

About Sherman Public Library



In 1994 the Williamsville Public Library received a \$38,000 **Libraries for Tomorrow** grant from the Illinois State Library to form a "demonstration" library district that would serve the Williamsville School District. The new library district would be known as The Sangamon Valley Library District and would share space with the Village Clerk in the Sherman Village Hall. The library opened for business in February of 1994 with three tables, three computers, eighty books, and high hopes. One of the stipulations of the grant was that after one year of demonstration services, the question of forming a permanent library district and funding it through a property tax assessment would be placed before the voters of the district.

When the referendum in April of 1995 failed, Sherman citizens formed a committee to explore the means by which a library would be created to serve only the Village of Sherman. Enough signatures were collected to place the creation of the new Sherman Public Library District on the November, 1995 ballot.

The referendum passed by a large margin, and the Sherman Public Library District became official on November 20, 1995. Original members of the library board were Bill Peterman, Randy Burge, Lynn Morford, Bill Jensen, Eileen Jones, Jackie Weatherford, and Francine Matthewson (Black). Lynn Morford served as the first Board President.

Current members of the Library Board of Trustees are : President Julia Horton, Vice President Mary Contri, Secretary David Grimm, Treasurer Robert Shurig and Trustees Jack Patterson, Randy Burge and Gale Kilbury.

By 1999 it was apparent that the Library had outgrown its home. The Library applied for and received a \$250,000 grant in matching funds from the Illinois State Library. A grant in the amount of \$40,000 from Illinois First enabled the Library Board to purchase property on the northwest edge of the Village for a new library building. The architectural firm of Hanse-Utz from Mattoon was chosen to design the building. Hat Construction from Springfield had the successful construction bid. A ground breaking ceremony was held in March of 2000, and construction began in August of that year. The Sherman Public Library opened for business in its new home on April 1, 2000. The square footage of the new building was just under 5000 square feet. It was quite a difference from the shared 400 sq. ft. at the Village Hall. The additional space afforded areas for a children's book section, meeting room, public computers and expansion.

The first board hired Anita Walters to serve as the director of the new library district. She continues to oversee library operations, aided by a staff which includes Dawn Rutschke, Dr. Ted Morrissey, Phyllis Sanderbeck, Mona Bentley and Vicki Bryant. Norma Davis serves as volunteer.