

The Riverside Public Library Timeline of Important Dates

April 21, 1927 - Referendum passed establishing a library and levying a tax for this purpose.

April 17, 1928 - First Library Board elected.

June 25, 1929 - Bond issue Referendum to construct a building for \$75,000.00; passed 120-70.

February 8, 1930 - By election of the people, the Library Act was amended to permit the library to be built in any park in the Village under exclusive control and supervision of Library Board.

April 11, 1930 - Grace Gilman hired as librarian prior to opening; signed agreement with architect Connor and O'Connor.

May 26, 1930 - Memorandum of Agreement signed between Village and Library to permit the Library to erect and maintain a library on Village land.

August 6, 1930 - Awarded General Contract for construction of library building to Arvid H. Viren for \$51,630.

October 4, 1930 - Ground breaking and laying of cornerstone.

November 13, 1930 - Resolution passed to construct a joint heating plant with the Township for heating both the Town Hall and the Library.

April 4, 1931 - Dedication and opening of the Library. Those present included Mr. Connor, Architect of the building and Edgar Cameron, a Chicago artist who painted a mural of Marquette and Joliet. Robert Somerville, first Library Board President, presented the Cameron Mural and a decorative map of the region as a personal gift to the Library. Over 1800 people registered for library cards the first week the library opened.

April 22, 1931 - Organizational meeting for Riverside Friends of the Library. Mrs. Joseph Jaros was elected President.

December 22, 1931 - Annual operating budget cut from \$8,990 to \$6,500 due to low rate of tax collection during the Depression.

September 30, 1936 - Board voted to replace Library doors with solid oak entrance doors

February 24, 1937 - Riverside Historical Society materials housed in the Library.

February 1, 1940 - Village moved out of basement room of the library. Basement remodeled into a Children's Room.

May 1, 1966 - Riverside Public Library becomes one of the first libraries to join the new Suburban Library System (SLS).

April 1975 - Riverside Public Library was recipient of the "All-Star Library Award" from the Illinois Library Association.

Referendum passed to increase library tax rate from 19 mils to 40 mils.

November 1984 - Referendum by voters to fund a \$1,500,000 addition to the library passed 5,196 to 4,470. Architect: Frye Gillian Molinaro; Contractor: A.C.M. Associates; Size: 12,500 sq. ft. addition to the 5,761 sq. ft. building.

April 14, 1985 - Groundbreaking for new addition.

September 7, 1986 - Grand re-opening of the library with new addition.

October 1989 and January 1990 - Flamingo Film Company spent four days filming an Encyclopedia Britannica Film in the Library.

December 1991 - Riverside Public Library pictured on the cover of *American Libraries* magazine.

April 1997 - Riverside Public Library building is used for the taping of the Oprah Winfrey Show book discussion of *Stones from the River* by Ursula Hegi.

October 1997 - The Riverside Public Library joined the World Wide Web: www.sls.lib.il.us/rss/

June 1998 - The Library was awarded grant of \$33,306 from the Illinois State Library and an additional \$50,000 plus was fund raised, to renovate the Terrace into a Quiet Reading Room. Construction began March 1999

April 5, 1999 - The front of the Library building was filmed for use in an episode of "Early Edition".

November 7, 1999 - Dedication of the Quiet Reading Room.

August 2002 - Young Adult Area opened on lower level.

April 2004 - Lighting fixtures, made to look like the original Great Room lights, were installed in the Great Room. The fixtures were purchased with money received from the estate of Grace A. Board, a former staff member.

(OVER)



Riverside Public Library

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April 24, 2005 – The Library’s 75th Jubilee Year begins with a Commencement Celebration. A year of programs, events and celebrations took place in recognition of the Anniversary. All costs incurred with the Anniversary year were paid by the Riverside Friends of the Library.

June 2005 – Library receives grant of \$27,000 from the Illinois Clean Energy Foundation to replace lower level lighting.
April 30, 2006 – The Riverside Friends of the Library mark their 75th Anniversary. Their many years of support to the Library is celebrated.

June 2006 – The Library receives a \$17,000 grant from the Illinois Clean Energy Foundation to replace the lighting in the Adult Non-Fiction area.

September 2006 – A Landscaping project, funded by the Riverside Garden Club, the Frederick Law Olmsted Society and the Riverside Friends of the Library is completed.

June 2007 – Library receives a \$12,000 grant from the Illinois Clean Energy Foundation to complete the replacement of lighting in the Library.

July 2008 – *Bats at the Library*, a children’s book by Brian Lies, is published by Houghton-Mifflin Corporation. The “Library” used in the book is based on the Riverside Public Library.

October 10, 2008 – Author Brian Lies comes to Riverside to read from and autograph his book, *Bats at the Library*. The Library celebrates this event with “Batoberfest”, an evening of fun for the entire community. Bat images lit the Library Building and the Village’s Water Tower to publicize the event.

May 2010 – The Library is the recipient of an installation s of poetry and other related materials throughout the building as part of “The Language of Conservation”. The event was a initiative of the Poets House, in partnership with the Chicago Zoological Society, Riverside Public Library and Brookfield Public Library, as well as a consortium of zoos and libraries nation wide. It was made possible by a National Leadership grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and ran for three years.

April 2011 – The Library celebrates 80 years of service to the community!

June 2012 – The Library forms a partnership with the Riverside Farmers’ Market.

June 2012 – The Library is featured on a Isaac Mizrahi infomercial featuring local resident Summer Rio and Chevrolet.

September 2013 – Library Board of Trustees hires Studio GC as a space planner for the Library.

December 2014 – The Library enters into an agreement with the Czech-Slovak American Genealogy Society (CSAGSI) to become the location of CSAGSI’s substantial Czech Genealogy Collection. The Paul M. Nemecek/CSAGSI Genealogy Collection is housed on the Lower Level of the Library. CSAGSI member volunteers provide hours of assistance with the resources available.

December 2016 – New book and media shelving is installed on the Main Level of the Library. The shelving project was funded by the Riverside Friends of the Library. With the installation of the new shelving, the entire adult collection of the Library is housed on the same floor.

May 11, 2017 – The new HVAC system is installed at a cost of 375,000. The Village of Riverside provided a loan of \$220,000 to help the Library pay for the project.

December 2017 – Opening Doors Project completed. The Friends of the Library funded the opening of a direct entrance to the elevator from the Movie Room. The Patron Services Department was closed in with an additional service desk and entrance door.

September 2019 – February 2020 – Construction on the Early Learners Area, part of the Library’s Lower Level Renovation Program, takes place.

March 17, 2020 – Bond Referendum for \$1,500,000 to pay for the Lower Level Renovation of the Library passed 2,047 to 752.

March 16 – June 1, 2020 – For the first time in it’s history, the Library is closed for an extended period of time because of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

September 12, 2020 – Lower Level Renovations begin.

April 2021 – The Riverside Public Library begins its 90th year of service!

July 1, 2021 – Ribbon Cutting held for the re-opening of the Lower Level. Due to COVID-19 concerns, only Library Board members and select guests attended.

August 28, 2021 – RENOVATION CELEBRATION held at the Library to celebrate with our patrons and to hold a Dedication Ceremony for the Friends of the Library Terrace and the David M. Bonnette/REEF Teen Room.