

Historical Society of Michigan

Michigan History Calendar

Day	Year	Events
1 NOV	1679	Robert Cavalier de la Salle built a fort at the mouth of the St. Joseph River near St. Joseph. It was the first European outpost in the Lower Peninsula.
1 NOV	1815	Michigan Territorial legislature passed an act that decreed that Negro, Indian, and mulatto slaves would be given corporal punishment rather than go to jail for non-capital offenses.
1 NOV	1901	A state statute went into effect requiring the gasoline be sold and stored in red cans.
1 NOV	1923	The bridge to Belle Isle was opened. First named the George Washington Bridge it has been renamed the General Douglas Mac Arthur Bridge.
1 NOV	1928	Ten railroad companies operating in Michigan, Indiana, and Illinois were consolidated to form the Grand Trunk Western Railroad. The Canadian National, owned by the government of Canada, controlled the GTW.
1 NOV	1957	The Mackinac Bridge was opened. Michigan's two peninsulas were connected and automobile car ferry service across the straits ended.
1 NOV	1973	The state's longest expressway, I-75 from the Ohio border near Toledo to Saulte Ste. Marie (395 miles) was formally completed.
1 NOV	1974	It became illegal to paint advertising on barns. The state paid to have 47 barns, most with tobacco ads, repainted.
1 NOV	1978	The Grand Trunk ended carferry operations between Muskegon and Milwaukee. The Grand Trunk was the last railroad to start cross-lake service and the first to abandon it.
1 NOV	1979	A new law went into effect requiring auto owners to renew their license plates on their birthday.
2 NOV	1835	The first session of the state legislature was held in Detroit.
2 NOV	1920	Eva M. Hamilton of Grand Rapids won her race for the state senate. She was the first woman elected to the Michigan legislature.
2 NOV	1927	The first known scheduled interstate passenger service in the country began with Stout Air Service flights between Detroit and Cleveland.
2 NOV	1954	Charles Diggs a Detroit mortician and former state senator was elected to the U.S. Congress, Michigan's first African-American congressman.
2 NOV	1976	Voters approved a referendum requiring a deposit on beverage containers to reduce litter and promote recycling.
2 NOV	1982	Martha Griffiths became the first woman to be elected Michigan lieutenant governor.
3 NOV	1835	Stevens T. Mason became governor of the proclaimed State of Michigan. Congress refused to recognize Michigan as a state until the dispute over the Toledo Strip was settled.
3 NOV	1911	William C. Durant who had been ousted from control of General Motors organized the Chevrolet Motor Company to build cars developed by racecar driver Louis Chevrolet.
3 NOV	1926	Fifty-one miners died in the Barnes-Hecker iron mine near Ishpeming. The mine roof collapsed letting in a wall of water and mud that washed them away.
3 NOV	1926	Ty Cobb retired from baseball.

3 NOV	1930	The Detroit-Windsor tunnel under the Detroit River opened to traffic. It was the first underwater automobile tunnel connecting two countries.
3 NOV	1972	Voters on Mackinac Island approved the use of snowmobiles, the first motor powered vehicles allowed since 1949.
4 NOV	1952	Cora Brown of Detroit was elected to the state senate, the first black woman elected to any state senate.
4 NOV	1979	Fifty-two Michigianians were held hostage when Iranian militants seized control of the U.S. embassy in Teheran. The hostages were held for 444 days.
5 NOV	1912	In the presidential election, Michigan voters gave a plurality to Progressive Party or "Bull Moose Party" candidate Theodore Roosevelt. This was the first time Michigan had not supported the Republican candidate since 1856 when the party first named a candidate.
5 NOV	1918	Suffrage amendment passed the legislature. Michigan was the 7th state to allow women to vote.
5 NOV	1974	Voters repealed sales tax on food and medicines.
5 NOV	2002	Jennifer Granholm became the first woman to be elected governor of Michigan.
5 NOV	2004	The <i>Polar Express</i> , the Tom Hank's digital cartoon film based on the book with the same title by Grand Rapids native Chris Van Allsburg opened with a gala celebration in downtown Grand Rapids. The locomotive used for the film was the former Pere Marquette #1225 owned by the Steam Railroading Institute.
6 NOV	1767	The British commander of Michilimackinac, Robert Rogers, who gained fame leading his Rangers during the French and Indian War, was arrested and charged with treason. The charges were not supported but he was dismissed from the army. During the American Revolution he fought as a Loyalist. After the war he lived and died in poverty and obscurity in England.
6 NOV	1861	Michigan women organized the first Ladies Soldiers Aid Society in Detroit to support Civil War soldiers.
6 NOV	1923	The Ottawa Beach Hotel, the largest resort on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan burned to the ground. The Michigan State Parks Board bought the property and developed it into Holland State Park, the most popular of the Michigan state parks.
6 NOV	1965	Four hundred hunters were given licenses to hunt turkeys in Allegan County. In this, the first modern turkey hunt, 400 hunters killed 82 birds.
6 NOV	1973	State senator Coleman Young was elected. He was the first Black mayor of Detroit.
6 NOV	1998	President Bill Clinton signed an act creating the National Automotive Heritage Area designating 6 corridors in Southeast Michigan as landmarks in the development of the automobile industry.
7 NOV	1950	Michigan voters approved a referendum allowing the sale of colored oleomargarine.
7 NOV	1972	Voters approved daylight savings time adding an extra hour of evening sunlight from the first Sunday in April to the last Sunday in October.
7 NOV	1991	Former Michigan State University basketball star Ervin "Magic" Johnson announced that he had tested positive for the AIDS virus.
8 NOV	1870	For the first time, African-Americans were allowed to vote in a state election.
8 NOV	1886	The Edison Illuminating Company began providing electric service in Detroit.
8 NOV	1895	In one of the state's worst accidents, a boiler exploded in the Journal Building in downtown Detroit killing 37 people. The building engineer was arrested, accused of going to a saloon rather than keeping watch over his post.

9 NOV	1775	Henry Hamilton became British commandant in Detroit. During the Revolutionary War George Rogers Clark captured him at Vincennes.
9 NOV	1913	The most deadly storm in Great Lakes history began and when it ended 40 ships were lost and 235 seamen died.
9 NOV	1962	The Ford Rotunda burned in Dearborn.
10 NOV	1904	Michigan Employment Institution for the Blind opened in Saginaw. It offered instruction and opportunities for employment for blind Michiganians aged 18–60. Courses included broom making, rug weaving, chair canning, and piano tuning.
10 NOV	1975	Twenty-eight men went down with the 587-foot long <i>Edmond Fitzgerald</i> during a storm on Lake Superior.
11 NOV	1918	Armistice Day. At the eleventh minute of the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month soldiers of both sides stopped killing each other in World War I. The 32nd Division, the "Red Arrow Division," made up Michigan and Wisconsin men suffered 2,898 deaths and 10,986 wounded. In total 175,300 Michiganians served.
11 NOV	1929	The Ambassador Bridge between Detroit and Canada was dedicated. Automobiles had to wait as 100,000 walkers crossed the bridge as part of the dedication ceremony.
11 NOV	1997	The first General Motors executives moved into their new offices in the Renaissance Center, a structure built by Ford to revitalize downtown Detroit.
12 NOV	1909	The first mile of paved concrete road was laid on Woodward Avenue (M-1) between 6th and 7 mile roads.
13 NOV	1972	The first Michigan state lottery ticket was sold to Governor William G. Milliken.
14 NOV	1914	John and Horace Dodge built the first Dodge automobile at their facility in Hamtramck.
14 NOV	1929	The Ambassador Bridge linking Detroit and Windsor was opened for traffic.
14 NOV	1977	The state's first prison for women, The Huron Valley Women's Facility in Ypsilanti, opened.
15 NOV	1971	For the first time Michigan motorists could order their license tabs by mail.
16 NOV	1926	State police broke into the House of David at Benton Harbor to arrest its religious leader, King Benjamin Purnell.
17 NOV	1807	In the Treaty of Detroit negotiated by territorial governor William Hull, the Indians ceded much of Southeast Michigan and received \$10,000 in cash and an annual annuity of \$2,400.
17 NOV	1886	American Newspaper Publishers Association was organized in Detroit.
17 NOV	2004	Troy based K-Mart Corporation purchased one of the oldest retail/mail order chains in the country—Sears and Roebuck.
18 NOV	1844	Jonathan Walker was branded by U.S. Marshall Eben Dorr in Pensacola in the Territory of Florida because he tried to help 7 slaves escape. The "Man with the Branded Hand" was immortalized by poet John Greenleaf Whittier and he became a prominent abolitionist speaker. Walker died in Muskegon 30 APR 1878 and is honored there with a marker in Evergreen Cemetery.
18 NOV	1958	The <i>Carl D. Bradley</i> sank near Charlevoix. Only 2 of the 35-man crew survived. Most of the men came from Rogers City.
19 NOV	1850	In the Great Railroad Conspiracy, farmers upset by the practices of the Michigan Central burned its freight depot in Detroit.
19 NOV	1956	The last regularly scheduled passenger train ran on Michigan's first operating railroad, the "Old Road," originally the Erie & Kalamazoo between Adrian and Toledo.

19 NOV	1966	In a game to determine the number-one ranking in college football against the MSU Spartans, Notre Dame coach, Ara Parseghian had his team run out the clock rather than risk a pass and try to win. The game ended in a 10-10 tie.
19 NOV	1988	Detroit's magnificent Fox Theatre reopened after extensive renovation by Mike and Marian Ilitch owners of Little Caesar's.
19 NOV	2004	One of the worst brawls in Michigan sports history occurred a spectator threw a glass on beer at Indiana Pacers star Ron Artest near the end of a basketball game with the Detroit Pistons. A m�el�e ensued when Artest rushed into the stands throwing punches at fans.
20 NOV	1953	Birmingham became the first city in Michigan and just the second in the country to provide direct dialing for long-distance calls.
21 NOV	1847	The <i>Phoenix</i> burned with the loss of over 200 lives. Many of the lost were immigrants from the Netherlands on their way to join relatives in Wisconsin.
21 NOV	1859	The Chicago, Detroit & Canada Grand Trunk Junction Railway began service between Detroit & Fort Gratiot (Port Huron). Thomas A. Edison worked on this line as a "candy butcher" when he was 12 years old.
21 NOV	1945	200,000 UAW workers went on strike against General Motors. After being on strike for 119 days, they received a raise of 18.5 cents per hour.
21 NOV	1977	I-96 between Muskegon and Detroit was completed.
22 NOV	1975	The first MHSSA state high school football championship games were played. Winners were Livonia Franklin in Class A, Dearborn Divine Child in Class B, Ishpeming in Class C, and Crystal Falls in Class D.
