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# The Yellow Sheet

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## Looking good at 55

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As the saying goes, change is constant. Who would have thought a mere simple idea, a small room and a scant batch of tattered books would morph into a full fledged library? Strange how things change! It was fifty five years ago this month that some people (allegedly 'mothers') acted on the idea of opening a "public library". Then, unlike now, the word public meant quite literally the people. So the people pooled their personal books together, borrowed a room from the school and used a culture of volunteerism to open up their own public library. So the journey began.

But like the seeds in the spring, soon the changes began to take shape and it never stopped changing. Almost daily the number of books got larger. Everybody had books that others could have to read and return. Along with that, the size of patrons got larger and larger. Soon the inevitable happened, the "public library" needed a larger room; so it moved (to a part of present Painted Lizard/ Sheerer Coffeeshop complex). Soon that proved to be too tight a dress for the rapidly growing baby. This was when the baby took its first major step (1977). It wasn't an easy step of course as there were a good deal of fall downs and get ups( it cost them a year worth of delays, missing the bicentennial opening goal). But the big change came and the "Yarnell public library" settled in its own very home (the western half of the present structure). Yet there were bigger and more changes to come.

Through incredible mix of volunteerism and ingenious fundraisings the library was able to build an addition which became the present reading room. Now the lonesome old 'shack' was no more but instead there sat a handsome building, ample and rich looking, making a proud presence in the community. By now it had a children section, a handicap accessible bathroom and had three times as many books lining the vast array of shelves. At times there were as many as 17 volunteers staffing the library. Then came the Big change; time had come for the public library to go "Public". It was gradual but as the late 80's turned to 90's and further edging the end of the 20th. Century, there were less and less volunteers and more and more County paid services which began to dominate the library's operations. Soon came the computerized catalogue system, interlibrary book exchange system and a full time professional librarian in charge of the operation, all provided and paid by the County. Added were the books on tape and the video cassettes, which subsequently changed to books on CD and DVD's. Finally came the internet services, including WiFi system.

Today the Yarnell Public Library may seem small compared to the main branch in downtown Prescott but in terms of services it is no less by any means. It's been changes upon changes. What changes are to come next?