

## **History of the Green Free Library**

The borough of Wellsboro was already more than 100 years old when the first effort was made to establish a free public library. In 1911, a local philanthropist, Charles Green of Roaring Branch, left a \$50,000 trust with instructions to create the Green Free Library. Several years passed until Mary B. Robinson bequeathed Chester Place, the family home built in 1855 by her father, Chester Robinson. After extensive renovations to Chester Place, the new Green Free Library officially opened on January 26, 1917.

Thanks to a dedicated cadre of community leaders and volunteers, the Library has grown steadily, but slowly. The Gmeiner Art and Cultural Center was constructed on Library grounds in 1969. Along with the wing added in 1975, it serves the community as a place where art can be viewed, taught and enjoyed by all. The Library and Center work hand-in-hand to improve the quality of life and create cultural opportunities for local residents.

The Library strives to provide a collection of materials that meet the informational and recreational demands of the community. It is a valuable reference center for local schools. Students from the North Campus of Pennsylvania College of Technology use the library's resources to supplement their learning and curriculum studies. The library offers children's reading programs, genealogy service, and local history research. Installed in 1991, an automated computer system for acquisitions, circulation and on-line public access allows efficient and expedient access to the collection. Internet access was made available in January 1997.

Green Free Library's service area, which includes the townships surrounding Wellsboro, encompasses 11,900 residents. The library has 6,000 registered patrons, serves approximately 100 people daily, and circulates about 300 books per day. Of the eleven libraries in the Potter-Tioga Library System, Green Free is the largest. It surpasses any of the other ten in number of books in its collection.

Green Free Library actively participates in ACCESS, the Pennsylvania Library System's interlibrary loan database boasting three million items. Additionally, the library is a member of PALS, a consortium of school, public and academic libraries.