

HISTORY OF THE GLEED COMMUNITY LIBRARY

The Yakima Regional Library bookmobile made two stops along the highway in the Gleed area in the early 1950's. It wasn't highway 12 then. It was the original 2-lane highway 410 and if you were a reader you watched for the big yellow bookmobile at a crossroad. You hurried because it stopped for only 15 or 20 minutes, selections needed to be made quickly. One of the cheerful, effecient library aids, Dorathy McKay Adamson, soon learned your reading prefences and had a book in her hand to hand to you.

One of the bookmobile librarians was Mrs. Erwin Drake who always enjoyed her stop in Gleed because that was where her daughter, Mrs. Edith Schnellman, lived. Edith loved books. Eventually she and her mother dreamed up the idea of a branch library in Gleed. That very first branch library was a group of book shelves in the hardware store which Edith and her husband, Walter, operated. Walter was a member of the Gleed volunteer fire department and with the help and backing of the whole Gleed fire department the books and book shelves found a home in the back of that building. At first the library shared the space with a big fire truck. Little by little, with donated materials and labor the books and book shelves had a room of their own, separated from the rumble and roar of the truck when it answered an emergency call. The grand opening was on June 14, 1956. It was open one day a week. Library board members were Mrs. Eleanor Coyle, John Hudson and Mrs. Don Kohl.

When Mrs. Schnellman retired from her job as librarian, Mrs. Kohl became librarian for a year. The position then passed to Miss Marjory Gilde who remained there for 11 years. When her duties as secretary of the Lower Naches Primary School became too numerous, she resigned and Mrs. Eleanor Coyle became librarian and remained there for 18 years. During this time library days were increased to 2 days a week. When Mrs. Coyle retired, the position was filled by her daughter Mrs. Kathy Pilgrim, who has been librarian from then to the present.

In these years from 1956 to the present many more books and services have been added. The fireman, Lower Naches Womens' Club, Garden Club, Lion's Club, Grange and many members of the community have donated time and materials to make our library a pleasant place to come and relax, learn, and enjoy the magic of reading.

The Gleed Library customers are as diverse as is our community. We have many senior citizens who frequently use the library. Many of the seniors come here because they don't feel they can drive safely into town. Some are disabled and send a family member in for their books. Many times the librarian has picked out books and had them ready for these people. Also at times they have delivered them because of bad weather or illness, so that the customers don't have to give up their enjoyment of reading.

There are becoming more and more families that home school their children and use the library for reports and for fun. Many young families come in to start their children out with the joy of being read to.

School children come in for help on reports from 3rd. grade to high school; even college students seek out a quiet spot to search for information for a college subject.

We have a summer reading program to keep our community's children interested and knowledgeable through out the summer.

Many people who use the library either just plain like to read or want a quiet place to stop and think after a busy day.

Also we have more and more Spanish speaking customers interested in reading and learning to read. We have a Spanish section which we are gradually expanding.

Over the last few years it became evident that the library would have to find a new home. The Gleed fire Department passed a bond issue and was able to build a new building. Do to legalities beyond anyone's control the library was unable to move to the new site or to stay at the old one.

Community meetings were held and a Friends Group was formed to help find the library a home. A temporary site was found and on May 31, 1997 the Gleed Community Library was boxed up and moved to the Lower Naches Grange.

The Friends of the Gleed Library worked very hard at finding a permanent site. It seemed that no matter what lead they came up with something always blocked the way. They spoke with all the local service groups, did a phone survey of the whole Gleed area, checked into trusts and grants, talked with land owners and real estate agents for possible buildings or land, placed articles in the local papers, and worked on obtaining non-profit status for the friends group in order to raise funds; all with no luck in finding a permanent home for the library.

The whole Yakima Valley Regional Library system is under going many new changes; one of which is a valley wide computer and internet system. With no permanent site the Gleed Library could not be linked to this system, thus denying its customers and those all over the valley access to these two new systems. The Gleed Library's future was studied by Yakima Valley Regional Library staff, Yakima Valley Regional Library Board, and the Gleed Friends of the Library with no solution found. On March 19, 1998, with much regret the decision was made to close the Gleed Community Library on May 21, 1998.

The Gleed Friends of the Library will continue to meet and work on finding a permanent site for a library in our community.

From a group of book shelves in the hardware store, to the back wall of the Grange, the library has provided almost 50 years of service to our community. The great amount of knowledge and enjoyment obtained from this service will be greatly missed in our small community. We will now have to reach out to the many other Yakima Valley Regional Library sites and services to provide this for us. With the closing of the Gleed Community Library so closes another page in the history of our community.