

AMERICAN HISTORY: A FEW LANDMARKS

1492

Christopher Columbus discovers America (Cuba and Hispaniola – today, Haiti and the Dominican Republic) by mistake.



Christopher Columbus sighting America 1492

1607

Captain John Smith and 105 emigrants establish the first British colony at Jamestown (Virginia).

1619

Arrival of the first African slaves, brought to the English colonies by a Dutch ship.

1620

The Pilgrim Fathers (*Pères Pèlerins*), on board *The Mayflower*, land at Plymouth, Massachusetts.

1775

The American Revolution starts (ends in 1783).

1776

The Declaration of Independence, mostly written by Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson, is signed (July 4).

1783

Britain acknowledges the independence of the United States of America (the 13 former British colonies).

1787

The Constitution of the United States of America sets the principles governing the political life of the new country.

1789

George Washington is elected the first U.S. President.

1803

The purchase of Louisiana from France for \$15 million doubles the territory of the U.S.A.

Lewis and Clark explore the Western territories, including Missouri and Oregon.

1835

Texas proclaims its independence. (1836: Battle of the Alamo.)

1848

The former Mexican territories of Texas, California, Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah and part of Colorado are given up by Mexico to the U.S.A.

California Gold Rush.

1860

Abraham Lincoln is elected President.

1861

The Civil War between the North and the South starts.

1863

Emancipation proclamation.

1865

End of the Civil War (620,000 killed). General Robert Lee surrenders at Appomattox.

President Lincoln is assassinated (April 14).

1867

Russia sells Alaska to the U.S.A.

1869

Completion of the first transcontinental railroad.



Joining East and West railroads 1869

1875

Gold is discovered in the Black Hills (an Indian territory covering South Dakota and Wyoming), triggering off a gold rush boom. The Sioux War starts (1875-76).

Battle of the Little Big Horn.

1914

Opening of the Panama Canal.

1917

The U.S.A. declares war on Germany.

1918

End of World War 1: 112,000 U.S. dead.

1919

Prohibition Act prohibiting the consumption of alcohol in public places. (Act repealed in 1933.)

1920

The 19th Amendment gives women the right to vote.



Suffragettes

1924

Quota Laws restricting immigration according to nationalities.

1927

First transatlantic flight by Charles Lindbergh.

Sacco and Vanzetti are executed.

1929

“Black Thursday” (October 29): the Wall Street crash marks the beginning of the Great Depression.

1933

President Roosevelt launches his “New Deal” to fight unemployment and the economic crisis.



Franklin D. Roosevelt 1932

1941

The Japanese destroy the U.S. fleet in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii (December 7).

The U.S.A. declares war on Japan and the other Allied Axis Powers.

1944

“D Day” (June 6): The Allied Troops, commanded by General Dwight Eisenhower, land in Europe.

1945

Yalta Conference (February 3-11) between Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin.

1945

Germany surrenders unconditionally (May 8).

The first A-bomb is dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki (August 6-9): 175,000 people are killed or fatally injured. Japan surrenders.

1947

The Marshall Plan grants economic and military assistance to non-communist countries.

1950

Beginning of the Korean War (ending 1953).

Senator McCarthy launches his anti-communist crusade (ending 1954).

1953

Julius and Ethel Rozenberg are executed.

1954

Segregated schools are declared unconstitutional.

1955

Montgomery bus boycott is initiated by Reverend Martin Luther King.

1961

Cuba crisis (1961-1962).

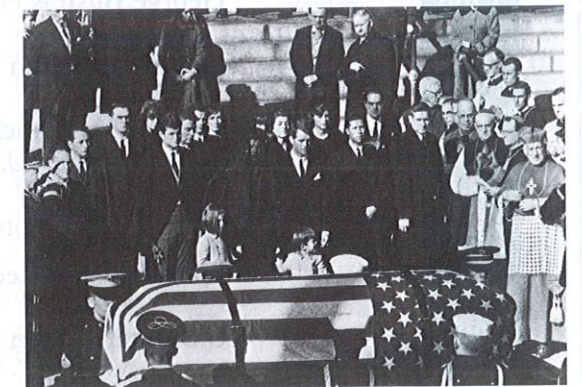
1963

August: March on Washington organized by Martin Luther King (“I have a dream...”).

November 22: President John F. Kennedy is assassinated in Dallas (Texas).



Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968)



John F. Kennedy's funeral, November 25, 1963

1964

President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act which abolishes segregation in the U.S.A.

1964

The Vietnam War begins (ends in 1973 with the treaty of Paris: American troops withdraw from Vietnam. 58,000 U. S. dead).



Anti-Vietnam War protest

1965

Malcolm X is assassinated.

1968

Martin Luther King is assassinated.

Robert Kennedy is assassinated.

1969

Neil Armstrong becomes the first man to set foot on the moon.

1974

The Watergate Scandal forces President Richard Nixon to resign.

1981

Ronald Reagan takes office.

1983

U.S. intervention in Grenada.

1988

George Bush is elected President.

1989

Fall of the Berlin Wall (November 9).

1990

The U.S.A. launches "Operation Desert Storm" to force Iraq out of Kuwait (U.S. casualties: 146).

1992

Violent racial riots in Los Angeles (May).

Bill Clinton is elected President.

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