



### The History of the Belfast Public Library

The Belfast Public Library was established on March 14<sup>th</sup> 1901, when the State of New York granted the Board of Education of the Belfast Union School a Provisional Charter.

The Library was first located in a small room of the Genesee Valley Seminary, King Street, Belfast, N.Y. that was built in 1857. Members of the Hawthorne Club, a literary club from Belfast, offered the services to the library.

March 31, 1910, the Library was granted an Absolute Charter by the University of the State of New York Education Department.

In 1910 the Library was moved down town in the back of a new building occupied by the Post Office. This building is now occupied by Fleet Bank. At this time Mrs. Clark was the first librarian and was hired and paid by the Hawthorne Club.

In 1915 Mr. Frank Bartlett of Olean, N.Y. and a native of Belfast erected in memory of his parents a new building for the library. This building is on the corner of Main and Chestnut Street.

On August 4, 1915 this building was deeded to the town of Belfast by Mr. Bartlett. Mrs. Allen Ford was hired as librarian in 1914 and served until 1940 when she retired at the age of 80. Miss Pauline Weir was then appointed and served until April 1983. Mrs. Louise Nelson took over the job as librarian and served until 1986. Mrs. Karen Johnson was hired by the Library Board of Trustees as librarian and served until 1996.

Because the school was centralized, a new Absolute Charter was granted to the library in April 22, 1955.

December 24, 1981 the State of N.Y. Education Department granted a Certificate of Registration to the library.

The principal income and financial support of the library comes from the Belfast Central School District. The voters of the district vote at their annual meeting on a sum for the library since it is chartered under the school. Since the library was deeded to the town, it is the town's responsibility to maintain the upkeep of the building and grounds