

The story of the city and people of Milwaukie begins long before the first European Americans settled in the area in 1847. The "Dogwood City of the West" was first inhabited by the people of the Clackamas tribes, who arrived thousands of years before there was an organized Clackamas County or Oregon Territory. Sadly, the saga of those first peoples was largely lost when the tribe was assimilated into the other tribes of the Grand Ronde. Most of the history passed to us details life in the area since the arrival of European and American explorers and pioneers. For public reference, some of the key points in our city's history are noted below.

- 1805** Despite missing the Columbia River's largest tributary, the Willamette River, on both westward and eastward journeys, famed explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark were able to estimate the population of the Clackamas people to be around 1,800.
- 1806** April 23 Lot Whitcomb, pioneer founder of Milwaukie, is born in Rutland, Vermont.
- 1811** William Henry and Alfred Seton journeyed by bateau boat up the Willamette River as far as the Falls. They were likely the first white men seen in the region that would become Clackamas County.
- 1815** Alexander Ross and party made a treaty with Indians permitting white men to enter the Willamette Valley; it is not clear which tribe(s) made this treaty as there were at least 16 tribes the area.
- 1829** The ship *Owyhee* sailed up the Willamette River, the first ocean-going ship to do so, and anchored at the Clackamas Rapids. After attempts to trade went bad, members of the local tribe cut the *Owyhee's* anchor rope, but the ship sailed away too late for the sake of the Clackamas people. Aboard the ship were sailors ailing from a fever (malaria) which the native people of the Willamette Valley quickly caught. In 1829, nine out of ten of the Clackamas people died from the cold sick. By 1851, only 88 members of this tribe were left. Lewis and Clark had estimated their number at 1,800 in 1805.
- 1830** Beginning this year and peaking in the year 1833, epidemics decimated the tribes of the Lower Columbia River, Klamath Lakes, and the Willamette Valley. Epidemics of measles, cold sick, the ague, malaria, and smallpox followed both Indian and white travelers along the river trade routes.
- 1841** This year is designated as the opening of the Oregon Trail as an emigrant road.
- 1843** Clackamas County is created by the Provisional Government of Oregon: "District Number 3, to be called the Clackamas District comprehending all the territory not included in the other three districts." Bounded by Champoeg District on the south and by the Willamette River on the west, Clackamas stretched east to the crest of the Rocky Mountains and north to the international border at 54° 40' with Russian Alaska.
- 1845** Andrew Fellows, the first white man to establish residence on the spot where Milwaukie now stands builds a cabin on the banks of the Willamette River near what is now the foot of Jefferson Street.
- 1847** Lot Whitcomb leaves Illinois and brings his family west along the Oregon Trail, at first living in the cabin built, and abandoned, by Andrew Fellows in 1845.
- The Luelling family arrived on the Oregon Trail with a stock of seedling fruit trees. Settling near Milwaukie, Seth Luelling became a renowned orchardist. The Lambert, Bing, Royal Anne, and Black Republican cherry varieties were all born in the area.
- 1848** Orrin Kellogg settled near Lot Whitcomb in Milwaukie. He later platted the city of Oswego while Whitcomb platted Milwaukie.

- 1849** Lot Whitcomb, William Torrance and Joseph Kellogg, founded the town of Milwaukie on Whitcomb's land claim. A sawmill was built and a schooner was assembled to produce and transport lumber.
- A one-room school house is built on the site of today's Portland Waldorf School.
- 1850** With about 500 inhabitants, a US post office opens in Milwaukie; Lot Whitcomb is the first Postmaster.
- William Meek built the large-scale Milwaukie Milling Co. sawmill at the mouth of Johnson Creek.
- St. John the Baptist Catholic Church is founded.
- Pioneer Cemetery was founded; notable Milwaukie names are buried there including Meek and Luelling.
- November 21 Whitcomb's paper the *Western Star* runs its first issue. Months later, in the dark of night, employees John Waterman and William Carter, moved it to Portland and renamed it *The Oregon Weekly Times*.
- December 25 Men brought from California by Whitcomb began to build the first steamship manufactured in Oregon. The sidewheel steamer *Lot Whitcomb* was launched amid a huge celebration at Milwaukie on Christmas Day, 1850. The festivities turned tragic when a canon, fired in celebration from aboard another schooner, exploded and killed that ship's captain. The *Whitcomb* worked as a tug between Milwaukie and Astoria.
- 1851** April By Congressional Appointment, Milwaukie became a "Port of Delivery" encouraging the fledgling though short-lived shipbuilding industry on Milwaukie Bay.
- November By treaty, the Clackamas people ceded all their lands (including Milwaukie) for an annuity of \$2,500 for ten years. Clackamas men who signed the treaty were allowed to occupy their traditional homes during the remainder of their lifetimes but their children retained no land rights.
- December 10 Rev. St. Michael Frackler and Rev. William Richmond held the first Anglican (Episcopal) service in Clackamas County at Milwaukie.
- 1853** Benjamin Brown built and began operating the Standard Flour Mill at Milwaukie; the mill's Red Cross brand produced 100 barrels per day.
- 1855** An Episcopal Church opened in Milwaukie.
- 1856** Oregon voters turned down a proposal to make Oregon a State. Politics surrounding the "slavery question" complicated Oregon's statehood in the US Congress and provoked debate in the Territory. Baptist preacher Hezekiah and son Cary Johnson organized the new Republican (anti-slavery) party in Oregon City. A new cherry variety developed in Milwaukie was dubbed the Black Republican in the party's honor. *The Argus* newspaper, which had succeeded the *Spectator* in Oregon City, was staunchly Republican. Portland's *Oregonian* remained Whig until the late 1850's while the *Statesman* (which moved from Oregon City to Salem when the government did) supported the Democrats.
- Milwaukie's Veranda Hotel opens, like other hotels of the era it became a community social center.
- A second classroom is added to the first school building.
- 1857** March 31 Lot Whitcomb dies at Milwaukie.

- 1858** Seth Luelling founds the Oregon Horticultural Society.
- Seth Luelling, famed cherry orchardist, introduced Italian prune trees to Oregon. The prunes grown at the Luelling farm (now Waverly Golf and Country Club) sparked a successful industry that thrived.
- 1861** The Spencer Hill (Episcopal) Church added a girls' boarding school at Milwaukie.
- 1863** After 5 years of construction a macadam road was constructed along the route of Macadam Avenue from Portland to Milwaukie on the west bank of the Willamette River.
- 1864** A Catholic mission opened to serve settlers in the Milwaukie area.
- 1868** The great Oregon railroad race began, a winner take all (right of way, land rights, and franchise) competition pitted Portland against East Portland in a race to construct a railroad between Canemah and the Portland stockyards. In Oregon's miniature version of the transcontinental railroad race, the westsiders' Portland Transportation Company raced with the eastsiders' Oregon Central Railroad Company. Ben Holladay threw \$1 million behind the eastside's Central Railroad. Holladay, a premier Oregon entrepreneur, sold his assets to invest in the railroad scheme and organized a work force of Chinese emigrants from Portland and San Francisco. Railroad ties came from Holladay's mill in Milwaukie.
- 1869** Pioneer Cemetery was deeded as a public cemetery.
- December 24 Oregon's railroad race ended with the eastside's Oregon Central beating the westside's Portland Transportation Company by two days. The route went 20 miles south from Portland's Brooklyn stockyards to Canemah. By the time the eastsiders had extended the rails south to New Era, the company's capital was gone and they sold to a German concern. Portland Central, however, had won the lucrative land grants awarded to the winner of the race.
- 1870** June 24 In North Platt, Nebraska, the namesake of Milwaukie's library, Florence Olsen is born. A graduate of the University of Oregon, Florence would be a teacher and then one of Oregon's first female lawyers until she married fellow attorney Herman Ledding.
- A new steam-powered ferry was launched by Chester (or Florian?) Harlow between Milwaukie (at the foot of Jefferson Street) and the south end of Macadam Avenue in Portland.
- 1874** Irene Chamberlain Whitcomb, wife of Milwaukie founder Lot Whitcomb, passes away. One reason the Whitcombs emigrated to Oregon was for a better climate for Irene's failing health, but despite this concern she outlived her husband by 17 years.
- 1876** Emmanuel Evangelical United Brethren Church was founded; it is called Faith Evangelical Church today.
- 1878** A new cherry variety, the Bing, was developed at the Luelling Farm. Its namesake was the six-foot-tall Chinese nursery foreman at the farm, Bing Ah.
- 1882** P. J. Henneman & Son fruit growers are founded on Washington Street.
- 1888** An orphaned Herbert Hoover moves to Oregon to live with his relatives, the Minthorns. The future president's uncle, Dr. Henry John Minthorn, owned farmland near Milwaukie where young Hoover often visited. In 1931 President Hoover donated \$50 to Milwaukie Covenant Church; the church had a stained glass window installed depicting a dove and an olive branch in Hoover's honor.

<b>1889</b>		<p>The Milwaukie library was founded, probably by Alfred Lewelling as a circulating library, housed in the law office of Thomas Lakin, Justice of the Peace, on the corner of Main and Washington Streets. The office burned down a few months later.</p> <p>The German Methodist Church is founded at 24<sup>th</sup> and Washington; it was torn down in the 1980s.</p>
<b>1890</b>		<p>The Portland-Oregon City Interurban Line, an electric transport trolley, brought passengers to Portland, through Milwaukie, from Oregon City for the first time this year.</p> <p>Seth Luelling and William S. U'Ren, of Milwaukie, lead Oregon's Populism movement, calling for referendum and recall, a direct primary, a single tax, and the popular election of US Senators.</p>
<b>1892</b>		<p>Ardenwald Community-Congregation Church is founded on 32<sup>nd</sup>; it will later be known as First Congregational Church and then the Kairos-Milwaukie United Church of Christ.</p>
<b>1893</b>		<p>A second school building is built, with two-stories.</p>
	February 16	<p>Work was completed on an extension of the eastside electric line from Sellwood to Oregon City.</p>
<b>1895</b>		<p>The Milwaukie School is built on site of current City Hall; it is torn down in 1935.</p>
<b>1898</b>		<p>The Oregon Legislature annexed two parcels of Multnomah County's Sellwood to Clackamas County.</p>
<b>1901</b>	July 8	<p>The Standard Mill building on Milwaukie's riverfront collapses.</p>
<b>1903</b>	February 4	<p>Milwaukie is incorporated by the Oregon State Legislative Assembly and elections for the first <a href="#">Mayor</a> and <a href="#">City Council</a> are held.</p>
	June 2	<p>The first Milwaukie City Council Meeting is held in rented space on the corner of Main and Jefferson.</p>
	June 6	<p>The City Council adopts Ordinance No. 1, regulating the storage of gunpowder, dynamite and all other explosives within the limits of Milwaukie.</p>
<b>1904</b>		<p>A franchise is issued to build water storage tanks, lay water mains and provide water for the city.</p>
<b>1905</b>	February 11	<p>The Oregon State Senate adopts <a href="#">Senate Bill 58</a> incorporating the Town of Milwaukie, two years after the State House of Representatives passed and the Governor signed an act of incorporation.</p> <p>A natural spring is discovered that would create Crystal Lake, a park that featured a playground, a bowling alley, a ball field with grand stands, a swimming complex and a dance hall. The number of visitors reached as many as 15,000 on certain Sundays. Crystal Lake Park officially opened in 1908 and closed permanently in 1936. Today the Crystal Lake apartments stand on this site.</p>
<b>1906</b>		<p>The Milwaukie Volunteer Fire Department is established.</p> <p>The first street lights were installed, followed by sidewalks, paved streets, telephone service, natural gas and residential electricity.</p>
	May 19	<p>The <i>Milwaukie Bee</i> newspaper begins, but soon moves to Sellwood and changes names.</p>
<b>1907</b>		<p>The celery farm that would become Binn Bros. is founded by Gus Binn, Sr. at 37<sup>th</sup> and Railroad Ave.</p>

<b>1908</b>		<p>Captain James Shaw begins the <i>Milwaukie Record</i> newspaper which runs until 1911.</p> <p>W. E. Thresher starts the <i>News</i> newspaper, a daily until 1910 when it becomes the semi-weekly <i>Milwaukie Press</i>.</p> <p>The first City Hall is built on the southeast corner of Harrison and 21<sup>st</sup> Street; it later moved to the corner of 21<sup>st</sup> and Jackson Streets.</p> <p>Four rooms are added to the Milwaukie School building.</p>
<b>1909</b>		<p>The City's second mayor, Philip Streib, founds the first Milwaukie-based bank, First State Bank.</p> <p>Wichita Ave Evangelical United Brethren Church is founded on Wichita Ave.</p> <p>The first Wichita School building is constructed on King Rd.</p>
	January 12	<p>The City Council adopts the first Resolution, R1-1909, expressing the city's appreciation for the first Mayor of Milwaukie, William Shindler who leaves office that year.</p>
<b>1910</b>		<p>A committee is appointed by the City Council to establish a room in the old City Hall for library use.</p>
<b>1912</b>	February 26	<p>The City Council adopts Ordinance 125 making it illegal to "expectorate or spit on the floor of any public hall, building, or office, or upon the sidewalk" with a maximum fine of \$20 or ten days imprisonment. Ordinance 125 would be repealed by Ordinance 1016 in 1964.</p> <p>S. A. Thomas begins the <i>Milwaukie Appeal</i> newspaper, but is wiped out by fire that same year.</p>
<b>1913</b>		<p>The first Ardenwald school house is built.</p>
<b>1916</b>		<p>The predecessor of the <i>Clackamas Review</i> and the <i>Milwaukie Review</i> begins as the <i>North Clackamas News</i>, with George A. McArthur as publisher.</p> <p>The library book collection is turned over to the new grammar school. Traveling library stations host the collection until it was housed in the Perry Pharmacy with support from the Oregon State Library.</p> <p>Milwaukie Elementary School is built.</p>
<b>1918</b>		<p>On April 5<sup>th</sup>, in response to concern about the impact of public dances on the public health of Milwaukie, the City Council adopts Ordinance 161 "regulating public dance halls and dances" and setting out in detail how to become licensed and operate any type of public dance. Ordinance 161 would be amended in the following decades before being repealed by Ordinance 1070 in 1965.</p>
<b>1917</b>		<p>The Milwaukie Police Department is formed as a municipal department with Sam Riley as the first chief. Prior to the MPD, Milwaukie had been served by several town marshals.</p>
<b>1924</b>		<p>Ardenwald Elementary School opens on 36<sup>th</sup> Ave.</p>
	December 3	<p>Edith Hazen is the first woman elected to the City Council.</p>
<b>1925</b>		<p>Milwaukie Union High School is built; it is dedicated September 3, 1926.</p>
<b>1926</b>		<p>During the winter Fred H. Cockell constructs a chick hatchery on Lake Road.</p>
<b>1930s</b>		<p>The Oregon Koyasan Shinnon Temple and School is built and operated by Frank Watanabe at 42<sup>nd</sup> and Railroad. After World War II the building became a church.</p>
<b>1934</b>		<p>The library moves to Council Chambers in City Hall. Dorothy M. Winters becomes the first librarian in 1935 and the first library board was appointed in 1936.</p>

<b>1935</b>		Gene and Rosa Leitz purchase greenhouses on Lake Road and open Milwaukie Floral.
<b>1936</b>		The Milwaukie Historical Society is founded.
	November 19	Milwaukie Junior High School is built by the Works Progress Administration (WPA), it featured a pool.
<b>1937</b>	May 22	A marker on the corner of McLoughlin and Jefferson is dedicated to the memory of Father Peter John DeSmet, Jesuit missionary and peace maker among the Native Americans in the area in the 19 <sup>th</sup> century.
<b>1938</b>		Milwaukie's population is around 1,800.
		Milwaukie Union High School's grandstand and athletic fields are built.
	June 4	The cornerstone of today's City Hall is laid.
	July 7	City Hall is dedicated by a weekend-long celebration featuring parades, a dance, baseball and volleyball games, a vesper service and "competitive races".
	August 4	City Hall is occupied by the fire and police departments, municipal court and library as well as the City Council and administration.
<b>1939</b>	August 24	The Oregon State Highway Commission pays the heirs of Richard Scott \$468.50 for a right-of-way to build a super highway (McLoughlin Blvd) through the area around Johnson Creek, north of downtown.
<b>1940</b>		Milwaukie Church of Christ, now Milwaukie Christian Church, is founded.
<b>1941</b>		Wichita Elementary School opens on Kind Rd.; it is the second school building on this site.
	May 1	The City of Milwaukie, Clackamas County Housing Authority, and the U.S. Housing Administration enter into an agreement to construct low-cost housing north of downtown on McLoughlin Blvd. Some houses would later be moved to 32nd Avenue, the original site is now in the industrial area.
<b>1945</b>	July	Louis D. Kelsey is named Milwaukie's first City Manager following a change to the City Charter in 1944 which brings the Council-Manager form of government to the city.
<b>1946</b>		Crystal Lake Church, now the Orthodox Church of the Annunciation is founded. The original church was housed on the site of the former Crystal Lake Amusement Park and was later moved to Rusk Rd.
		The Seventh Day Adventist Church is founded; it existed briefly on Harrison Street, but would relocate to Lake Rd. The building on Harrison would be rented by other ministries, including First Love Ministries.
	February	Milwaukie Lutheran Church opens on Lake Road. The first church building was later used by Milwaukie High School for class space after the church moved from downtown to Lake Rd.
<b>1947</b>	January 13	The City Council adopts Ordinance 492 "regulating the operation of what is known as history question games and other games of like nature" and providing a fine of \$200 or 100 days in the county jail for failing to obtain a license from the Office of the City Recorder. In April that same year Ordinance 495 would amend Ordinance 492, specifying that the annual registration fee shall be \$150. Both Ordinances 492 and 495 would be repealed with adoption of Ordinance 1070 in 1965.
		The 100 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of the settling of Milwaukie is celebrated.
		The Milwaukie police department purchases its first patrol car, a Chevy sedan.

<b>1950</b>		Milwaukie's population hits 5,253.  International Harvester Company purchases seven acres on the east side of McLoughlin Blvd where Kellogg Park Federal Housing formerly stood.
<b>1951</b>	March 18	Milwaukie Presbyterian Church is founded on Lake Rd.
	May 17	Milwaukie First Baptist Church is founded on 42 <sup>nd</sup> . Today it is known as GracePointe Church.
	June 11	On the recommendation of the Milwaukie Sportsman's Club and the Oregon State Police, the City Council adopts Resolution 5-1951, setting aside the parts of Johnson Creek within city limits as a "fish preserve during the summer months of 1951" for "juveniles under the age of fourteen years only"
<b>1952</b>	April 28	The City Council adopts Resolution 6-1952, that "in the event the City of Portland adopts Daylight Saving Time" then the Mayor of Milwaukie is authorized "to make Daylight Saving Time the official time of the City of Milwaukie."  The Friends of the Milwaukie Library is founded.
<b>1953</b>	April 13	The City Council adopts Ordinance 579 "requiring a license from all persons engaged in the business of revealing or attempting to reveal the future events in another's life" and setting a maximum fine of \$500 or 30 days in prison for failure to obtain a license from the City Council.  St. John the Baptist School, a Catholic grade school, opens on 25 <sup>th</sup> Ave.  Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church is founded on Stanley Ave., it moves to Happy Valley in 1994.
	December 31	Milwaukie Police Sgt. James Worrell is overcome by carbon monoxide gas and passes away while sitting in his police cruiser in front of City Hall. To-date Worrell is the only police officer lost in-the-line-of-duty in Milwaukie.
<b>1954</b>	March 22	Milwaukie welcomes home the Milwaukie High Mustangs, boys' state basketball champions.
<b>1955</b>	June	Former President Harry and First Lady Bess Truman visit the North Clackamas area.
<b>1956</b>		Hector Campbell Elementary School opens on 47 <sup>th</sup> Ave.
	February	Assistant Fire Chief Warren Nott drowns while saving a father and son who had fallen through the ice on Kellogg Lake; Nott was the only member of the Fire Department lost in the line of duty.
<b>1958</b>		Inter-urban street car service, the Trolley, ends after 65 years running through Milwaukie, carrying commuters from Portland to Oregon City.  Linwood Church of Christ is opened on Linwood Ave.
<b>1959</b>		US Senator and presidential candidate John F. Kennedy visits State Senator Monroe Sweetland at the offices of the Milwaukie Review.
<b>1960</b>		Milwaukie's population hits 9,099.
<b>1961</b>	January 21	Florence Ledding, widow of City Councilor Herman Ledding and step-daughter of town founder Seth Lewelling, bequeaths her home and property on 21 <sup>st</sup> Ave. to the City for use as a library.  St. Paul's United Methodist Church is founded.
	June	The original St. John Episcopal Church building is floated down the Willamette River from Milwaukie to its present home near Oaks Park in Portland.

<b>1962</b>	July 9	Noting that the "oldest and largest Dogwood Tree in the world" was in the City of Milwaukie, the City Council adopts Resolution 25-1962, officially adopting the Dogwood as the city flower and "Dogwood City of the West" as the city pseudonym (nickname).
	October	The Columbus Day storm blows down Milwaukie Union High School's grandstands, they are rebuilt.
<b>1963</b>		The Milwaukie Union High School gym burns down and is rebuilt. Seth Lewelling Elementary School opens on Logus Rd. August Wilbur D. Rowe Middle School opens on Lake Rd.
<b>1965</b>		The Mayor and City Council debate a "residential expressway" (the Milwaukie Expressway) while approving the first million dollar budget which is referred to the voters and rejected twice before winning final approval at the ballot box. During the budget battle Mayor George Haley and a Councilor resigns.
<b>1968</b>		US Senator and presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy visits on a whistle stop tour. Dwyer Memorial Hospital opens; in 1986 it becomes Providence Milwaukie Hospital. Linwood Elementary School opens on Linwood Ave.
<b>1971</b>		The North Clackamas School District Kiesz-Suchsland Administration building is built on Lake Rd. The Milwaukie Union High School auditorium is built across the street from the school.
<b>1972</b>		McLoughlin Blvd is decommissioned as US 99 and becomes a state highway, Oregon 99E.
<b>1973</b>	January 20	The Milwaukie High School Marching Band marches in the Inauguration Parade in Washington DC.
	January 22	The City Council adopts Resolution 2-1973, "Requiring Men to Grow Bears and Women to Wear Pantaloon or Long Skirts" in promotion of <a href="#">Festival Daze</a> .
<b>1975</b>	June 7	The Milwaukie Museum moves to its present location at 3737 SE Adams St.
<b>1979</b>		Harvest Christian Center is opened on 52 <sup>nd</sup> Ave.
<b>1980</b>		'Cityhood' – the unification of most North Clackamas communities into what would have been one of Oregon's largest cities – is publically debated, despite initial petitioner success the effort fails.
<b>1980</b>		The Milwaukie Center opens at North Clackamas Park.
<b>1981</b>		Joy Burgess is elected the first woman Mayor.
<b>1983</b>		The Dwelling Place is founded, a Christian church located in a building on Roswell St, it was once also known as Ardenwald Church of the Nazarene.
<b>1992</b>		The North Clackamas Parks and Recreation District is created, through inter-governmental agreement the City transfers its parks staff to the new agency which is charged with maintaining City-owned parks.
<b>1994</b>	March	The City's Public Safety Building, housing the Police and Fire departments, is dedicated.
<b>1995</b>		Northridge Community Church moves to its Milwaukie location on Harrison, in the building once occupied by New Beginnings Church. The building is also shared with Bridge City Community Church.
<b>1996</b>		The Milwaukie Fire Department is consolidated into Clackamas County Fire District No. 1.
<b>1998</b>		The Milwaukie Center's Sara Hite Rose Garden opens at North Clackamas Park.



<b>2002</b>	Milwaukie Middle School is closed and sold to the Portland Waldorf School.
<b>2003</b>	The City celebrates its 100 <sup>th</sup> anniversary – a year of activities and events, including a re-enactment of the first City Council meeting, mark the Centennial Celebration.  The Ukrainian Bible Church Pathway to God was founded on Stanley Ave.
<b>2005</b>	Milwaukie Academy of Arts, a charter school, opens at Milwaukie High School.
<b>2007</b>	Wichita Elementary School closes, becomes Center for Family and Community.
<b>2012</b>	Construction begins on the Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail project.