

Dearborn Heights Modern Historical Compiled Timeline

1603: French Lay claim to undefined territory in the region, naming it new France.

July 24, 1701- Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac and his soldiers first land in Detroit.

Nov 29, 1760- British Take control of area from France, as a provision in the Settlement of the French and Indian Wars.

1780- Pierre Dumas clears farm near what is today Morningside Street in Dearborn's South End. First Non-Native American activity in present day Dearborn.

1783- United States annexes British territory around the Great Lakes and southward.

1787- Territory of the U.S. north and west of the Ohio River is officially proclaimed the Northwest Territory.

1791- Michigan was incorporated. The name came from the Indian Word "Michigama" meaning large lake.

Dec 26, 1791- Detroit and environs become part of Kent County in upper Canada (Ontario)

1795- James Cissne becomes first settler in what is now west Dearborn.

1796- Wayne County is formed. Original Area is 2 million Square Miles, stretching from Cleveland to Chicago and Northwest to Canada. Named in honor of General "Mad" Anthony Wayne.

May 7, 1800- Indiana Territory, which includes part of Michigan, including the Dearborn Area, created out of part of the Northwest Territory.

June 11, 1805: Fire destroys most of Detroit.

1812: Wayne County formally established by proclamation of governor of Northwest Territory.

Nov. 15, 1815: Current boundaries of Wayne County drawn, county split into 18 townships.

Jan. 5, 1818: Springwells Township established by Gov. Lewis Cass.

Oct. 23, 1824: Bucklin Township created by Gov. Lewis Cass. The area ran from Greenfield to approximately Haggerty and from Van Born to Eight Mile. First meeting of newly organized Bucklin Township was held in the building now known as the "Little Red" Schoolhouse.

1826: Conrad Ten Eyck builds Ten Eyck Tavern at Michigan Avenue and Rouge River.

1827: Wayne County's boundaries changed to its current 615 square miles.

April 12, 1827: Springwells and Bucklin townships formally organized and laid out by gubernatorial act.

1829- Bucklin Township Divided into Pekin and Nankin Townships.

1832- Post office at Wallaceville. (Ann Arbor Trail and Beech Daly)

March 31, 1833: Greenfield Township created from north and west sections of Springwells Township, including what is today east Dearborn.

April 1, 1833: Pekin Township renamed Redford Township. Dearborn Township created from southern half of Redford Township south of Bonaparte Avenue (Joy Road).

1833-39: Detroit Arsenal built.

1835-1838 Chicago Road (Michigan Avenue) planked in a 3 year building program.

Jan. 26, 1837: Michigan admitted to the union as the 26th state. Stevens Thomas Mason is first governor.

1837: Michigan Central Railroad extended through Springwells Township. Hamlet of Springwells rises along railroad.

April 5, 1838: Village of Dearbornville incorporates. Village unincorporated May 11, 1846.

1849: Detroit annexes Springwells Township east of Brooklyn Street.

Feb. 12, 1857: Detroit annexes Springwells Township east of Grand Boulevard.

1861- Civil war breaks out, 150 volunteers serve from Dearborn Township Area.

March 25, 1873: Springwells Township annexes back section of Greenfield Township south of Tireman.

May 28, 1875: Postmaster general changes name of Dearbornville post office to Dearborn post office, hence changing name of area to Dearborn.

1875: Detroit Arsenal officially closes.

1876: William A. Nowlin writes "The Bark Covered House" in honor of country's 100th birthday.

June 20, 1884: Detroit annexes Springwells Township east of Livernois.

1889: First telephone installed in Dearborn at St. Joseph's Retreat.

March 24, 1893: Village of Dearborn incorporates.

1896- Rural free delivery mail system in Dearborn Township with five horse and buggy rigs in service.

1911- Home telephone company extends service to Dearborn.

1912- Township Attorney and Health Officer Appointed.

1906: Detroit annexes another section of Springwells Township.

1916: Detroit annexes more of Springwells Township, forming Dearborn's eastern boundary.

1917: Rouge "Eagle" Plant opens.

Nov. 1, 1919: The first house numbering ordinance in Dearborn starts. Residents required to place standard plate number on right side of the main house entrance five feet up.

Dec. 9, 1919: Springwells Township incorporates as village of Springwells.

1921- Streetlights come to Dearborn Township.

Dec. 27, 1923: Voters approve incorporation of Springwells as a city. It officially became a city April 7, 1924.

Sept. 9, 1924: Village of Warrendale incorporates.

November 1924: Ford Airport opens.

April 6, 1925: Warrendale voters and residents of remaining Greenfield Township approve annexation by Detroit.

May 26, 1925: Village of Dearborn annexes large portion of Dearborn Township.

Dec. 23, 1925: Springwells changes name to city of Fordson.

1926- Sewers extended to Dearborn Township.

Feb. 15, 1926: First U.S. airmail delivery made, going from Ford Airport in Dearborn to Cleveland.

Sept. 14, 1926: Election approves incorporation of village of Inkster. Unincorporated part of Dearborn Township split into two unconnected sections.

Oct. 11, 1926: Only dirigible to moor in Dearborn docks at Ford Airport.

Feb. 14, 1927: Village of Dearborn residents approve vote to become a city.

June 12, 1928: Voters in Dearborn, Fordson and part of Dearborn Township vote to consolidate into one city.

Jan. 9, 1929: Clyde Ford elected as first mayor of "new" Dearborn.

1929: Henry Ford Museum & Greenfield Village opens.

1938- First zoning ordinance passes.

1941- Board of appeals organized.

1942- Civil Defense organized.

Jan. 6, 1942: Orville L. Hubbard takes office as mayor of Dearborn for first time.

1943- Building department founded.

1945- People's Community Hospital Authority Incorporated.

April 7, 1947: Henry Ford dies.

Oct. 20, 1947: Dearborn City Council OK's purchase of land near Milford for what would become Camp Dearborn. First section of camp opens following year.

1947- Plumbing department organized.

1948- Electrical department founded.

Oct. 21, 1947: Ford Airport officially closes.

1949- Dearborn Township Fire Department Formed

1952- Water department authorized.

January 1952: Oakwood Hospital formally opened and dedicated.

1953- Planning Commission Organized.

1955- Department of Public Works founded.

1956- Fire Department founded with 2 stations in service.

April 22, 1958: Election held to annex part of south Dearborn Township to Dearborn. Proposal fails.

1959- Township Library Moved to building on Warren.

April 6, 1959: Election held to annex part of north Dearborn Township to Dearborn. Proposal fails.

March 4, 1960: Petition filed to incorporate Dearborn Township and strip of Inkster into city of Dearborn Heights. Village of Inkster files petition for cityhood March 7 and a bill of complaint against Dearborn Heights incorporation March 11.

June 20, 1960: Voters approve incorporation of Dearborn Township into city of Dearborn Heights. Voters approve 6208 to 3979.

1961- John Canfield elected as first Mayor. A court action by village of Inkster stalls incorporation proceedings.

1963- State supreme court approves incorporation on April 8.

1963- Population- 71,551

1963- Mayor John L Canfield sworn in.

1964- John F Kennedy Jr. Library and Caroline Kennedy Library open to the public. Libraries are named in memorial of John F Kennedy's children.

1964- Council approves major paving project, city hall flooded with paving requests and petitions.

1965- Urban re-development program begun.

1966- Population 76,000

1966- Election held to annex 1.52 square mile section of Taylor Township north of I-94 to Dearborn Heights. Vote Fails.

1967- July 15- First Dearborn Heights post office opens.

1969- New post office building dedicated.

1970- Census population- 80,069

1971- Head Center has grand opening.

1972- Dearborn Heights Community Center Dedicated, later renamed Canfield Community Center.

1973- New ice skating rink opens.

1974- August- Mayor John Canfield steps down due to health problems

1975- Mayor John Harris permanently sworn in January 1975.

1977- Mayor Frank Swapka sworn in.

1980- March 14-Frank Swapka Dies. City Council appoints Donald Bishop new mayor.

1980- Mayor Donald Bishop sworn in:

1984- August 31, 1984 Mayor Bishop removed from office, Wesley Tennant voted in by city council.

1985- Wesley Tennant's term ends.

1986- Mayor Lyle Van Houten voted in.

1987- Dearborn Heights Shopping Center opens on Ford Road.

"A shopping center is expected to open later this year on the site of the former Dearborn Drive-In on Ford Road, and the Crestwood School District is considering selling a school west of the shopping center for a Target discount department store"

1994- Mayor Ruth Canfield Sworn in.

1994- Richard A. Young Community Center Opens

1998- Tuesday July 21, Dearborn/Dearborn Heights hit by major storm. Dearborn and surrounding communities were in state of disaster.

2003- December- Ruth Canfield resigns as Dearborn Heights Mayor due to health/family considerations.

2004- December- John F Kennedy library re-opens to the public.

2004 Dan Paletko Mayor

2005- January- Caroline Kennedy Library reopens to the public.

1818 - 1965

Dearborn Township - Dearborn Heights

Compiled by: Anna C. Hendrickson

City Historian

- 1700 All the territory Northwest of the Ohio River was the "Indian Territory".
- 1787 On July 23, of this year, the Northwest Territory was formed and this was the first territorial division by the United States and was the procedure for Statehood.
- 1791 Michigan was incorporated. The name came from the Indian word "Michigama", meaning Large Lake.
- 1796 The County of Wayne Was created which was all of the present State of Michigan (except the Western part of the Upper Peninsular), the Northern part of Ohio and Indiana and a strip of the Eastern part of Illinois and Wisconsin, by Winthrop Sargent.
- 1805 Michigan Territory was created with Detroit as its seat of government and William Hull was appointed Governor by President Thomas Jefferson. Michigan Territory, consisted of Michigan, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin and part of Dakota.
- 1815 Wayne County was organized and was named in honor of General "Mad" Anthony Wayne.
- 1818 The first steamship appeared, "Walk-on-the-Water, in the Detroit River. It was wrecked in a storm in 1821. The "Detroit" was second in 1820, and third came the "Michigan" in 1833, and was built at Detroit.
- 1824 The Michigan Territory was laid out into townships by Governor, Lewis Cass.

- 1827 Bucklin Township was organized. May 28, the first meeting of the organized Township of Bucklin was held at the "schoolhouse" near Joseph Hickcox's farm as was designated by the Governor's order. This was the "Little Red Schoolhouse" which we now know as Hawthorne School and was formerly known as Wallaceville School. Through "my humble efforts" the North Dearborn Heights School district has agreed to a 99 year lease, at \$1.00 per year for a Historical Museum and which after needed repairs we hope to have open to the public in the Spring of 1966, (possibly for Michigan Week).
July of 1827, saw the first roads of the township laid out.
- 1829 Bucklin Township divided - now Pekin and Nankin Townshps.
- 1832 Post Office at Wallaceville, (Ann Arbor Trail and Beech Daly).
- 1833 Pekin Township, renamed Redford Township on March 21, April 1, the township of Dearborn was formed out of the Township of Redford.
- 1834 October 23, the Township named Dearborn was changed to Bucklin Township.
- 1835 Chicago Road (Michigan Avenue) was planked, others were fixed with slag etc.
- 1836 March 26, the name of Bucklin Township was changed back to Dearborn.
- 1837 Michigan Central Railroad operated from Detroit to Dearborn. January 26, the State of Michigan was admitted to the Union and was the 26th state at that time.
- 1847 A Law was passed to locate the Capitol of Michigan, to Lansing, and therefore, the seat of government moved from Detroit.

- 1861 Comprised the years of the Civil War, and approximately 150 served
to from the Dearborn Area. Bounty was paid to encourage enlistments
1865 and another interesting point was that if a man was "drafted" he
could pay another man to take his place and serve for him.
- 1896 Mail, Rural Free Delivery, Dearborn had 5 rigs with horses. The first
automobiles appeared in Detroit, First Ford 1906.
- 1897 Christmas Day the first Inter-Urban Street Car arrived at Dearborn
Village from Detroit.
- 1911 Home Telephone Company extended their lines to Eloise; via Michigan
Avenue. The Dearborn Township Hall at Pricess and Michigan Avenue
did partake of this service at a later date.
- 1912 Township Attorney hired on a fee basis, in 1928 at a salary of \$2,000.00
per year was established. Dr. Burdeno was appointed Health Officer, at
\$100.00 per year. The Board of Review came into being.
- 1918 Street lights arrived in Dearborn; in 1921, in Township of Dearborn;
1931, was discontinued due to the depression years; 1940, street
lights were installed as Special Assessment Districts; about 1950
this was an overall tax spread.
- 1919 Parks and Recreation built a Band Stand in the School yard in Dearborn,
for \$300.00 with the approval of the Township Board of course. Women
Voted for the first time.
- 1924 Motor buses on Michigan Avenue and Warren Avenue. Gas lines came to
Dearborn - later to the Township portion.
- 1926 Detroit extended its water lines to Joy Road and Telegraph and on Warren
to about Evergreen, (Warrendale). Sewers came to dearborn Township
(Sanitary) Special Assessment.

- 1928 A Township Engineer was appointed.
- 1933 February 14, the "Bank Holiday" - Depression and Victory Gardens.
In this year the Township of Dearborn had a population of 3,000
and over 2,000 were obtaining "relief".
- 1938 Garbage collection from the homes began. First Ordinance - "Zoning".
- 1941 Board of Appeals organized, (Township Board).
- 1942 Civil Defense organized, under the direction of Jack LaRue.
1962, Richard A. Young, Director
1966, John M. Harris, Director
- 1943 Building Department set in motion - Seth Fearnley was first Superintendent.
Hospital Authority formed and Dearborn Township a member of same.
- 1947 Plumbing Department, Anthony Worblewski, 1952, Ralph Rittenhouse.
- 1948 Electrical Department, Edwin Baschal
- 1952 Water Department, William H. Thorne, Superintendent.
- 1953 Planning Commission.
- 1955 Department of Public Works, Charles Greenlaw, 1963, Frank Swapka.
Sanitation Authority.
- 1956 Fire Department reorganized - 2 Stations
- 1959 Incinerator Authority, one library, 1965 2 libraries.

- 1960 June 20, Special Election - to Incorporate as City of Dearborn Heights, and to elect 9 Charter Commissioners. Election Returns: To Incorporate - Yes-6,208 No-3,979 Charter Commissioners elected were: Joseph D. McCarthy Clarence Constan, George Wicklund, Robert McLachlan, Robert Bullinger, Raymond Heinrich, Walter J. Williams, Anna C. Hendrickson, and Ronald Prebenda. Court action by 4 citizens against the Incorporation began.
- 1961 September 12, Electors approved adoption of the Charter of the City of Dearborn Heights and elected officials of the new city. More trips to court, Circuit and State Supreme due to litigation, then new city could not operate as one and the Township form of government continued during this period. Sidewalk Installation Program, began organizing Police Department.
- 1962 July 1, Our own Police Department and New Police Building started.
- 1963 April 4, at 8:05 a.m. the Supreme Court handed down their decision that we were legally a City namely Dearborn Heights. Official City census July 1, 71,551. Now about 74,75,000 (1965). First paving for our city 27 miles at a cost of \$3,000,688.49 on a ten year spread. The 1965-66 paving program is another 25 miles.
- 1964 Civil Service for City employees.
- 1965 Urban Renewal approved. The City of Dearborn Heights, covers 12.07 square miles plus about 3 square miles of County property, the Middle Rouge Parkway.
The City of Dearborn Heights, has 7 school districts, 4 located entirely within the city boundaries and 3 are fractional districts.
At Ford and Telegraph Roads the city is 617 feet above sea level.

Anna C. Hendrickson, Historian

Historical Highlights

- 1824 MICHIGAN TERRITORY LAID OUT IN TOWNSHIPS BY GOVERNOR LEWIS CASS
1827 BUCKLIN TOWNSHIP ORGANIZED
FIRST MEETING OF NEWLY ORGANIZED BUCKLIN TOWNSHIP
IN THE SCHOOLHOUSE NEAR JOSEPH WILCOX'S FARM . . . LATER
KNOWN AS "THE LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSE" . . . NOW AN HIS-
TORICAL MUSEUM ON ANN ARBOR TRAIL NEAR BEECH-DALY ROAD.
- 1829 BUCKLIN TOWNSHIP DIVIDED INTO PEKIN AND NANKIN TOWNSHIPS
1832 FIRST POST OFFICE ESTABLISHED AT WALLACEVILLE . . .
THE CORNER OF BEECH-DALY ROAD AND ANN ARBOR TRAIL
1833 PEKIN TOWNSHIP RENAMED REDFORD TOWNSHIP
DEARBORN TOWNSHIP FORMED OUT OF REDFORD TOWNSHIP
1835 CHICAGO ROAD [MICHIGAN AVENUE] PLANKED IN A
3 YEAR BUILDING PROGRAM
1861 CIVIL WAR BREAKS OUT . . . 150 VOLUNTEERS SERVE FROM
DEARBORN TOWNSHIP AREA
1896 RURAL FREE DELIVERY MAIL SYSTEM IN DEARBORN TOWNSHIP
WITH FIVE HORSE-AND-BUGGY RIGS IN SERVICE
1911 HOME TELEPHONE COMPANY EXTENDS SERVICE TO DEARBORN
1912 TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY AND HEALTH OFFICER APPOINTED
1921 STREETLIGHTS COME TO DEARBORN TOWNSHIP
1926 SEWERS EXTENDED TO DEARBORN TOWNSHIP
1938 FIRST ZONING ORDINANCE PASSES
1941 BOARD OF APPEALS ORGANIZED
1942 CIVIL DEFENSE ORGANIZED
1943 BUILDING DEPARTMENT FOUNDED
1945 PEOPLES COMMUNITY HOSPITAL AUTHORITY INCORPORATED
1947 PLUMBING DEPARTMENT ORGANIZED
1948 ELECTRICAL DEPARTMENT FOUNDED
1952 WATER DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZED
1953 PLANNING COMMISSION ORGANIZED
1955 DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS FOUNDED
1956 FIRE DEPARTMENT FOUNDED WITH 2 STATIONS IN SERVICE
1959 INCINERATOR AUTHORITY FORMED
1960 SPECIAL ELECTION TO INCORPORATE THE CITY OF DEARBORN
HEIGHTS . . . VOTERS APPROVED 6208 TO 3979
1961 JOHN L. CANFIELD RE-ELECTED TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR . . .
TRUSTEES . . . JAMES E. GREENLAW, JOHN M. HARRIS,
RAYMOND A. HEINRICH AND ROBERT McLACHLAN
JOHN L. CANFIELD ELECTED DEARBORN HEIGHTS' FIRST MAYOR
COURT ACTION BY DISSIDENT CITIZENS HOLDS
UP INCORPORATION PROCEEDINGS
1963 STATE SUPREME COURT APPROVES INCORPORATION ON APRIL 8.
POPULATION 71,551
1964 FIRST PAVING PROGRAM BEGINS. 52 MILES TO BE PAVED THROUGH 1966
CITY EMPLOYEES COME UNDER CIVIL SERVICE REGULATIONS
1965 URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAM BEGUN
1966 ESTIMATED POPULATION . . . 76,000
1967 POST OFFICE OPENED IN DEARBORN HEIGHTS
1968 GROUND BROKEN FOR NEW POST OFFICE
1969 NEW POST OFFICE BUILDING DEDICATED
1970 CENSUS: POPULATION 80,069
1971 HEAD CENTER HAS GRAND OPENING
1972 FAIRLANE/DEARBORN SCHOOL DISTRICT MERGED
1972 NEW COMMUNITY CENTER DEDICATED
1972 NEW POLICE COMMUNICATIONS GRANT APPROVED - \$180,000
1973 NEW ICE SKATING RINK OPENS

