. The Women's Institute gave constant support by large donations for decorating, books and equipment. The Second Thursday Club also gave books.

On January 1, 1966 the Library was taken over by the Elgin County Library Board, the Belmont Library Board functioning only in an advisory capacity with Mrs. Murray Farquhar as chairman. Renovations were carried out by the new board. The books were transferred to the large Reading Room and washrooms and kitchen were installed in the former book room. The property is still owned and maintained by the Village.

For some time additional books were provided on a rotating basis by the Elgin County Library Co-operative. Now they are provided by the Elgin County Public Library. Circulation of books in 1970 - 10,123. Mrs. Hector Stewart was Librarian from 1927-1955; Mrs. Lela Armstrong, briefly in 1956. Present Librarian is Mrs. Jim Tribe serving since June 1956. Assistant Librarians - Mrs. Edna Ferris, Mrs. William Jones, Mrs. William Barons, Mrs. Douglas Groat and the present assistant is Mrs. Murray Farquhar.

The Library is the meeting place of the Town Council and other gatherings.

INDUSTRIES



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