

SWAN LIBRARY NOTES 100th ANNIVERSARY 3-10-2000

On Friday, March 17th (St. Patrick's Day) the Swan Library in Albion will celebrate its One Hundredth Birthday. It was on that day in the year 1900 that the library opened its doors to patrons for the first time. To commemorate these one hundred years of service, the library will hold an open house all day long with refreshments. From 3-5 p.m. clowns will be in the children's library. From 4-5 p.m. Dee Robinson, Gaines Town Historian, will talk about Pioneer Women. Her new book, 'Historical Amnesia', published by the Orleans County Historical Association will also be released. At 5 p.m. a Birthday Party will be given in the upper rooms of the library.

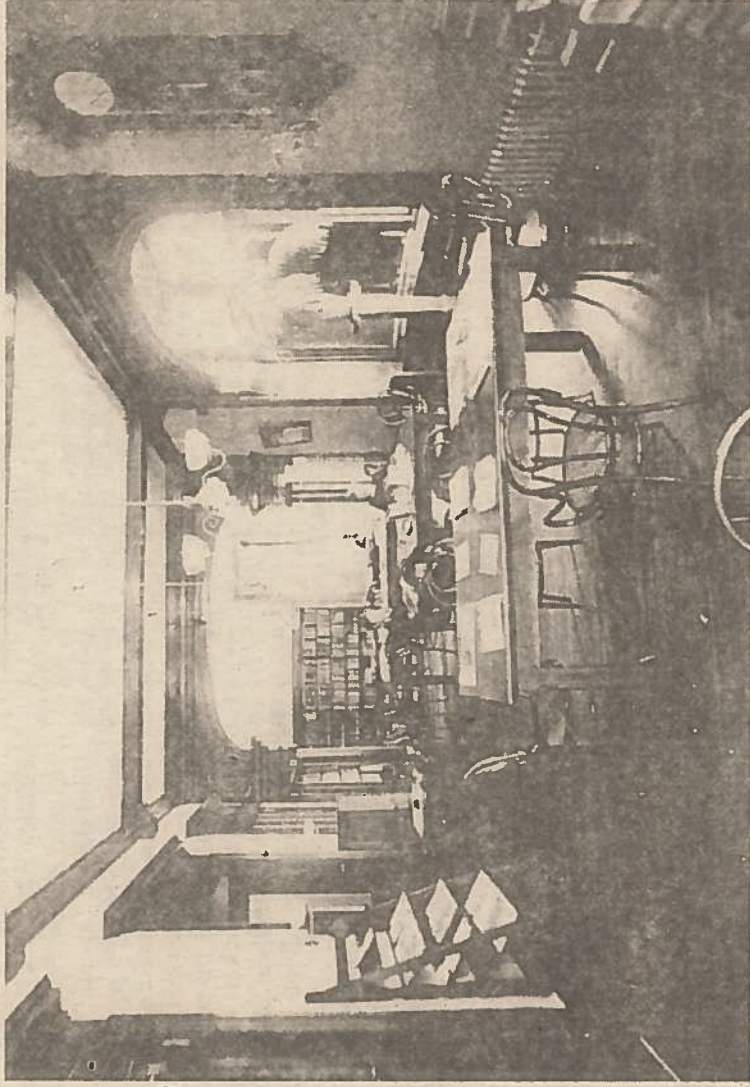
The historic marker in front of the Swan Library notes the following:

William G. Swan, Benefactor
Chartered December 21, 1899
Opened March 17, 1900. Oldest
Orleans Co. Library. Former
R.S. Burrows Mansion - 1851
Lillian Achilles 1st Librarian

William G. Swan (1822-1896) came to Albion in 1835 with his parents from Saratoga County, N.Y. He and his father later engaged in business and in 1855 he became Superintendent of the International Railway suspension Bridge at Niagara Falls,

a position he held for thirty-eight years. In a codicil to his will, Mr. Swan left \$35,000 for the establishment of a community library to be known as Swan Library. He also directed his executors to set up an association and that the trustees buy a lot and erect a suitable building upon it. Instead, the trustees purchased the former mansion of Roswell S. Burrows and transformed that residence into a library which occurred in 1899. also, in 1899 the Swan Library Association was granted a charter which was signed by Melvill Dewey who initiated the Dewey Decimal System for shelving books in a library.

Miss Lillian Achilles (1871-1941) was born in Ridgeway, the daughter of Albert and Ellen Brown Achilles. She was a graduate of the Albion Academy and conducted a private primary school for a short time. Following that, she served twelve years as librarian of the Albion Town Library which was eventually to become absorbed into Swan Library. This was located on the second floor of Central School which later became the old American Legion Hall, now called Central Hall. It was Miss Achilles' friendship with Mr. and Mrs. Swan that helped arouse their interest in establishing a community library. Miss Achilles became the first librarian and served for the next forty-one years until her death. Her



library science training was secured at Chicago University. She was indeed, a woman of vision and through her expertise she fashioned the library as many people knew it for over four decades.

Our interior photo taken in 1900, shows the main reading room at it looked one hundred years ago.

Official Notice

On Saturday, April 15 Orleans County will celebrate its 175th Anniversary. A history

program is being planned at the Orleans County Court House from 1:30-4:00 p.m. with several local historians participating who will tell about our early beginnings. An anniversary cake will be cut at 1:30. Terry Heary will provide music on the fiddle and the afternoon will end with a performance by the Community Mass Choir. The program is being headed up by C.W. Lattin and Neil Johnson. The public is encouraged to attend this milestone of local history.