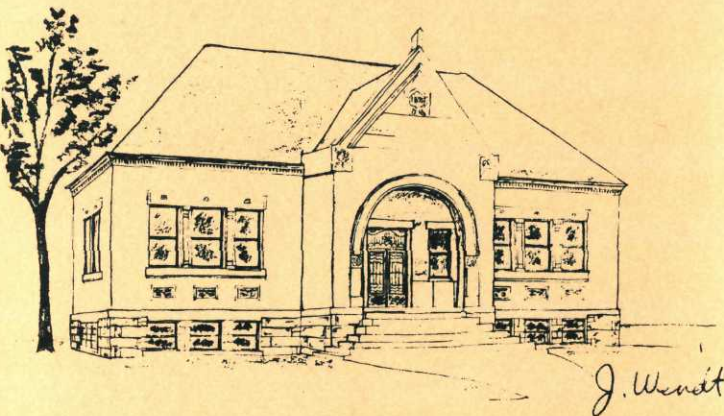


HISTORY OF DUNDEE TOWNSHIP LIBRARY

While 1979 has been chosen for the celebration of the Library's Centennial, recently discovered township records indicate that the Dundee Library was operating as a tax-supported library as early as 1876.

Library service in Dundee Township grew out of subscription libraries established by groups concerned with the lack of cultural and recreational activities in the area and was directly related to local agitation and concern with the Temperance Movement of the times.

In the 1850's a small collection of books was brought together by the Hand in Hand group of the Sons of Temperance. In 1871, at the suggestion of J. A. Carpenter, the Literary and Library Association of Carpentersville was organized and chartered under state law. This group expanded the original collection of books and operated for many years as a subscription library in the original Library Hall, a small frame building located at Main and Grove Streets in Carpentersville. Members of the Literary and Library Association served as volunteer librarians until 1883, when Mrs. Lucia Gorman became librarian. The very minimal subscription fees required for membership were supplemented by endowment from the Carpenter family.

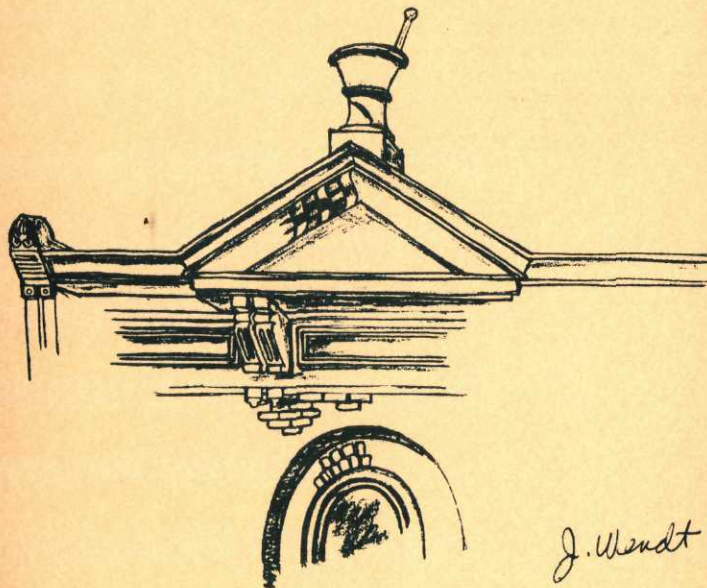


CARPENTERSVILLE LIBRARY HALL

In 1895, Mrs. Mary Carpenter Lord, in memory of her deceased husband J. A. Carpenter, built and donated jointly to the Congregational Church and the Literary and Library Association of Carpentersville the Library Hall located at 21 Washington Street. This township landmark, which was selected as an historic site by the

State of Illinois in 1973 and has also been entered in the National Register of Historic Places, is the present Dundee Township Park District Administration Building.

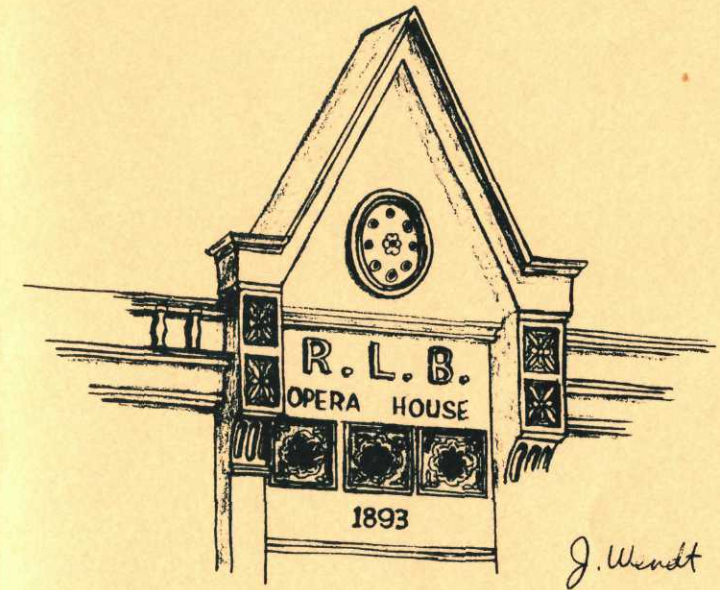
Dundee Library had its beginnings in the early 1870's with a collection of approximately 50 books in English and German, organized through the efforts of Dr. E. F. Cleveland and Fred Haverkamp, who were leaders of several civic movements of the period. The young Dr. Cleveland was a scholarly individual who deplored the lack of cultural institutions in the community. Mr. Haverkamp, a self-educated man who emigrated from Germany at age 17 to become a successful merchant in Dundee, held strong convictions regarding the Temperance Movement and hoped to provide for the young bloods of the community some center of activity other than the local saloons.



DETAIL FROM CLEVELAND AND TEST DRUG STORE

This first Dundee Library was housed in the Allan Hollister real estate and insurance office, a small frame building which stood at the corner of Main and First Streets. With the building of the drug store adjacent to this site, the library was moved into the combination offices and drug store of Drs. Cleveland and Test. Young Henry Baumann, druggist apprentice, served as librarian. He later became owner of the drug store and served for many years as librarian and president of the Board of Trustees. During the 1890's, the books were located on a balcony at the rear of his store and were reached by use of a ladder and "cat walk."

During these early years, the library's holdings were listed on printed leaflets entitled "Dundee Public Library Catalogue." The catalogue of 1884 lists 1120 books, which included 223 books printed in German. It is believed the German books were disposed of with the move across Main Street to the Opera House Building in 1900.

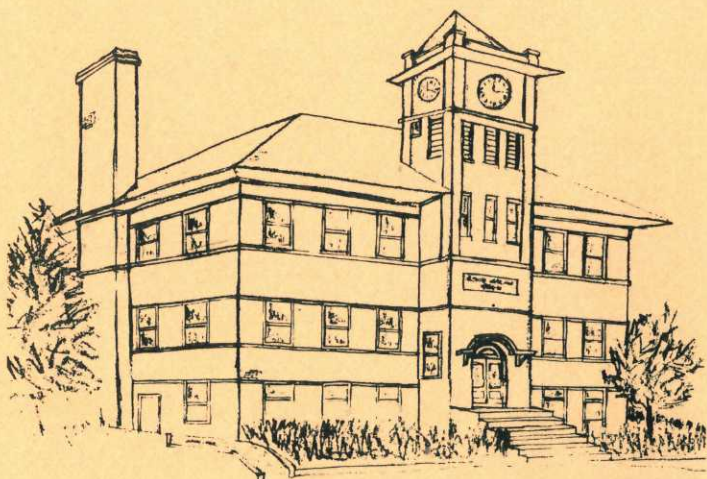


DETAIL FROM OPERA HOUSE

The Opera House of that era was a center for community activities and celebrations as well as a theater where professional and amateur theatricals were staged. Here the library had its home on the second floor in one of several rooms which had been planned as offices.

In 1909 it became necessary to find new quarters for the library to make way for the new telephone switchboard and office to be installed in the Opera House. A committee appointed to seek the erection of a building to house both the library and Dundee village offices was unsuccessful, and the library collection was moved across Main Street into temporary quarters in the drug store of C. S. Sinclair. Here Mr. Sinclair served as volunteer librarian along with his professional duties as druggist.

In 1910 the library was moved into quarters on the first floor of the new Dundee Village Hall. By the early 1920's the library had outgrown its limited space in one room on the first floor of Village Hall, and it was moved upstairs to occupy one half of the second floor space. By 1929, the book collection had grown to 6012 and library patrons totaled 1296.



J. Wendt

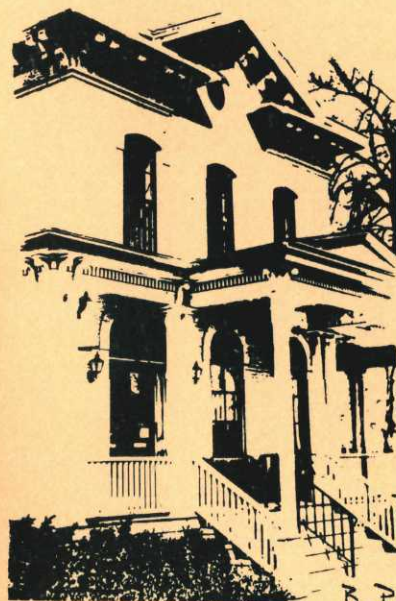
WEST DUNDEE VILLAGE HALL

In 1937, because of its superior rating, Dundee Library qualified for government assistance in bringing the reference collection and loan book collection up to date and in setting up a subject heading card catalog. Also at this time the juvenile department was organized and outfitted, open access to book stacks for the public was instituted, and a small reference and community meeting room was furnished. When the library held open house at the time of this expansion and renovation, the book collection totaled 10,000.

With the increasing growth of the community during the 1950's the Library Board, under the direction of Joseph Estes, stepped up efforts to provide a larger home for the library. One who foresaw this need and worked tirelessly toward this goal was Mrs. Ruth Wendt, who retired from the Library Board in 1963 after 26 years of devoted service.

In 1958, plans were presented for a proposed library to be built facing the Fox River on Lincoln Avenue in West Dundee. A \$175,000.00 referendum was defeated. At this time the Dundee Library was serving 3500 active patrons, with a staff of 3 full time librarians and a collection of 12,000 volumes. In 1959, in a merger with the Carpentersville Literary and Library Association, the Dundee Library incorporated this collection and maintained a branch library at this location until early 1969.

In 1962 the Brinkerhoff-Hall house, a Victorian dwelling located at 218 W. Main St., Dundee, became the first building owned by the Dundee Township Library. This Dundee landmark, built in the 1870's, later became the subject of a bitter controversy in the community when efforts to preserve the building as an historic site proved unsuccessful.



BRINKERHOFF —

HALL HOUSE

B. Pool

Within three years the facility proved inadequate to serve the rapidly growing community. In spite of the overcrowded conditions the library, under the able direction of Head Librarian Alice Herron, increased its services during the years at this location. Recordings, films, foreign language materials, and books for the visually handicapped became available. The library sponsored Great Books discussion groups and book reviews and worked closely with the schools to alleviate shortages of books available in local school libraries during this period.

In the spring of 1963, the Friends of the Library was organized. This volunteer group sponsors cultural activities such as Art Fairs, Creative Writing Contests, and other projects with an aim toward supplementing library needs and activities. It was from the Historical Committee formed by this group that our local Historical Society developed.

Under the leadership of Board President John Snow the Library Board continued its resolute efforts to provide adequate library facilities. Several sites for a new building were proposed. These included a proposed Bridge Library spanning the Fox River between East and West Dundee whose cost proved prohibitive. A referendum for \$350,000 to add a wing to the library building on Main Street and erect a branch library in the Meadowdale area of Carpentersville was defeated in 1965.

In November 1968 a referendum to erect a new library on the site of the existing library was defeated. That same year, to ease crowding, a portable building was erected adjoining the library and the entire adult non-fiction collection moved into it.

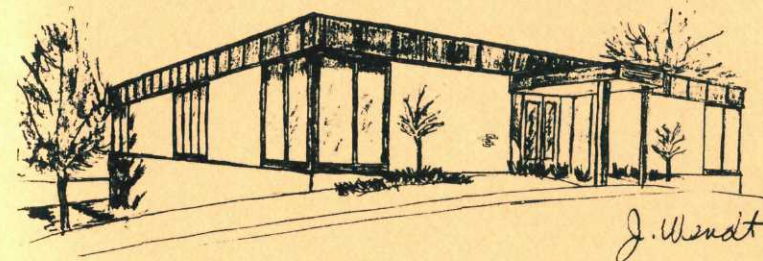
During 1969 and 1970, North Suburban Library System Service was expanded to include films, Reciprocal Borrowing (which gives local patrons access to the collections of all member libraries within the System), Reference Service, and Central Serials copying service for magazine materials. Services to the visually handicapped were expanded. Paperbacks and comic books were introduced into the library collection and the nucleus of the local history collection was started.

In 1971 the Library Board established a Building Fund toward the time when both community support and a feasible library site might become available. In the summer of 1973 the present site, consisting of 2½ acres at the junction of Barrington Avenue and Rte. 68 in East Dundee was purchased. The building on Main Street was sold and the proceeds added to the Building Fund. The Township added support with Federal Revenue Sharing Funds and the new library was built without a bond issue or tax increase.

In April 1975, delays in construction forced a move into temporary quarters in a commercial building in West Dundee. The following October library service began in the present location.

With additional space, the library is at last able to increase its collection and services, and offer programs and activities, particularly in the children's department.

Recent statistics show the library serving more than 16,000 active patrons with a collection of more than 66,500 books, 3300 recordings and 252 periodical titles. Circulation of 1000 per day is now considered average.



J. Wendt

DUNDEE TOWNSHIP LIBRARY 1979

This Centennial Celebration finds the Dundee Township Library, for the first time since its beginnings, permanently housed in a facility adequate to serve the community. The library offers 15,000 sq. ft. of library space, with the potential of an additional 12,000 sq. ft. upon the completion of the lower level. Future plans are for a public meeting room and the children's department to be located on the lower level.

Pictures courtesy of Beth Pool and John Wendt
Text by Abbey LaVell