

Harry Potter Celebrates 20 Years of Magic

By Georgia Hamilton

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This past summer, the beloved magical book series Harry Potter turned 20 years old. The author, J.K. Rowling, started writing the first book when she was delayed on a train. She wrote many of the chapters on just scraps of paper and by 1997 the first book was published. Since then there have been 6 more books in the series as well as other books that branched off of the original series. Since the books have been released, many people, old and young, have fallen in love with “The Boy Who Lived”. That is why the 20 year anniversary is such a big milestone.

Nowadays it is hard to find someone in the U.S. that has not read or at least heard of this famous wizard. Harry Potter now has books, movies, and various different merchandise. “It’s cool that people my age now have this connection with today’s generation through the series,” says 26 year old Jordan Kirian, an employee at the Marysville Public Library. It truly is astonishing that something that was not expected to be so infamous is now something that people of various ages can now speak to each other about.

Since the original seven Harry Potter books and movies have been out a new wizarding wonder has swept the world. *Fantastic Beasts And Where To Find Them* was released in 2016. This prequel to the original Harry Potter’s takes place in the 1920s and tells about the magic zoologist, Newt Scamander. It follows Newt’s adventure to America to find and record information on magical creatures. However, things take a turn for the worse when he runs into a No-maj and some of his creatures escape. This movie dives into some of the topics that weren’t as touched on in the original series, and it provides a look on magical history before Harry comes

into the picture. “It takes the wizarding world and puts it in an American perspective and it also introduced us to Ilvermorny,” said Cali Leng. Ilvermorny is the American Wizarding School that was not formally introduced until the first *Fantastic Beasts*.

There is no doubt that the series has grown more popular than when it was first released. The author, J.K. Rowling, is estimated to be worth about \$1 billion. That’s pretty surprising given most of the first book was written on paper scraps. “I thought it was just a guy with a scar whacking a pale guy with a stick until his nose fell off,” says Taylor Andrews, a newcomer to the series. It’s true that Harry Potter has gotten more of a reputation in society. “The books almost never got checked out,” said Kirian when asked about the sudden popularity of the series. If the popularity begins to grow, J.K. Rowling may be worth even more. “Rowling is just trying to make more money,” says Cali Leng. However, people say that since they were introduced they begin to see different generations bonding and even notice that some of it relates to real life. Harry Potter may fade away at some point, but it will be hard to forget this story that has touched many readers lives.