

History of  
Albion Municipal Library and Heritage Center  
April 3, 1985

In September 1981, the members of the Federated Albion New Century Club expressed a desire to have a library for the use of the community. It was felt that a library would help keep the community together after the closing of the elementary school. Many hours of research began and information was obtained from all the libraries in Marshall County. Many other clubs and organizations were contacted and stated their willingness to help with donations and volunteer labor. This information was presented to the Albion City Council. The resulting vote was to allow the remodeling of the City Council Room at City Hall for the purpose of starting a library. The remodeling was done with all donated labor and the materials from City insurance. The City library ordinance was completed and provided for a Board of Trustees consisting of 5 members. The Albion Municipal Library was born with an open house on April 12, 1982 in the City Council Room. The rear of this room was reserved for the City clerk.

As this library was such a success in the community, it was presented to the City Council that more space was needed. The library asked for the use of the north 2 bays of the fire station, which were being used as storage space for town vehicles. The City Council completed a contract with Martha Ellen Tye for \$10,000 to remodel the building. This contract was for a 10 year period with option for renewal. The Albion community held a Labor Day 'Raise the Roof' fund-raiser, which totaled \$2,743. Other donations were made for operating funds. Some shelving, tables, small chairs, and books were given to the library from the Marshelltown (Albion) school system. An application was made to the Kinney-Lindstrom Foundation for funds. Following a visit with the foundation board, a sum of \$3750 for the building fund, to be used for stucco and overhand and another \$2,000 for shelving and furniture was obtained. With this help and donated labor, the doors were opened on February 2, 1983, a public open house was held on May 15, 1983.

The Albion Library was very fortunate to have JoAnne Mittelstadt as our librarian. She spent many hours making the library a success and worked without pay, donating her time from the opening on April 12, 1982 until July 1, 1982 when funds became available for the operating expenses.

The following is a report by JoAnne Mittelstadt comparing the increase in library usage: During January and February 1984, the total circulation (books checked out) was 1,038 and patrons (people using the library) numbered 763. In January and February 1985, the circulation had increased to 2,423 and the patrons to 2,198. This increase in 1985 was mainly due to rural borrowers from the Albion, Liscomb and Green Mountain areas.

Story Hour for children was held on Tuesday from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. with approximately 25-30 pre-school children and many mothers attending. The mothers helped supply treats and drinks. The Central Regional Library loaned the library a film projector, which was greatly appreciated and used during story hour. Our 'Friends of the Library' members are very active. The Friends organization helped in many ways and purchased library books needed for homework by school children. The Board of Trustees served a farm sale in October 1983 and an ice cream and sandwich fundraiser in May at the Albion Fire Station to supplement our operating fund.

Past board members include: Gene McRill and Doris Holroyd served 2 years, January 1982-December 1983, Mrs. Holroyd was re-appointed by the Albion Town Council to the board.

The Board of Trustees at the time of this history (1985) are:

Loren Conrad and Bonnie Harmon, January 1982-December 1985

Betty Tomlinson, January 1982-December 1985

Doris Holroyd and Keith Balvanz. January 1984-December 1989.