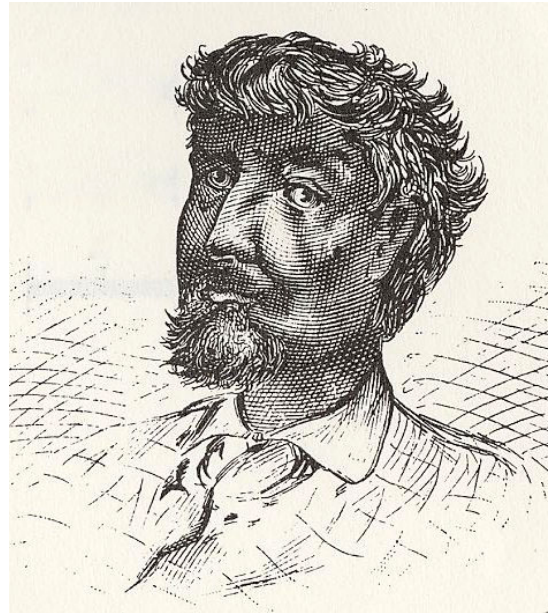


10 Important Events in Chicago History

(1770s -1780s) Chicago's 1st Resident

For thousands of years, Native American tribes, including the Mascouten and Miami, lived in the area that would become Chicago. The 1st Europeans to live in the area were explorers and fur trappers. We are still not exactly sure of the year, but sometime in the late 1770s or early 1780s, a man named Jean Baptiste Point du Sable became Chicago's first

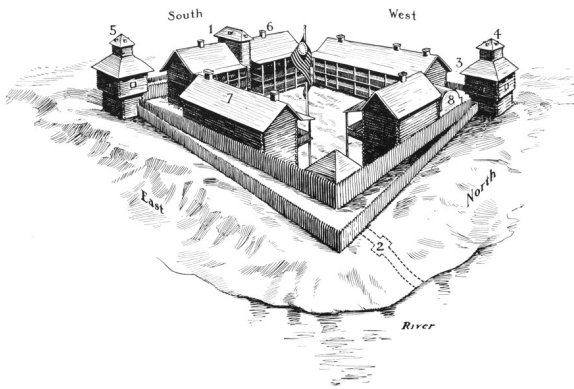


resident. He built a cabin on the bank of the Chicago River near Lake Michigan. In 1800, Du Sable sold his property and moved to Peoria, Illinois. Du Sable is recognized as the founder of Chicago. A school, museum and park have been named in his honor.

10 Important Events in Chicago History

(August 15, 1812) Fort Dearborn Massacre

In 1803, the 1st army fort was built in Chicago. It was named Fort Dearborn, in honor of the U.S. Secretary of War, Henry Dearborn. On



June 18, 1812, war broke out between The United States and Britain. This war is known as the war of 1812. The U.S. government was worried that they would not be able to keep sending supplies to Fort Dearborn, so they ordered the

soldiers and their families to evacuate the fort. About a mile from the fort (near where Soldier Field is today), the soldiers and their families were attacked by Potawatomi Indians. Of the 148 residents of Fort Dearborn, 86 were killed by the Potawatomi. The rest were taken as captives. The next day the Potawatomi burned the fort down.



10 Important Events in Chicago History

(April 3, 1848) The Chicago Board of Trade Opens

In 1837, Chicago officially became a city. By 1848, nearly 30,000 people lived in Chicago.

Much of Chicago and the surrounding area was farm land. Farmers wanted a location

where they could sell their crops and negotiate the prices of crops they would grow in the future. On April 3, 1848



The Chicago Board of Trade was established to allow the negotiating and trading to happen in one central place. Today the Board of Trade is one of the largest structures in Chicago. The main room at the Board of Trade

called, “The Trading Floor” is so large an airline jet can comfortably fit inside. Still today, millions of dollars worth of products are bought and sold at the Board of Trade Daily.

10 Important Events in Chicago History

(October 8-10, 1871) Great Chicago Fire

Nobody knows for sure how the Great Chicago Fire started. One popular story is that Mrs. O’Leary’s cow kicked over a lantern starting the fire. Some think it started because of a meteor shower. What we do know is, the fire quickly spread because most of the buildings in the city were made of wood. Firemen



hoped the Chicago River would be a natural obstacle that would stop the fire, but it didn’t. By the time the fire was out 2 days later, 300 people had been killed, 100,000 people were homeless and much of Chicago was destroyed. The good news is that new technology allowed architects to rebuild Chicago bigger and better than it was before the fire. Chicago has basically been built twice, once before the fire then again after the fire. That’s why Chicago is called “The Second City.”

10 Important Events in Chicago History

(May 4, 1886) Haymarket Riot

Chicago workers gathered at Haymarket Square (which is not too far from the United Center) to protest the killing of several workers the day before by Chicago police. As the police tried to disperse the crowd, someone (who has still never been identified) threw a bomb. The police and workers began shooting at each other. Seven police officers and one worker were killed. Eight people were charged with murder, even though some of them were not even present at the riot. Four people were eventually executed



10 Important Events in Chicago History

(May-October, 1893) Chicago's World Fair

In 1893, Chicago hosted the world's fair. It was also known as the Columbian Exposition because the event celebrated the 400 year anniversary of Columbus' voyage to the New World. Countries from around the world, brought art work, food, clothing and animals from their native land. 27 million people attended the fair which stretched across the south side of the city. The center of the fair was known as the White City, because the buildings were painted white and lit by electric lights. The Fair had many firsts: Juicy Fruit Gum, dishwasher, fluorescent light bulb, Ferris Wheel, spray paint and Cracker Jack. After the fair, many of the buildings were torn down or later destroyed in a fire. One of the few remaining buildings from the fair is the Palace of Fine Arts. Today, the Palace of Fine Arts is the Museum of Science and Industry



10 Important Events in Chicago History

(1900) The Chicago River is Reversed

Chicago uses Lake Michigan for drinking water. There was one big problem though. In the 1800's, the Chicago River was highly polluted and during heavy rains, river water would flow far out into the lake and pollute Chicago's drinking water. For example, in 1886 a heavy thunderstorm caused the drinking water to become polluted causing a Cholera and Dysentery epidemic that killed 12% of Chicago's population. To fix the problem, Chicago decided to reverse the flow of the river

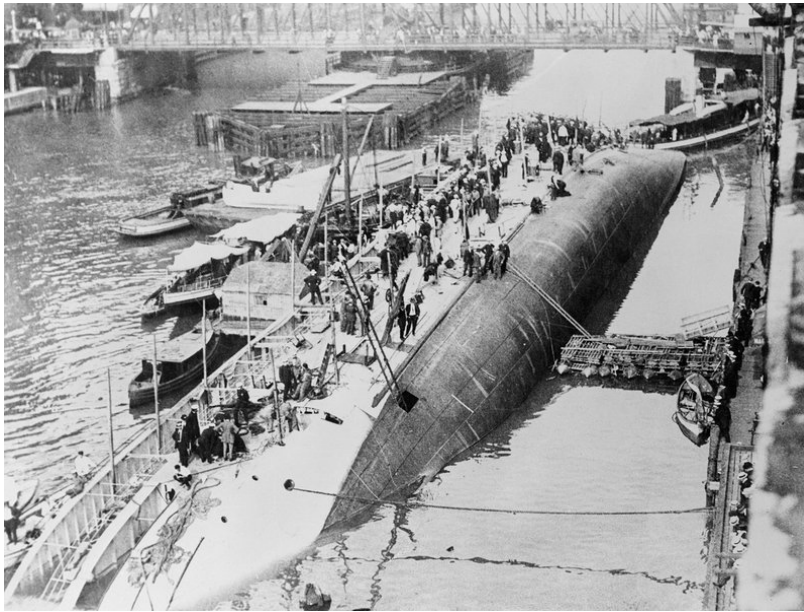


so it would eventually flow into the Mississippi River instead of Lake Michigan. For 50 years, a series of locks and canals were constructed. Finally, in 1900 a crane removed the last few feet of dirt between the river and the 1st canal. The river reversed and began flowing away from Lake Michigan. That was great for Chicago, but bad for St. Louis and the other towns on the Mississippi River. St. Louis tried to sue Chicago, but they lost in court.

10 Important Events in Chicago History

(July 24, 1915) The Eastland Disaster

On the morning of July 24, 1915, 2,573 workers from The Western Electric factory in Chicago began to board a ship named the Eastland for a company picnic in Michigan City, Indiana. The ship was docked in the Chicago River near the Clark Street Bridge. People



crowded onto the deck of the ship. At 7:28am, the ship pulled away from the dock and immediately began the list (lean) dramatically. The boat capsized throwing hundreds of

people into the river and trapping many below decks. People nearby quickly tried to rescue those people in the water. Although the ship was only a few feet from the dock, many people were not rescued in time. 844 people died including 22 whole families. More people were killed because of the Eastland Disaster than the Titanic.

10 Important Events in Chicago History

(February 14, 1929) The St. Valentine's Day Massacre

In 1920, the United States passes the 18th amendment, which made alcohol illegal throughout the country. This period in American history is called Prohibition. Alcohol was still produced illegally especially in Chicago. Gangs claimed



different areas of the city as their own in order to sell the expensive illegal alcohol. Violence was common as gangs tried to take over each others turf. The Italian gang run by Al Capone wanted to run the turf of the Irish gang controlled by “Bugs” Moran. Capone’s men dressed as police officers and enter the headquarters of Moran’s gang which was located on the north side of the city. The imposters told seven of Moran’s men to face the wall and pretended to arrest them. Instead, they pulled out machine guns and killed all 7. With Moran’s gang eliminated, Al Capone became the most powerful man in the city. In 1931, Capone was convicted of not paying his taxes and sent to Alcatraz prison and in 1933, Prohibition came to an end.

10 Important Events in Chicago History

(September, 1973) The Sears Tower is Built

In the 1960, Sears was the largest store in the world. The company employed almost a half a million people, many of them in Chicago. The company decided to construct a building that would be large enough for all its employees scattered around the city to use.

Construction began in 1970. It took more than 2,000 construction workers 3 years to complete the project. When it was finished in 1973, it became the tallest building in the world. Within the building, there are 25 miles of plumbing, 1,500 miles of electric wiring, 80 miles of elevator cable, and 145,000 light fixtures. In 1998, the

Sears tower lost the title of the tallest building in the world when the Petronas Towers were built in Malaysia. In 2009, the building was purchased by the Willis Group and the name officially became the Willis Tower, but most Chicagoans still affectionately call it the Sears Tower.



Essay Topics

Pick three topics from the following list. Write 100-200 words on each topic. Include 1 picture for each topic.

- 1673: Marquette and Joliet explore site of Chicago; Chicago's written history begins
- 1832: Black Hawk War
- 1837: Chicago's first local theater company established
- 1847: First issue of Chicago Tribune published
- 1848: First City Hall completed
- 1860: Abraham Lincoln nominated at Chicago's first national convention
- 1862: Camp Douglas became a Confederate prisoner of war camp
- 1865: Chicago Union Stockyards completed
- 1869: Chicago Water Tower built
- 1879: Art Institute of Chicago founded
- 1889: Jane Addams founds Hull House
- 1893: Mayor Carter Harrison assassinated
- 1909: Burnham's Plan of Chicago
- 1916: Municipal Pier (later Navy Pier) completed
- 1919: Race Riots
- 1927: Buckingham Fountain dedicated
- 1927: Municipal Airport (Midway) opens
- 1930: Shedd Aquarium opens
- 1942: First self-sustaining controlled nuclear chain reaction
- 1958: Our Lady of the Angels School Fire
- 1959: St. Lawrence Seaway opens; Queen Elizabeth visits
- 1966: Martin Luther King Jr. marches in Chicago
- 1968: Democratic National Convention
- 1983: Harold Washington elected first African American mayor
- 1995: Deadly heat wave
- 2008: President-elect Barack Obama delivers his acceptance speech in Grant Park