

Title: History of the Alliston Library. Page 1/3

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Description: A very short history of the Alliston Library. Article discusses in brief the history of the library. It then moves on to discuss the roles and goals of the Alliston Library in the future.

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HISTORY OF THE ALLISTON LIBRARY

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The Alliston Women's Institute founded the first library as a memorial to those who gave their lives in World War I. The first building (shared by the Women's Institute and the Library) was opened in 1922 and was called "Alliston Memorial Library".

In 1939 the Library came under the jurisdiction of the Province of Ontario and officially became the Alliston Public Library. However, the Women's Institute remained involved with the Library, aiding it in many ways.

Growth of the Library was so great that by 1973 the Women's Institute and the Library changed places in the building, the Library taking the larger lower floor. Finally in 1976 with the Library again outgrowing its' quarters, the Board planned a new building. They applied for a Wintario grant and received profits from the Alliston Potato Festival Committee.

The old Library closed in March of 1981 and moved to its' temporary home in St. John's United Church. Early in March of 1982, the Alliston Library moved into its' new home - one of the first library buildings to be completely accessible to the handicapped. With donations from the public and the balance supplied by the Town, the construction costs were soon covered. The Alliston Public Library officially opened on June 4th, 1982.

Formerly part of the Georgian Bay Library System, in 1984 with a new government bill the Alliston Public Library became part of Ontario Library Services Trent. Also belonging to the Simcoe County Library Cooperative, we now have access to a wider range of materials and services.

The Future

The public library is one of the most important municipal services in the community. It should provide cultural, recreational and informational programmes for people of all ages and backgrounds.

The Future cont'd

Alliston Public Library has adequately fulfilled the informational and recreational reading functions within the restrictions of its' budget. We must now organize vital dynamic programmes aimed not only at our present library users but also at those currently not using our services.

Some other areas of change to be examined in the near future are computerization; building an audio visual collection; reorganization of the staff, with an opening created for an assistant librarian; and becoming more involved in marketing the library and its' services.

Of course to try to make any of these changes we will have to explore various sources of funding. There are many grants available both from the government or private sector for developing library collections and services. We must become aware of these and gain access to them. In this way we will be able to develop our excellent facility to better meet the needs of our community.

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