

Spotlight On Glen Elm Branch Library

Name of Library: Glen Elm Branch Library is one of eight branches of the Regina Public Library. Opened in 1979 the branch is located at 1601 Dewdney Avenue East and serves the east central communities of Regina.

Library Profile: The building experienced its first major upgrade in 2005 when the layout for the public space was reorganized and the interior colour scheme was changed. This improved the appearance and created more seating space for the public. Similar but more extensive changes occurred in March 2014 and again in December 2015 when all the shelving and furniture in the public space was replaced and upgraded and a new paint job introduced a new colour scheme.

These changes were made in response to changes in the community. Starting in 2008 the neighbourhood experienced a boom in immigration as many newcomers from all parts of the world moved into the community. This influx of newcomers has led to a number of changes in the branch library. These range from changes in the collection (we created a multilingual collection which features material in ten different languages besides English) to the kind of programs offered to a new way the branch relates to and interacts with its community. We also introduced a literacy computer café for use by our patrons.

In 2010 a mural was painted on the outside northwest corner of the building. This mural described (without words) what the building was and what happened inside the building. Along with the mural a column near the front door was converted into a sign that said welcome in eleven different languages. In January 2014 the branch introduced a new collection of Family Language Kits which were designed to help newcomer parents with young children learn English and introduce the families to the resources of the public library.

In 2012 we initiated a major project of working with several community partners to create a program called Community Connections. Initially started with a provincial government grant this program brought together a variety of cultural and ethnic groups in the community for an afternoon of multicultural performances, free ethnic snacks and information kiosks about the individual groups and organizations. This program has since been adopted by the local community association and is now run every year by that group with Glen Elm Branch Library as a working partner.

One of our most recent activities is a joint program working with the Regina Immigrant Women's Centre to host a series of sewing classes for immigrant women. And in 2016 we are presenting a year-long series of programs celebrating the many different cultures in the community. During this time the branch is celebrating the Chinese Lunar New Year, the start of the Islamic month of Ramadan, the Hindi festival of Lights and Christmas. These are all events that are important to and celebrated by the diverse members of the Glen Elm Library community.

As the community evolves the Glen Elm Branch Library is positioned to change right along with it. Over the last six years we have implemented a process of community engagement that informs the branch staff about what is happening in our community. We do this by meeting with stakeholders and other

members of our community to build and strengthen our connections to the community. These connections help ensure that the branch's collections, programs and services will remain relevant to the people and the community we serve.