

Key Facts and Dates of Boston History

From *Greater Boston Historical Map, Complete Guide to Boston's Freedom Trail, What They Never Told You About Boston, Public Health Trails, Boston Ways: High, By and Folk*, and many other sources

- 1602 – Cape Cod named by Bartholomew Gosnold
- 1603 – Explorer Martin Pring Explores what will be Plymouth
- 1605-6 – Champlain visits Boston, Gloucester and Plymouth
- 1614 – John Smith explores Boston Harbor
- 1616 – Native Americans in what will be greater Boston ravaged by disease
- 1620 – Mayflower lands in 102 in Plymouth 50 survive to next year
- 1623 – Gloucester fishing colony established
- 1624 – William Blackstone or Blaxton lands at Plymouth and later becomes first Euro settler of Boston
- 1626 – Gloucester colonists move to Salem
- 1629 – Massachusetts Bay Colony receives its charter and Charlestown is settled
- 1630 – Boston, Dorchester, Watertown, Roxbury and Medford are settled by Puritan parties
- 1631 – Cambridge is settled
- 1632 – Law passed banning smoking in public
- 1634 – William Blackstone leaves Boston for Rhode Island in disgust "I left England on account of the Bishops. I fear that I may have to leave here on account of the Bretheren." His land is appropriated by Bostonians and turned into the Boston Common.
- 1630-40 – Period of the "great migration" of Puritans to greater Boston
- 1634 – Beacon erected on "Beacon" Hill
- 1635 – Boston Latin School founded; Roger Williams flees Boston for Rhode Island
- 1636 – Harvard University founded.
- 1637 – Local Pequot tribe wiped out by settlers
- 1639 – America's first post office opened at Fairbanks Tavern
- 1640 – First slaves arrive in Boston
- 1641 – Law passed by General Court prohibiting cruelty to animals
- 1644 – Baptists banished from Massachusetts; General Court orders that all Indians must worship God
- 1645 – First Latin School schoolhouse erected on School Street
- 1646 – Rev. John Eliot learns native language (Natick), translates Bible and preaches in Roxbury; Saugus Iron Works established; Presbyterians banished from Massachusetts
- 1647 – General Court requires teachers in every community of 50 families or more
- 1648 – Blake House in Dorchester (oldest house in Boston) built; first of 4 witches hanged on Boston Common.
- 1651 – Dancing and fancy dress forbidden by General Court
- 1655 – Irish immigrants arrive in Boston and are immediately sold into bondage
- 1659 – Quaker Mary Dyer condemned for her beliefs; she leaves but is hanged on Boston Common when she returns in 1660, just before Charles II ends persecution of Quakers.
- 1662 – First bridge connects Boston and Cambridge; American's first censor appointed (position lasted until 1975)
- 1673 – General Court orders that all church doors must be locked during services to prevent members from leaving
- 1675-76 – King Philip's War – Native effort to drive the English out; 40 Indians captured during the War are executed on Boston Common
- 1679- First building code established to prevent fires
- 1680 – Paul Revere House built
- 1686 – King James II re-organizes colonies, creates "Dominion of New England," installs Sir Edmond Andros as governor; first commercial bank established

- 1689 - Bostonians force resignation of Governor Andros
- 1690 - First newspaper in America (*Publick Occurrences, Both Foreign and Domestick*) issued in Boston; it was immediately banned
- 1692 - Witch trials in Salem – twenty are executed before governor ends witch hunt following his wife being accused of being a witch
- 1700 – Boston population estimated at 7, 000; first anti-slavery tract in colonies published by Samuel Sewall; Catholic priests banned in greater Boston
- 1704 – America's first regular newspaper (*Boston News-Letter*) published
- 1712 – (Globe) Corner Book Store built
- 1713 – Old State House built
- 1716 – America's first lighthouse (Boston Light) built
- 1721 – Boston smallpox epidemic; Dr. Boylston introduces smallpox inoculation; Rev. Cotton Mather's house firebombed for his support of Dr. Boylston following opposition to inoculation let partly by James and Benjamin Franklin's newspaper, the *Courant*
- 1723 – Old North Church built; Benjamin Franklin leaves Boston for Philadelphia
- 1728 – First paper mill in America opens in Dorchester Lowers Mills
- 1729 – South Meeting House constructed
- 1742 – Faneuil Hall built, a gift of Peter Faneuil
- 1750 – Stage performances banned (to 1797); King's Chapel built
- 1760 – Sons of Liberty founded at Green Dragon Tavern
- 1763 – At dedication of newly rebuilt Faneuil Hall, James Otis declares it to be dedicated to the "Cause of Liberty"
- 1765 – America's first chocolate mill established in Dorchester (Baker Chocolate); first annual anti Catholic "Pope's Day"
- 1768 – British troops occupy Boston following riots
- 1770 – Boston Massacre
- 1773 – Boston Tea Party
- 1774 – English Parliament closes Boston Harbor in retaliation for Tea Party
- 1775 – Siege of Boston. Battle of Lexington & Concord "Shots Heard 'Round the World." Battle of Bunker Hill. George Washington takes command of Continental Army at Cambridge Common
- 1776 – Evacuation Day (March 17) George Washington works out deal for British fleet to leave Boston without damage in exchange for promise not to burn Boston; Boston population estimated at 2,719
- 1780 – Massachusetts Constitution (written by John Adams) adopted
- 1782 – America's first medical school (Harvard Medical School) established
- 1784 – Beginning of China Trade
- 1785 – General Court passes first pure food legislation in US
- 1790 – First census – Boston population 18,320
- 1795 – America's first trade union established by Paul Revere
- 1795-97 – Massachusetts State House built
- 1796 – Boston Dispensary (now New England Medical Center) established
- 1797 – USS constitution launched
- 1799 – Peabody Museum established in Salem; Boston Board of Health formed with Paul Revere as first chairman
- 1800 – Charlestown Navy Yard (closed by President Nixon in 1974); Boston population 24, 000
- 1803 – Merrimack Canal built – links northern Mass/southern NH to Boston; Mount Vernon (near Beacon Hill) leveled
- 1804 – South Boston (formerly Dorchester Neck and Heights) annexed to Boston; filling of Back Bay begins
- 1806 – African Meeting House built in Boston
- 1810 – Boston population 33,787

- 1812 – "Gerrymander" term created as a result of effort of Gov. Eldridge Gerry's attempt to draw political district lines to his advantage
- 1815 – Handel and Haydn Society (oldest music society in US) founded
- 1816 – New England's first textile mill established in Waltham; first step in America Industrial Revolution; America's first savings bank created (Provident)
- 1820 – Boston population 43,298
- 1821 – Massachusetts General Hospital established
- 1822 – Boston incorporated as City, first mayor John Phillips
- 1823 – Boston population estimated at 58,000
- 1825 – Quincy Market built; Bunker Hill monument cornerstone laid by Lafayette (lack of money results in completion in 1843). Monument was tallest structure in American until 1883.
- 1826 – Granite railway built in Quincy to bring granite to the coast for the Bunker Hill Monument; Union Oyster House (oldest restaurant in America) opens
- 1827 – America's first horticultural society (Massachusetts Horticultural Society) formed; America's first swimming pool established in Boston
- 1831 – William Lloyd Garrison begins publication of The Liberator
- 1832 – Garrison founds the New England Anti-Slavery Society; first public school system established by Horace Mann
- 1833 – Society for blind (later Perkins School for Blind) established
- 1834 – Ursuline Convent a Charlestown burned down by anti-Catholic bigots
- 1835 – Age of the Railroad begins with 3 railroads serving Boston; Boston population 35, 000 (7th largest in US); abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison mauled by Boston mob
- 1837 – First Massachusetts Board of Education created headed by Horace Mann, first elevator in US installed in Scollay Square hotel
- 1841 – Transcendentalists create Brook Farm in West Roxbury
- 1845 – Irish Potato Famine dramatically increases immigration to Boston; Thoreau builds cabin at Walden Pond
- 1846 – Dr. Morton discovers ether and uses it during surgery at Massachusetts General Hospital
- 1847 – Custom house built (tower added 1912); Roxbury votes to become city
- 1848 – Boston Female Medical College established (first medical school to train women); Boston system of reservoirs created with connection of lake Cochituate aqueduct to Boston
- 1849 – Racial segregation of Boston schools ruled legal by court
- 1850 – Lowell becomes major center of industry – 1 million yards of cloth per week; Boston population 130,000
- 1851 – First YMCA in America founded in Boston
- 1854 – Oldest hotel in America, the Parker House, opens
- 1855 – Irish Boston police fired for being Irish
- 1859 – Land set aside for Boston Public Garden
- 1861 – Julia Ward Howe writes "The Battle Hymn of the Republic"
- 1862 – First football game played on Boston Common
- 1863 – Boston College founded
- 1865 – MIT founded in Copley Square; L Street Bath House (first public Bath House in America) founded
- 1866 – First YWCA in US established in Boston
- 1867 – New England Conservatory of Music founded
- 1868 – Roxbury annexed to Boston
- 1869 – Boston University founded; Children's Hospital founded; Massachusetts Board of Health (first in US) founded
- 1870 – Dorchester annexed to Boston; Boston population 250,000; Museum of Fine Arts founded
- 1872 – Great Boston Fire; Mother's Day proposed by Julia Ward Howe; first trained nurse in US graduates from new England Hospital, now Dimock Community Health Center

- 1874 – Minute Man statue placed at North Bridge in Concord; James Michael Curley born in Roxbury; Charlestown, Brighton and West Roxbury annexed to Boston
- 1876 – Telephone patented in Boston
- 1877- Trinity Church in Copley Square completed; Swan Boats begun
- 1879 – Christian Science Church founded by Mary Baker Eddy
- 1881 – Boston Symphony Orchestra founded
- 1882 – First commercial building with electric lights in US is Hotel Vendome
- 1884 – Frederick Law Olmsted starts "Emerald Necklace," the nations first park system
- 1885 – Hugh O'Brien, first Irish-American elected mayor of American city elected in Boston
- 1888 – Electric automobile built in Boston
- 1892 – Pledge of Allegiance written by Francis Bellamy at 142 Berkeley Street
- 1893 – Tradition of a lighted candle in a window starts in Boston at home of Harvard Divinity School student Arthur Shurtleff
- 1895 – Boston Public Library completed; Metropolitan Water District (now MDC) created to control water supply to metropolitan Boston
- 1896 – Fanny Farmer cookbook (*The Boston Cooking School Cook Book*), first cookbook in US, published; first cooking school also established same year by Ms. Farmer
- 1897 – First Boston Marathon
- 1898 – Boston creates first subway in America; King Camp Gillette invents the safety razor; Northeastern University founded; Wachusett Reservoir added to metropolitan water system
- 1899 – America's first Animal Rescue league established in Boston
- 1900 – 50% of Boston's population is Irish, only 10% English; population 560,892
- 1902 – Christmas caroling outdoors tradition started by Boston architect Ralph Adams Cram
- 1903 – First World Series is played in Boston; America's first football stadium, Harvard Stadium, opens
- 1906 – John "Honey Fitz" Fitzgerald elected Mayor
- 1912 – IWW strike results in 10% wage increase in Lowell
- 1913 – First credit union in US opens, established by Women's Educational and Industrial Union
- 1914 – James Michael Curley elected Mayor of Boston for first time
- 1916 – MIT moves to Cambridge from Back Bay
- 1917 – JFK born in Boston
- 1918 – Last Boston Red Sox World Series win as Babe Ruth traded to NY Yankees
- 1919 – Boston Police Strike makes Gov. Calvin Coolidge a national figure
- 1920 – Sacco and Vanzetti convicted of murder
- 1925 – Great Molasses flood kills 21 in North End
- 1926 – Mill closings start in Lowell; industry begins move south
- 1927 – Sacco and Vanzetti executed in Charlestown
- 1928 – First computer "the differential analyzer" developed at MIT
- 1929 – Boston Pops founded by Arthur Fiedler
- 1935 – James Michael Curley elected Governor of Massachusetts
- 1936 – America's first federally funded housing project opens in South Boston (McCormack Project)
- 1939 – Quabbin Reservoir started
- 1941 – First and now largest public sailing program opens on Charles River – Community Boating
- 1942 – Coconut Grove fire, 491 dead
- 1944 – First digital computer developed at Harvard
- 1945 – James Michael Curley elected Mayor of Boston for last (4th) time
- 1950 – Boston population peaks at over 800,000; Brinks Robbery; first black basketball player drafted by Boston Celtics
- 1958 – West End demolished
- 1960 – Sen. John F. Kennedy elected President
- 1965 – US Commission on Civil Rights issues "Report on Racial Imbalance in the Boston Public Schools; Massachusetts Racial Imbalance Act passed; Prudential Center opens

- 1966 – First black head coach in professional sports – Bill Russell of Boston Celtics; law banning contraception repealed
- 1967 – Kevin White defeats Louise Day Hicks to become Mayor
- 1968 – Riots in Roxbury following assassination of Martin Luther King
- 1970 – *Hair* banned in Boston by City Censor Dick Sinnott, who currently writes in the City Section of the Globe. Court ordered *Hair* re-opened effectively ending censorship in Boston
- 1974 – US District Court declares that Boston Public Schools were intentionally segregated by race, busing begins; UMass Boston moves to Columbia Point
- 1976 – The first First Night celebrated
- 1978 – The Blizzard of 1978; looting in Codman Square
- 1983 – Raymond Flynn defeats Mel King to be elected Mayor of Boston
- 1990 – Boston population at 574,283, 20th largest city in America
- 1993 – Thomas M. Menino defeats James Brett to be elected Mayor of Boston