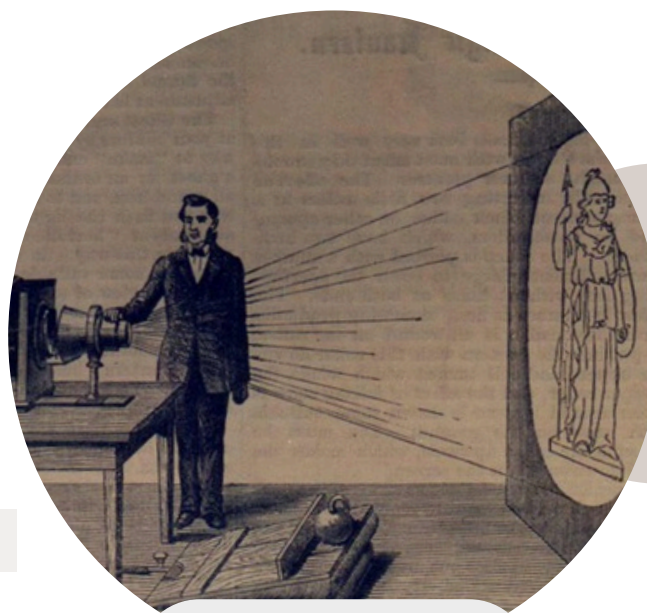


Guelph Public Library Timeline

1832-2025



The Library Room at the British Hotel

F&MI rents a suite at the British Hotel and extends its hours of operation. Regular public lectures begin.

Phantasmagoria Lantern Acquired

F&MI purchases a Phantasmagoria Lantern (Magic Lantern) to enhance its lecture presentations with projected images.

Ontario Free Libraries Act Passed

Ontario passes the Free Libraries Act, allowing cities and towns to establish publicly funded libraries.

1832

1

Farmers and Mechanics Institute is Established

The Farmers and Mechanics Institute (F&MI) forms with paid memberships, located at Thomas Sandiland's Store at 3-5 Wyndham St.

1850

2

1855

3

A New Location

The Library Room relocates to a space above P.C. Allen's Bookstore, next to 53 Wyndham Street.

1856

4

1858

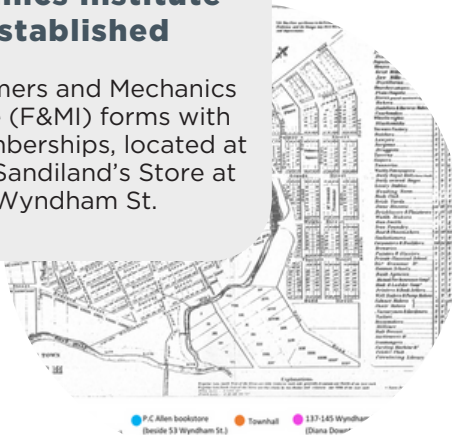
5

Library Reading Rooms at Town Hall

The Library Reading Rooms move to Guelph's Town Hall, and library staff are officially hired.

1882

6



1883

7

The Guelph Free Public Library

The Guelph Free Public Library is established and located at 137-145 Wyndham Street.



1900

8

The Carnegie Foundation

Plans begin to move into a larger facility. A new property is selected, and funding from the Carnegie Foundation is pursued.

1905

9

The Guelph Public Library Opens

The new Guelph Public Library opens to the public, establishing itself as a cornerstone of the community.



Children's Reading Room

Discussions begin about creating a dedicated Children's Reading Room. After its opening, the Boys & Girls Reading Room sees steady and continuous growth.

10

1916

1939-1945

11

World War II

Books from the library and magazines from the community are sorted by the International Order of the Daughters of the Empire (I.O.D.E.) and donated to military forces.



Film Screenings for Kids

The Boys & Girls Reading Room begins showing films using a donated delineascope and screen.

12

1946

1948

13

Mrs. Hugh Guthrie Becomes Board Chair

In 1946, Mrs. Hugh Guthrie (Margaret Murray Stuart) becomes the first woman to join the Library Board and is appointed Chair in 1948.

1951

14



100 Norfolk Street Library Opens

A modern new library building opens at 100 Norfolk Street in November 1965.

1965

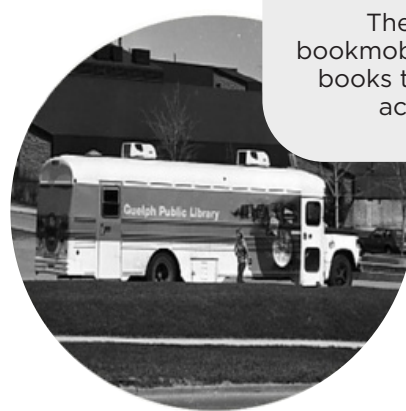
15

Norfolk Building Expansion

The Norfolk location expands to 29,500 square feet over three levels to better serve the growing community.

1976

16



First Bookmobile Service Launched

The library's first bookmobile begins bringing books to neighborhoods across Guelph.

1977

17



Bullfrog Branch Opens

Bullfrog Branch opens its doors in September 1984.

1984

18

1986

Newspapers Preserved on Microfilm

Guelph's historical newspapers, spanning from the 1800s to 1988, are microfilmed to improve accessibility.



1990

Digital Records Management Begins

The library adopts its first digital records management system, retiring the traditional card catalogue.

1999

Public Computers Introduced

Thanks to a grant from Industry Canada, public computer access becomes available.



19

20

21

22

23

24

Scottsdale Branch Opens

Scottsdale Branch welcomes visitors starting November 1986.



1988

Second Bookmobile Hits the Road

A second bookmobile is launched to expand the library's mobile reach.



1991-1992

Library Website Goes Live

The library launches its first website. A second version follows in 2002.

2001

25

West End Branch Opens

In June 2001, the West End Branch opens at the West End Recreation Centre, serving a growing community.



2003

26

Westminster Branch Opens

Westminster Branch, the largest in the system, opens in November 2006.

27



2006

Third Bookmobile Funded by Lions Club

The third Bookmobile is launched with generous support from the Guelph Lions Club.



2007

29

Friends of the Library Book Sales Begin

The Friends of the Guelph Public Library start their popular book sales to raise funds for library initiatives.

2008

30

125th Anniversary Celebration

A commemorative logo is unveiled and the third version of the website is launched to celebrate the library's 125th anniversary.

2010

31

East Side Branch

The East Side Branch opens in May 2010. The library also transitions to a new digital records system.



eBook Task Force Formed

An eBook Task Force is created to support staff and patrons with digital literacy and e-resource questions.

32

2011

2013

33

Guelph Mercury Photos Digitized

Over 3,000 historic photos from the Guelph Mercury are digitized and made available through the Archeion database.

Self-Checkout Introduced

Self-checkout stations are launched. The Archives also digitize the Couling Inventory of Guelph's historic buildings.

34

2014

2015

35

Tech Bar Unveiled

A Tech Bar opens at the Main Library featuring a 3D printer, VR goggles, basic computers, e-readers, and iPads. A new logo and brand are introduced.

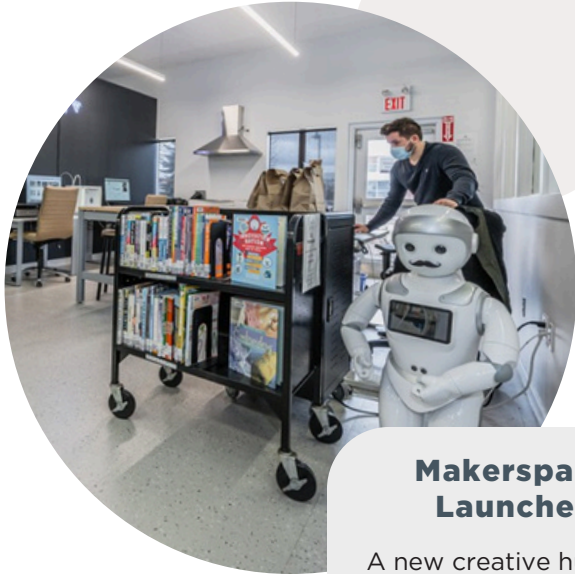


Fourth Bookmobile Begins Service

The fourth bookmobile launches alongside the fourth iteration of the library's website.

36

2017



Makerspace Launches

A new creative hub, the Makerspace, is introduced with a sound studio, 3D printers, craft equipment, and a games room.

2018

37

New Central Library Approved

City Council unanimously supports the proposal for a new Central Library as part of the Baker Street development.

38

2019



39

COVID-19 Lockdowns

The library closes during COVID-19 lockdowns but quickly pivots to offer curbside service and virtual programs.

2020

Overdue Fines Eliminated

In an effort to promote equity and accessibility, the library eliminates overdue fines.

40

2022



Building a Future-Focused Library

With construction underway and innovation at its core, Guelph Public Library looks ahead to a dynamic, inclusive, and community-driven future.

2023

41

New Central Library Construction Begins

Construction officially starts on the long-anticipated Central Library at the Baker Street development.

42

2025