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A view of ongoing construction at the Scottsdale Civic Center Library where the Heritage Connection will welcome patrons to discover relics of local history. (Submitted photo)

The Scottsdale Public Library and its patrons are putting finishing touches on a permanent exhibit some might say has been an effort nearly 50 years in the making.

The Scottsdale Heritage Connection aims to bring 20th Century relics to life ensuring the efforts of community pioneers of yesterday are not forgotten as 21st Century progress marches forward.

Library officials say the Scottsdale Heritage Connection will open sometime this summer.

For Beckie Gallivan Butler, Scottsdale Public Library senior manager, the coming exhibition has been a passion project fueled by the dedication of community volunteers, partners — and sponsors.

The Heritage Connection will be displayed at the Scottsdale Civic Center Library, 3839 N. Drinkwater Blvd.

"The Scottsdale Heritage Connection is a collection of materials at the Scottsdale Public Library related to Scottsdale's history, which staff and volunteers have been collecting and curating for nearly 50 years," she said. "The collection includes physical materials such as books, newspaper clippings and high school yearbooks as well as digital materials including oral histories, videos, documents and over 10,000 photographs."

— Beckie Gallivan Butler, Scottsdale Public Library senior manager

But without the sweat equity, expertise and dedication of library volunteers, Ms. Gallivan Butler says the Heritage Connection would not have been possible.

"The Scottsdale Public Library is in the fortunate situation of having a committed group of community members and the Friends of the Scottsdale Public Library who have spent two years raising funds to support creating a special space for the Scottsdale Heritage Connection," she pointed out.

"This dedicated space at the Civic Center Library, will allow easy access to the Scottsdale Heritage Connection materials and provide a research and community gathering place focused on Scottsdale's history."

Ms. Gallivan Butler explains the Friends of the Public Library, which is a 501(c)3 organization, is one of the primary mechanisms of private dollars to support the five-branch Scottsdale public library system.

"The Friends support helps to provide free community events at the library, children's programming in areas like STEM and storytelling, and programs beyond library facilities like the Books2Go micro libraries," she said of funding assistance not a part of the municipal General Fund.



HISTORY: The cover of *Scottsdale Steps Forward*, Spring 1973, Vol. IX, No. 2 shows Architect Bennie M. Gonzales studying the 1965 Civic Center model. (File photo)

"Friends is a partnership of individuals, foundations, and corporations that support lifelong learning through tax-deductible donations that support library services and programs. The mission of the Friends is to encourage community support through public education, advocacy and fundraising for the Scottsdale Public Library."

Since the first house of knowledge emerged in ancient Alexandria, libraries have long-served as community gathering locations and librarians — the gatekeepers of knowledge.

"Libraries are a vital part of society today and throughout history because they are and always have been, the last free, democratic institution available to one and all," she said. "Libraries are a community hub; connecting the community to information, resources, and with one another."

But with great technological advances come great challenges, Ms. Gallivan Butler admits.

"Libraries have been evolving for decades as a result of the digital revolution," she said.

"In today's library, services are utilized online, 24-hours a day and seven days a week. Materials and program attendance are reserved, research is completed, and electronic materials are checked out and enjoyed all without coming into the library. The evolution is continuing in terms of material format options, with titles available to be downloaded or streamed for those who don't want to use traditional formats such as DVDs and compact discs."

— Beckie Gallivan Butler, Scottsdale Public Library senior manager

Ms. Gallivan Butler explains at the Scottsdale Public Library a large effort has been moving more resources online, but also explaining the digital world to patrons.

"In addition to moving resources online, libraries are more focused than ever on providing information-related services specific to the needs of our communities and the digital era we are living in," she said noting youth and business development training to virtual reality programs available at the public library.

"Libraries are also focused on serving our community beyond our buildings to reach those who don't come to the library or aren't aware of all that today's library offers. We offer programs in non-library locations, participate in community eventsmicro-librariesand work with partners agencies to reach different groups in our city."



A view of three members of the philanthropic outfit known locally as the Scottsdale Charros. (File photo)

Partners in the community

The Charro Foundation offers a \$5,000 grant to the Friends of the Scottsdale Library, which Executive Director Dennis Robbins contends speaks to the spirit of the philanthropic outfit.

"Scottsdale Heritage means to tell the story of how our community began, the struggles and triumphs along the way and to learn from that to make a better future for our community tomorrow," he said of the support of the Scottsdale Charros.

"It is placing one foot in our past and knowing where we came from, but also to place a foot in front to create a better place in the future. It is important to remember how things came to be and why decisions were made in the past. We can celebrate the wins and the losses in our history so that we can make better decisions for future generations."

— Dennis Robbins, Scottsdale Charros executive director

For Ms. Gallivan Butler, the Scottsdale Charros are an essential part to the heritage of the community.

"The Scottsdale Charros not only preserve and promote Scottsdale history and programs, but continue to make history themselves," she explained. "Since forming in 1961, the Charros have hosted and championed spring training baseball and other sports programs iconic to Scottsdale. They have continued to embody the town's original slogan, 'The West's Most Western Town.'"

As with many things Scottsdale, the Charros were there at the beginning, Ms. Gallivan Butler says.

"A significant donor, the Charro Foundation was one of the earliest supporters of the Scottsdale Heritage Connection capital campaign," she said. "The funds the Charro Foundation provided, along with over 90 other individual, foundation and corporate donors, are being used to create and equip our new space which will provide our community a dedicated place to learn, discover and explore Scottsdale history."

Mr. Robbins explains the Charros and its philanthropic pursuit has matured along with the municipality of Scottsdale.

"The Scottsdale Charros began when our community was very young," he said. "The Charros and our city have grown and evolved together over the years. Early on we pitched in to help out any way we could. Volunteering at spring training games, hosting golf and tennis events and promoting the early years of the Fiesta Bowl. We wanted to promote tourism and economic growth in Scottsdale."



Dennis Robbins with his father, Mike Robbins. (File photo)

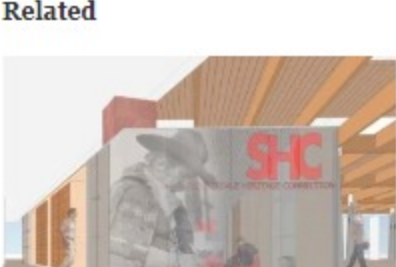
Mr. Robbins says if you don't know where you have been, you can't find out where you are headed.


"As today's culture changes so rapidly, the ability to study and reflect on the past becomes more relevant and more necessary," he said. "To slow down and ruminate on how fast Scottsdale and our society has changed in such a short period of time, hopefully we can get a grip on where we want to go in the future. Expectantly, the study of our past allows us to firmly plant our feet and boldly create a future our citizens can be proud of."


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