

Historical Society of Michigan

Michigan History Calendar

Day	Year	Events
1 MAR	1784	Virginia ceded her claims to all territory north of the Ohio River including Michigan to the United States. This was a prerequisite for the smaller states to approve the Articles of Confederation.
1 MAR	1847	Michigan became the first government in the English-speaking world to outlaw capital punishment.
1 MAR	1848	The first telegraph message was sent between Detroit and Buffalo, NY.
1 MAR	1915	Majestic Theatre offered the first motion pictures in Detroit.
1 MAR	1954	Representative Alvin M. Bentley was shot when members of a radical Puerto Rican independence movement opened fire from the gallery of the US House of Representatives.
1 MAR	1961	President John Kennedy established the Peace Corps. The idea was first proposed at the University of Michigan during the 1960 campaign.
1 MAR	1962	S.S. Kresge Company, the dime store chain, opened the company's first K-Mart store in Garden City.
2 MAR	1819	The Saginaw Treaty is signed. In the treaty negotiated by territorial governor, Lewis Cass, Native Americans gave up about six million acres or more than a quarter of the Lower Peninsula.
2 MAR	1824	In his only recorded speech as territorial representative to Congress, Father Gabriel Richard asked for funds to build a road from Detroit to Chicago.
2 MAR	1877	Rutherford B. Hayes was declared winner of the 1876 election by a special committee set up by Senator Thomas White Ferry from Grand Haven who was serving as President Pro Tempore of the US Senator and acting Vice President of the United States.
2 MAR	1974	In order to comply with federal legislation aimed at reducing energy consumption highway speed limits were reduced to 55 miles per hour.
3 MAR	1801	Mail service to Michigan began. Mail was carried from Washington every 3 months.
3 MAR	1803	As Ohio moved toward statehood, Michigan became part of Indiana Territory.
3 MAR	1846	Upset by discrimination at First Baptist Church, Detroit Blacks establish the Second Baptist Church.
3 MAR	1875	Just 3 years after creation of Yellowstone National Park, Congress created the nation's second national park, Mackinac Island National park. When the military left the island 20 years later, the park was given to the state to become Michigan's first state park.
3 MAR	1931	Congress authorized the creation of Isle Royal National Park.
4 MAR	1831	The state law allowing drunks and disorderly persons to be whipped was repealed.
4 MAR	1947	WWJ-TV aired Michigan's first daily television broadcast.
4 MAR	1964	Teamsters' President Jimmy Hoffa was convicted of jury tampering. He was later also convicted of misusing the union's pension fund. He entered prison in 1967.
5 MAR	1829	John P. Sheldon, editor of the Detroit Gazette was fined for writing articles critical of territorial courts. He was jailed when he refused to pay.

6 MAR	1863	Michigan's first race riot. After hearing Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation and conscription orders, a mob swept through a Black neighborhood burning homes and beating Blacks.
6 MAR	1877	First telephone message to Detroit. Businessmen listened to music transmitted from Chicago.
6 MAR	1896	Charles B. King became the first person to publicly drive on a Michigan street. During his test drive the car broke down.
6 MAR	1930	The Communist Party organized a massive demonstration in Detroit in support of unemployed workers.
6 MAR	1997	William Clinton spoke to the state legislature becoming only the second sitting U.S. President to address Michigan's lawmakers. Theodore Roosevelt was the first in 1907.
7 MAR	1932	Police and Ford guards fired on 3000 unemployed autoworkers as they marched toward Ford's River Rouge Plant. They were seeking relief for laid-off workers and union recognition. 4 were killed.
8 MAR	1918	Draftees at Fort Custer (Battle Creek) were given two dog tags as they prepared to leave for Europe in WWI. One for the neck and one for the wrist to make identification of body parts easier in case a shell hit them.
8 MAR	1942	Blue Star Mothers of America, an organization of women whose sons and daughters served in the armed forces, was formed in response to an article printed in the <i>Flint Journal</i> .
9 MAR	1901	R.E. Olds moved his plant to Lansing after fire destroyed the Olds plant in Detroit.
9 MAR	1925	The VFW National Home for Children near Eaton Rapids accepted its first family, the survivors of WWI veteran Edward Pollett.
9 MAR	1932	Ford introduced the first V-8 engine.
9 MAR	1945	The Detroit Industrial Expressway, designed so traffic could move safely at 100 miles per hour was dedicated giving access to Ford's aircraft facility at Willow Run. It is now part of I94.
9 MAR	1976	Hot-air balloon flights over the state became legal. They had been outlawed in 1931.
10 MAR	1707	Antoine de Lamothe Cadillac gave the first known grants of land to French settlers in Detroit.
10 MAR	1902	Henry Ford quit the Henry Ford Company in order to spend time building a racing car. The company's name was changed and under the leadership of Henry Leland began building Cadillacs, cars named for the founder of Detroit, Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac.
11 MAR	1967	State acquired its first helicopter. It was built in Menominee by R.J. Enstrom Company and used by Conservation Department.
12 MAR	1965	The first NCAA indoor track and field championship was held in Detroit's Cobo Hall. Won by Missouri.
12 MAR	1972	Detroit Red Wings retired Gordie Howe's uniform number (9). He tired of retirement and went on to play in the WHL and NHL with his sons until 1979.
13 MAR	1952	In Holland, Parke Davis opened its first factory to exclusively produce a synthetic antibiotic.
14 MAR	1914	Clarence Burton donated one of the nation's finest archival collections to the Detroit Public Library.
14 MAR	1967	Four of the first eight men selected in the NFL-AFL draft came from Michigan State University. Bubba Smith, George Webster, Gene Washington, and Clint Jones.

14 MAR	1994	President Clinton opened the G-7 Conference of leaders of the world's industrial nations, at the Fox Theatre in Detroit.
15 MAR	1861	Almost a month before Confederate forces fired upon Fort Sumter, the Michigan legislature gave Governor Blair power to supply men to the federal army in case of a Southern rebellion.
15 MAR	1867	University of Michigan became the first university in the nation to be supported by a direct property tax.
15 MAR	1887	Michigan hired the nation's first salaried fish and game warden, William Allen Smith of Grand Rapids.
15 MAR	1994	Michigan voters passed Proposal A that changed school funding from reliance on property tax to dependence on sales tax revenue, a tax that declines during periods of economic difficulty.
16 MAR	1912	Operations in the mill town of Deward in Crawford County shut down because there were no more logs to saw. In 12 years the company that had built the town cut over 90,000 acres, the last major stand of timber in the Lower Peninsula. In one year they had produced 52 million board feet of lumber.
16 MAR	1939	Governor Frank D. Fitzgerald died soon after starting his second term and was succeeded by Luren D. Dickinson. Fitzgerald is the only governor to have died while still in office.
17 MAR	1808	First St. Patrick's Day celebration in Detroit.
17 MAR	1847	State legislature met for last time in Detroit before moving to Lansing.
17 MAR	1977	In the nation's worst outbreak of botulism, 59 people became ill after eating improperly home-canned peppers at a Mexican restaurant in Pontiac. All survived because of quick identification of the toxin.
18 MAR	1837	University of Michigan was given permission by legislature to move from Detroit to Ann Arbor.
19 MAR	1897	The state supreme court ruled that Hazen Pingree could not serve both as mayor of Detroit and governor of Michigan. He resigned as mayor so he could serve in Lansing.
19 MAR	1925	The end of free fishing. A law was passed that requiring fishermen to buy a license
20 MAR	1680	Robert Cavalier de la Salle began a trek across Michigan's lower peninsula. He became the first European to cross the state.
20 MAR	1802	The state's first public market was established in Detroit.
20 MAR	1836	Michigan borrowed money for the first time, \$36,000 at 6% annual interest from Robert Hollingsworth of New York.
20 MAR	1837	An ill-fated public improvements act was approved. Michigan would borrow five million dollars to build 3 railroads and 2 canals across the state. After Panic of 1837 and failure of the state's bonding agent, the state was broke and its credit was ruined. Two railroads were sold to private investors and the other projects were abandoned.
20 MAR	1837	In a move more successful than the internal improvements plan, Governor Mason signed a comprehensive school plan for Michigan with free public schools based upon the Prussian system.
20 MAR	1881	Saginaw's Bancroft Hotel turned on the first incandescent lights used commercially in the state.
20 MAR	1919	Women served as jurors for first time in Wayne County.

20 MAR	1955	The Detroit Red Wings won a seventh consecutive National Hockey League championship by defeating the Montreal Canadiens 6-0 led by Ted Lindsay's 3 goal hat trick.
21 MAR	1822	The first Methodist Episcopal Society in Detroit was organized
22 MAR	1954	Northland, the country's first regional shopping mall, opened in Southfield.
22 MAR	1966	During a Senate hearing, General Motors President James Roche apologized for hiring private detectives to investigate the personal behavior, beliefs on Semitism, and political views of auto critic Ralph Nader.
22 MAR	1999	Jack Kevorkian went on trial for murder after a videotape of a death he assisted in was shown on the CBS news program "60 Minutes." Kevorkian acted as his own lawyer. He was convicted of second-degree murder.
23 MAR	1835	Territorial legislature granted a charter to Methodist Episcopal churchmen who sought to start a "literary school in the wilderness." Since 1861 it has been known as Albion College.
23 MAR	1984	A woman from Hazel park gave birth to the state's first "test-tube" baby.
24 MAR	1888	America's oldest collegiate athletic conference, The Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association (MIAA) was founded. Schools included Albion, Olivet, Michigan Agricultural College (MSU), and Hillsdale College. Michigan schools in the league today are Adrian, Albion, Alma, Calvin, Hope, Kalamazoo, and Olivet.
24 MAR	1917	Detroit Northwestern High School won the first state basketball championship.
24 MAR	1924	Thomas Dewey was born in Owosso. He became governor of New York and made two unsuccessful runs for the presidency against Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1944 and Harry S Truman in 1948.
24 MAR	1965	Four Klansmen on the road between Selma and Montgomery, Alabama killed Viola Liuzzo, a white civil-rights marcher from Detroit. An FBI informant with the Klansmen Failed to protect her.
