

## **History of Sleeper Public Library**

In 1907 a new bank building was constructed in Ubly by Albert E. Sleeper.

In 1908 Mr. and Mrs. Albert E. Sleeper sent a letter to the Ubly Village Council stating that they would like to present a Library to the people of Ubly. It was their wish to donate the rooms needed for a library on the 2nd floor of the new bank building, complete with the necessary furniture, at least 1500 volumes, also to furnish the lights and heat, of course the Village Council voted to accept this most generous offer.

Mr. Sleeper had previously established a library in Lexington, Michigan, which was called the Moore Memorial Library. Mrs. Sleeper's maiden name was Moore.

When the rooms were ready Mr. Sleeper had Miss Anne Henry, Librarian at Moore Memorial Library, come to Ubly to help set up the Library with 2500 volume, which he provided. He then had someone from the Library of Michigan come to Ubly to help with the cataloging.

During this time a petition of more than 50 registered voters was presented to the Village Council requesting the establishment of a special Library Tax of 1 mill. A special election was held and the resulting vote was in favor of Library funding of 1 mill.

In 1950 the library was moved from the Sleeper Bank Building to the Village Hall on Queen Street, for whatever reason, and resided in very cramped quarters until 1983.

In February, 1983 the Library Board purchased the old Sleeper Bank Building from the John Maurer family. The Library moved in March, 1983 back to where it all began. In May, 1983, the Library celebrated its 75th Anniversary in its new quarters with an open house and dedication ceremony.

In 1990 the trustees voted to buy the former Ubly Party Store, which adjoined the library building, with a view to future expansion.

Through the efforts of Carl Osentowski, of the Economic Development Corporation, the Village of Ubly received a \$500,000 grant to establish a Senior Citizen's Center. The village proposed to place the Center in the library building rather than locate the facility outside of town. The library provided funds to guarantee the grant. A new room was added on the East side to compensate the library for space given up on the West side of the building.

A complete remodeling and renovation of the street level of the building was done, with a modern kitchen for the Senior Center, and barrier-free entrances and rest rooms.

In 1994 the Village Council and Village President Dan Lackowski allowed the library to occupy their Council room for a year. Officer Gene Bucholz put up with Council, Library Board, and Steering Committee meetings in his quarters. It was a true community effort.

The library was returned to the completely modernized building in late January, 1995. A fundraiser headed by Nancy Elliott and Janice Schrader, with a big assist from former Mayor Francis Hund, collected thousands of dollars for needed furnishings and equipment not covered by the Grant. A grand opening was held on June 25, 1995.

May 18, 1996, the Sleeper Block, which includes the Sleeper Public Library and Senior Citizens Center, was placed on the Michigan Historic Sites thanks to the efforts of Mrs. Lillian Lowell, who researched and submitted all the data to the Michigan Historical Society.

The Library is now open 45 hours a week. The Library has six computers for patrons to use. The Library has internet access. In 2003 the library is an Inter-Loaning Library and we are now starting to create a Web Site for the Library.