**THE FRIENDS OF CALIFORIA ARCHIVES**

California 175 Project – Dates of Historic Interest

The following are 175 dates of interest in California’s history since it became the 31st state of the United States of America on September 9, 1850.

**1850 September 10**

John C. Fremont and William Gwin are sworn in as California's first two U.S. Senators.

**1851 July 10**

California's first university, the University of the Pacific, is founded in Santa Clara; it moves to San

Jose in 1871, then Stockton in 1923.

**1853 March 14**

Bavarian immigrant Levi Strauss arrives in San Francisco and sets up a wholesale dry goods business, serving the small stores of the American West. Twenty years later Levi Strauss will and Jacob Davis patent the process to create the first blue jeans.

**1854 (Month/Day unknown)**

The first novel written in California, *The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murrieta*, authored by Native American (Cherokee) John Rollin Ridge (aka Yellow Bird), is published.

**1854 February 25**

Sacramento officially becomes California's fourth and final state capital.

**1856 January 21**

A Southern California judge frees Biddy Mason from slavery; years later, she would become a real estate tycoon and fund programs for the poor in Los Angeles.

**1857 January (Day unknown)**

Agoston Haraszthy, a Hungarian immigrant, founds the Buena Vista Winery in Sonoma (the second oldest winery in California). As an official representative of California, Haraszthy travels to Europe and brings back over 100,000 cuttings from over 350 different types of wines and becomes known as the 'Father of California Wine.’

**1860 April 14**

The first westbound Pony Express trip arrives in Sacramento from St. Joseph, Missouri.

**1860 November 6**

California narrowly votes to give its four electoral votes to Abraham Lincoln in the 1860 presidential election.

**1862 January 10**

During the Great Flood of 1862, Governor Leland Stanford has to row a boat to attend his inauguration.

**1865 June 12**

The San Francisco Examiner begins publication; in 1880, entrepreneur and founder of the Hearst newspaper dynasty, George Hearst, accepts the paper as payment for a gambling debt.

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**1868 March 23**

The first campus of the University of California is founded at Berkeley. The first class of twelve students, known as the ‘Twelve Apostles,’ graduates in 1873.

**1869 May 10**

The Transcontinental Railroad is completed when the seven-year project, begun in Sacramento in the West and Omaha, Nebraska in the Midwest, meets in Promontory, Utah.

**1870 January 28**

The State Legislature rejects ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which prohibits denying a citizen's right to vote on account of race, color or previous conditions of servitude.

**1870 April 4**

San Francisco's Golden Gate Park opens to the public on more than 1,000 acres of what used to be windswept sand dunes.

**1871 February 16**

Moses Church incorporates the Fresno Canal & Irrigation Company, diverting water from the Kings River to A. Y. Easterly's ranch, where he is employed. His efforts transform Easterly's desert land into 200 acres of wheat fields, which subsequently caused the Central Pacific Railroad to found Fresno as a rail station.

**1873 August 2**

The first cable car in San Francisco has its inaugural run on Clay Street.

**1875 February 27**

Lt. Governor Romualdo Pacheco becomes California's first and only Hispanic Governor, when Governor Newton Booth resigns his position to assume his newly elected seat to the U.S. Senate.

**1875 August 26**

California’s largest bank, San Francisco’s Bank of California, collapses due to volatile trading of Nevada mining stocks.

**1878 September 4**

Clara Foltz becomes the first female attorney in California; a Los Angeles courthouse was renamed in her honor in 2002.

**1879 June 14**

The Sacramento Free Public Library opens to the citizens of the City of Sacramento. In 1908, it becomes the first library in the state to expand its services to citizens of the entire county.

**1880 October 6**

The University of Southern California is established; its initial graduating class consisted of two males and a female valedictorian.

**1881 June 2**

The Pacific Improvement Company opens the iconic 17-mile drive along the Monterey coast. The 'Lone Cypress' (believed to have been seeded in 1750) has been the symbol of the drive ever since.

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**1881 December 4**

The *Los Angeles Times* publishes its first issue.

**1883 November 3**

The notorious stagecoach robber Black Bart commits his last robbery near Copperopolis in Calaveras County. He is captured and convicted and spends four years in San Quentin. He is seen only once (February 28, 1888) after his release; he simply disappears.

**1890 January 1**

Members of Pasadena’s Valley Hunt Club stage the first Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena.

**1890 October 1**

An act of the U.S. Congress establishes Yosemite National Park in Mariposa County.

**1891 October 1**

Stanford University officially opens on a former farm in Palo Alto.

**1892 May 28**

The Sierra Club is founded; John Muir becomes its first president.

**1896 November 3**

California voters narrowly defeat a proposed State Constitutional Amendment, Proposition 6, to grant women the right to vote.

**1902 April 16**

Tally's Electric Theater, the first full-time motion picture theater in the U.S., opens in Los Angeles.

**1902 September 25**

The California Redwood Park Commission agrees to purchase 3,800 acres of ancient redwoods in Santa Cruz County to become California's first state park, Big Basin Redwood State Park.

**1903 November 13**

Hollywood, founded by H. J. Whitley, is incorporated as a municipality. In 1896, Hollywood was a rural settlement of eighteen families. Whitley bought 400 acres surrounding the settlement and subdivided it into residential parcels.

**1904 October 17**

The Bank of Italy, later changed to the Bank of America, is founded in San Francisco.

**1905 March 18**

Governor George Pardee signs the University Farm Bill, which establishes a farm school for the University of California and appropriates $150,000 for land and construction costs. The school officially opens in 1909, later becoming UC Davis.

**1905 September 7**

Los Angeles voters authorize the expenditure of $1.5 million in bonds for the purchase of land and water rights for a 233-mile aqueduct to carry water from the Owens River to Los Angeles. A subsequent measure in 1907 appropriated funds for the aqueduct's construction.

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**1906 April 18**

San Francisco, California's largest city, is nearly destroyed by a massive earthquake and subsequent fires.

**1908 November 3**

In the closest statewide election in history, State Constitutional Amendment 14 to raise state officers' salaries is approved by two votes (92,558 to 92,556).

**1910 January 10**

Los Angeles hosts the first major air show in the U.S., the Los Angeles International Air Meet, at Dominguez Field.

**1910 November 8**

Hiram Johnson is elected Governor on a reform platform that includes approval of women's suffrage, limits on child labor, an eight-hour work day for women, railroad regulation, as well as a new system of direct democracy that includes the initiative, referendum and recall processes. All of these issues are successfully addressed either through legislation or voter approval of various propositions in 1911.

**1910 November 8**

California voters approve Proposition 2, The State Highway Bond Measure, which allows for $18 million to create a system of highways.

**1911 August 29**

Ishi (meaning man) is discovered, after forest fires in the area, at the Charles Ward slaughterhouse back corral near Oroville. He was approximately fifty years old at the time and had lived alone and undetected since the Three Knolls Massacre in 1865. He was the last known member of the Native American Yahi people. He spent the remaining five years of his life as a janitor at the University of California, Berkeley where he and his tribal customs were also studied by anthropologists.

**1912 March 9**

Upon the death of John Neimore, Charlotta Bass becomes the editor of the *California Eagle*.  She immediately purchases the newspaper for $50 at auction, making her the first African American woman to own a newspaper in the U.S.

**1912 October 24**

The first Sikh Gurdwara in the United States is founded by the Pacific Coast Khalsa Diwan Society in Stockton.

**1912 November 5**

California voters approve Proposition 1, a constitutional amendment proposed by the Legislature, which makes textbooks free to school children.

**1913 January 2**

Senator Marshall Black is the first state-level elected official to be recalled from office.

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**1913 February 13**

*The Squaw Man* opens in Hollywood; it is the first feature-length movie filmed in the future movie capital.

**1913 May 19**

Governor Hiram Johnson signs the Alien Land Law prohibiting Chinese, Indian, Japanese and Korean immigrants from owning agricultural land in California.

**1914 November 3**

California voters approve two constitutional amendments, Proposition 10, an initiative, which abolishes the poll tax, and Proposition 44, proposed by the Legislature, which establishes a minimum wage for women and children.

**1915 February 20**

San Francisco hosts the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, showcasing the city's recovery from the 1906 earthquake.

**1918 November 5**

The first four women are elected to the state Assembly - Grace Dorris, Elizabeth Hughes, Anna Saylor, and Esto Broughton.

**1918 November 5**

Frederick Roberts is the first African American elected to the state Assembly. He served 16 years, becoming known as the 'Dean of the Assembly.’

**1919 April 13**

Publishing tycoon William Randolph Hearst inherits his parents’ fortune upon the death of his mother, Phoebe Hearst. Within months, he hires architect Julia Morgan to build La Cuesta Encantada (Spanish for The Enchanted Hill), aka Hearst Castle, on property above San Simeon. The project and partnership last for 28 years.

**1919 May 23**

Governor William Stephens signs legislation creating the Southern Branch of the University of California (UCLA).

**1922 July 11**

The Hollywood Bowl opens for its first official season, with Alfred Hertz conducting the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra.

**1923 January 23**

Mae Ellen Nolan is the first woman from California elected to Congress; only the 4th woman in U.S. history. She filled a seat vacated by the death of her husband.

**1923 May 4**

Hetch Hetchy Reservoir is filled for the first time, providing water for San Francisco and other Bay Area cities.

**1925 December 12**

A Mo-tel, meaning motor hotel, opens in San Luis Obispo, the first in the world.

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**1926 November 11**

The U.S. Bureau of Public Roads launches the nation's first federal highway system -- Route 66 -- connecting Santa Monica and Chicago.

**1927 May 18**

Grauman's Chinese Theater opens in Hollywood with the showing of Cecil B. DeMille's *The King of Kings.*

**1927 July 11**

Miriam Matthews is the first African American woman to be hired by the Los Angeles Public Library. In 2012, she was one of ten inaugural inductees into the CA Library Hall of Fame.

**1928 January 27**

With an endowment of over $700 million, The Huntington Art Gallery, formerly the residence of Henry E. and Arabella Huntington, opens in San Marino. Today, The Huntington is among the wealthiest cultural institutions in the United States and one of the top institutions in the world for the study of the history of science and technology.

**1929 May 16**

The first motion picture awards ceremony (The Oscars) is held at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel in Los Angeles.  German-born Emil Jannings wins Best Actor for his roles in *The Last Commandment* and *The Way of All Flesh*.  Janet Gaynor wins Best Actress for her roles in *7th Heaven*, *Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans* and *Street Angel*.  *Wings* wins the Outstanding Picture award.

**1932 July 30**

Los Angeles hosts the 10th Summer Olympic Games; the first to be held in California.

**1933 February 11**

Death Valley becomes a National Monument. Later, on October 31, 1994, it becomes Death Valley National Park.

**1933 April 10**

Governor James Rolph signs the Field Act to raise earthquake standards for the construction of schools and community colleges.

**1933 June 2**

The San Francisco Opera Ballet (now the San Francisco Ballet) presents its first independent, all-dance program under the direction of Adolf Bolm, a Russian-born and -trained ballet dancer and choreographer. It is the oldest ballet company in the United States.

**1933 November 26**

Thomas Thurmon and John Holmes, who had confessed to the kidnapping and murder of Brooke Hart, the son of a prominent San Jose businessman, are lynched by a mob just outside the San Jose jail. It is the last lynching in California.

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**1934 August 11**

U.S. Penitentiary, Alcatraz Island, aka 'The Rock,' opens. The first set of 137 prisoners were moved from the U.S. Penitentiary in Leavenworth, Kansas. Most of these prisoners were bank robbers, counterfeiters or murderers.

**1935 May 15**

Griffith Observatory in North Hollywood opens to the public. It is named after Griffith J. Griffith, who first donated 3,015 acres of land to Los Angeles in 1896, specifically for a future observatory, theater and park. He then bequeathed the funds for construction in his will in 1919. The telescope at the Griffith is the most viewed telescope in the world.

**1936 November 3**

California voters approve Proposition 21, a constitutional amendment proposed by the Legislature, which allows the State Legislature to establish separate prisons for female felons.

**1937 January 17**

Howard Hughes sets a transcontinental speed record by flying non-stop from Los Angeles to Newark, New Jersey, in 7 hours, 28 minutes, and 25 seconds.

**1937 May 28**

San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge is opened to traffic, after its nearly 4.5-year construction.

**1937 December 21**

Walt Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, the first animated feature-length film, opens in Los Angeles.

**1939 July 2**

Hewlett-Packard, the original Silicon Valley start-up, is launched in a Palo Alto garage.

**1939 November 9**

UC Berkeley professor Ernest O. Lawrence is awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics for his invention of the cyclotron (a particle accelerator). In 1952, he co-founded the Livermore branch of the California Radiation Laboratory, which was later renamed the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory in his honor.

**1940 February 29**

Hattie McDaniel becomes the first African American to win an Oscar, for Best Supporting Actress in *Gone With the Wind*.

**1940 December 30**

California's first freeway, the Arroyo Seco Parkway, opens. It is 8.2 miles long, linking Los Angeles and Pasadena.

**1942 March 29**

Under the authority of U.S. Executive Order 9066, issued in response to the United States’ entry into World War II, the forced evacuation and detention of Japanese Americans in California begins.

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**1943 October 7**

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer releases the movie *Lassie Come Home*, which shoots dramatic scenes along the San Joaquin River. The movie stars Pal, a male Rough Collie, born in the Glamis Kennels in North Hollywood, as Lassie. According to the *Saturday Evening Post*, Pal goes on to have "the most spectacular canine career in film history".

**1944 July 17**

A Liberty ship, the *E.A. Bryan*, explodes at Port Chicago Naval Magazine near Suisun Bay while being loaded with 4,600 tons of ammunition, killing more than 300 people. It is the worst home front disaster of World War II.

**1945 July 18**

The California Legislature renames Lake Bigler to Lake Tahoe, ending a nearly 100-year-old controversy regarding the name of this spectacular natural lake. Lake Tahoe is the largest alpine lake in North America.

**1946 November 5**

California voters reject Proposition 11, an initiative statute, which would make it unlawful to refuse to hire someone based on race, religion, national origin, or ancestry.

**1947 April 14**

Felicitas Mendez and her husband win a victory in the U.S. Court of Appeal, Ninth District, to prevent children being barred from attending neighborhood schools just because of the color of their skin.

**1947 June 14**

Governor Earl Warren signs Assembly Bill 1375, known as the Anderson Bill, ending segregation in California schools.

**1947 October 14**

Los Angeles County creates the nation's first air pollution control program.

**1947 October 14**

U.S. Air Force Captain Chuck Yeager becomes the first person to fly at supersonic speed (Mach 1), breaking the sound barrier over California's Mojave Desert.

**1948 October 22**

The first In-n-Out opens in Baldwin Park in Los Angeles County. It is the first fast-food chain to incorporate a drive-thru feature.

**1950 October 3**

Governor Earl Warren signs the Levering Act, requiring state employees to take an oath disavowing radical beliefs. In 1952, voters approve Proposition 6, a constitutional amendment proposed by the Legislature, which also requires public employee loyalty oaths.

**1951 October 15**

*I Love Lucy* starring Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz airs. It is the first scripted television program to be filmed on 35 mm film in front of a live studio audience.

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**1951 November 10**

The first coast-to-coast direct dial phone call is placed between the mayors of Englewood, New Jersey and Alameda, California.

**1952 November 4**

Californian Richard Nixon is elected Vice President of the United States.

**1952 November 4**

Pauline Davis, of rural Northern California, is elected to the State Assembly. She would spend twenty-four years in office, the longest tenure of any woman in California history. Her first bill, requiring women to be paid the same as men for equal work, failed.

**1953 October 3**

Governor Earl Warren becomes the 14th Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

**1953 November 17**

The self-proclaimed ‘Secret Boss of California,’ powerful lobbyist Artie Samish, is convicted of eight tax evasion charges and sent to federal prison.

**1954 May 17**

The U.S. Supreme Court rules ‘separate but equal’ schools to be illegal, based on a battle Mary Tape launched in the 1880's in California to get equal education for her Asian American children.

**1955 July 17**

Disneyland, ‘The Happiest Place on Earth,’ opens in Anaheim.

**1955 September 13**

Los Angeles suffers its worst smog attack in recorded history.

**1955 September 21**

The Daughters of Bilitis, the first lesbian rights organization in the U.S., is founded in San Francisco.

**1960 February 18**

Squaw Valley (now Olympic Valley) hosts the only Winter Olympic Games to be held in California.

**1960 March 28**

The first permanent star, honoring director Stanley Kramer, is installed on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. There were 1,558 stars in the first set of inductees. By 2025, there were 2,813 stars along the walk.

**1960 April 27**

Governor Pat Brown signs the Donahoe Higher Education Act, which creates California's Master Plan for Higher Education.

**1960 May 16**

Dr. Theodore H. Maiman invents the laser beam at Hughes Research Laboratory located above Malibu.

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**1960 November 8**

California voters authorize a $1.75 billion bond act proposed by the Legislature (Proposition 1) to finance construction of the State Water Project.

**1961 September 19**

Jesse Unruh is elected Speaker of the California Assembly, a position he held for over seven years. Politically powerful and astute, Unruh led the movement to create a full-time Legislature, with the inclusion of professional staff.

**1961 December 31**

The Beach Boys perform at their first paying gig, the Richie Valens Memorial Concert, at the Long Beach Auditorium.

**1962 November 27**

Governor Pat Brown announces California has surpassed New York in population (17.3 million).

**1963 September 20**

The Rumford Fair Housing Act, a state law aimed at prohibiting racial discrimination in housing, is enacted. The law was later repealed by voters in November 1964, with the passage of Proposition 14, an initiative, which was overruled by the California Supreme Court in 1966. In November 1974, voters enacted Proposition 7, The Declaration of Rights Constitutional Amendment, placed on the ballot by the Legislature which, among other things, expanded protection from sex-based discrimination to include race, creed, color, and national or ethnic origin, and expanded that protection to employment.

**1964 September 1**

Former California Attorney General Stanley Mosk begins his thirty-seven-year career as an Associate Justice of the California Supreme Court, the longest tenure in that court’s history.

**1965 September 8**

The Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee, comprised primarily of Filipino American farm workers, initiates a strike against the Delano grape growers. They were later joined in the strike by the National Farm Workers Association, led by Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta, which represented Mexican American workers. It was the first time that the two groups united, which led to their merger and the formation of the United Farm Workers of America.

**1966 November 8**

Former actor Ronald Reagan is elected as the 33rd Governor of California, defeating two-time incumbent Edmund Brown. Reagan would serve eight years as Governor before being elected the 40th President of the United States in 1980.

**1966 November 8**

Ivy Baker Priest is elected State Treasurer, becoming the first woman to hold a statewide constitutional office.

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**1966 November 8**

Mervyn Dymally is the first African American elected to the State Senate. In 1974, he was elected California's first and only African American Lt. Governor.

**1966 November 8**

Yvonne Brathwaite Burke is the first African American woman elected to the State Assembly. In 1973, she became the first African American woman elected to the U.S. Congress from California. She also is the only member of the U.S. House of Representatives to give birth during her tenure (1973).

**1966 November 8**

March Fong Eu is the first Asian American woman elected to the State Assembly. In 1974, she would become the first Asian American elected to a California state constitutional office (Secretary of State), becoming also the first Asian American woman to be elected to a state constitutional office in U. S. history.

**1966 November 8**

California voters approve an initiative constitutional amendment, Proposition 1A, creating a full-time State Legislature.

**1967 June 14**

Governor Reagan signs the Therapeutic Abortion Act legalizing abortion in cases of rape, incest or to protect the physical or mental health of the mother.

**1967 August 30**

The California Air Resources Board is established.  Governor Reagan appoints Dr. Arie Jan Haagen-Smit as its first chairman.  Dr. Haagen-Smit, known as 'the father of air pollution control,’ was the first to link automobile emissions with the smog problems in Southern California.

**1968 January 6**

The first heart transplant on an adult in the U.S. is performed at Stanford University Hospital. The recipient lives for fourteen days.

**1968 January 13**

Johnny Cash performs *Folsom Prison Blues* live at Folsom Prison. This live version was ranked by Pitchfork Media as #8 on its list of The 200 Greatest Songs of the 1960's and earned Cash his first Grammy Award.

**1968 June 5**

Robert F. Kennedy is assassinated at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles after delivering his victory speech upon winning the California Democratic presidential primary.

**1970 August 1**

San Diego Golden State Comic-Con opens in the basement of the U.S. Grant Hotel in downtown San Diego. Three hundred people attend. Now known as Comic-Con International: San Diego, it is the largest such show in North America.

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**1970 September 18**

Governor Reagan signs the California Environmental Quality Act.

**1972 June 15**

Pebble Beach Golf Links is the first public golf course to host the U.S. Open.

**1972 September 4**

Californian Mark Spitz sets an Olympic record winning seven gold medals in swimming, all setting new world-record times. He held this record for thirty-six years, until Michael Phelps won eight Olympic golds in the 2008 games.

**1972 November 7**

California voters approve Proposition 20, an initiative statute, which establishes the California Coastal Commission.

**1973 July 1**

Tom Bradley is sworn into office as the first African American mayor of Los Angeles, eventually serving a record 20 years.

**1974 February 5**

Newspaper heiress Patty Hearst is kidnapped from her Berkeley apartment by the Symbionese Liberation Army. She later participates in a bank robbery with her kidnappers, is caught, tried and convicted of the crime. Her original sentence is reduced from thirty-five to seven years. It is later commuted by President Carter, and she is then pardoned by President Clinton.

**1974 June 4**

California voters approve Proposition 9, the Political Reform Act, an initiative statute, requiring public disclosure of campaign spending and lobbyist activities and creating the Fair Political Practices Commission.

**1974 November 5**

Edmund G. ‘Jerry’ Brown Jr., son of former Governor Edmund G. Brown, is elected Governor, making them the first and only father and son to serve in that position. He is re-elected in 1978, and serves two more terms after being elected in 2010 and 2014.

**1975 September 5**

Lynette ‘Squeaky’ Fromme, a member of the infamous Manson family, attempts to assassinate President Ford outside the State Capitol in Sacramento. Her stated motive was 'to set an example to those who refuse to halt environmental pollution.’

**1975 September 22**

Sara Jane Moore attempts to assassinate President Ford outside the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco. Her stated motive was to 'spark a violent revolution.’

**1976 November 2**

Rose Ann Vuich becomes the first woman elected to the State Senate.

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**1977 March 26**

Rose Bird becomes California's first woman Chief Justice of the State Supreme Court; ten years later, voters would remove her and two other justices from the court.

**1978 June 6**

California voters approve Proposition 13, an initiative constitutional amendment to slash property taxes.

**1978 November 7**

Diane Watson is the first African American woman elected to the State Senate.

**1978 November 27**

San Francisco Mayor George Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk are assassinated by former San Francisco Supervisor Dan White.

**1978 December 4**

Carol Hallett becomes the Assembly Republican Leader as the first woman to lead a political party in either house of the State Legislature.

**1980 June 3**

California voters approve a constitutional amendment proposed by the Legislature (Proposition 5) prohibiting contempt citations against newspersons who refuse to disclose their confidential sources.

**1982 November 2**

Gloria Molina is elected the first Latina in the State Legislature.

**1983 June 18**

Californian Sally Ride is the first American woman (third woman in the world) to fly into space.

**1984 October 24**

The Monterey Bay Aquarium, the largest aquarium in the United States, opens to the public. David Packard, co-founder of Hewlett-Packard, funded $7 million for the initial construction.

**1984 November 6**

Marian Bergeson is the first woman to serve in both the State Assembly (1978-1984) and the State Senate (1984-1999).

**1984 November 6**

Only four non-incumbents are elected to the 120-member State Legislature.

**1986 November 5**

California voters approve Proposition 65, an initiative statute, designed to protect public health by reducing exposures to toxic chemicals.

**1988 January 17**

‘The Great Storm of '88’ strikes the coast of California with the largest waves - up to thirty-three feet - ever recorded in Southern California.

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**1989 May 24**

Governor Deukmejian signs the Roberti-Roos Assault Weapons Control Act making California the

first state in the nation to regulate the sale, manufacture and possession of assault weapons.

**1989 October 17**

A powerful 6.9 earthquake strikes the Central Coast, killing sixty-three people and causing $6 billion in damages, including the collapse of a portion of the Bay Bridge and Nimitz Freeway.

**1990 June 5**

Dianne Feinstein wins the California Democratic gubernatorial primary, becoming the state's first female major party nominee for Governor.  She is later defeated by the Republican candidate, Pete Wilson, in the general election in November.

**1990 November 6**

California voters approve an initiative constitutional amendment, Proposition 140, creating term limits for legislators and constitutional officers.

**1992 November 3**

For the first time in U.S. history, two women (Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer) are elected to represent a state in the U.S. Senate simultaneously.

**1994 November 8**

California voters approve Proposition 187, an initiative statute, banning undocumented immigrants from using the state's major public services; it is overturned by the California Supreme Court.

**1994 November 8**

Kathleen Connell is elected the first woman State Controller.

**1994 November 8**

Delaine Eastin is elected the first woman Superintendent of Public Instruction.

**1994 November 8**

Hilda Solis is the first Hispanic American woman elected to the State Senate. In 2000, she was the first woman to receive the John F. Kennedy Profiles in Courage award.

**1995 May 16**

Assemblyman Paul Horcher is the first Assembly member recalled from office.

**1995 June 5**

Willie Brown concludes a record fourteen-and-a-half years as California Assembly Speaker.

**1997 December 16**

The Getty Center opens to the public in Los Angeles, twenty-one years after the death of its namesake, oil tycoon, J. Paul Getty. It is the culmination of Getty's vision to display his personal art collection begun at his home in 1954, and expanded to Getty Villa in 1974.

**2001 March 19**

California's electricity crisis peaks as blackouts affect 1.5 million customers.

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**2002 August 17**

The Charles M. Schulz Museum and Research Center, dedicated to the comic strip Peanuts and its star character, Snoopy, opens to the public in Santa Rosa.

**2003 October 7**

In a special election, voters recall Governor Gray Davis from office and elect Hollywood action star Arnold Schwarzenegger as California's 38th Governor.

**2006 February 24**

Secretary of State Bruce McPherson appoints Nancy Zimmelman as the first woman California State Archivist.

**2007 January 4**

Nancy Pelosi of San Francisco becomes the first woman Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives. She served two terms, from 2007-2011, and again from 2019-2023.

**2008 October 10**

Mayor Gavin Newsom performs the first same-sex marriage in California at City Hall in San Francisco.

**2008 November 8**

The Camp Fire in Butte County is the deadliest wildfire in state history, killing eighty-five people.

**2010 November 2**

Kamala Harris is elected California's first woman, first African American, and first Asian American state Attorney General. In November 2020, she becomes the first woman of such background to be elected as the Vice President of the United States.

**2015 April 1**

In the midst of a severe drought, Governor Jerry Brown issues an executive order requiring urban areas to reduce water usage by twenty-five percent.

**2018 March 21**

Toni Atkins becomes the first woman and first openly gay lawmaker to be selected President Pro Tempore of the State Senate.

**2018 November 6**

Gavin Newsom wins the gubernatorial election; it is the first time since 1886 that two Democrats would be elected Governor in back-to-back elections.

**2018 November 6**

Eleni Kounalakis is elected California's first woman and first Greek American Lt. Governor.

**2020 February 6**

A San Jose woman who had traveled to Wuhan, China becomes the nation's first COVID-19 death.

**2021 November 14**

California celebrates its first ‘Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day’ honoring the civil rights pioneer who was the first African American child to desegregate her New Orleans elementary school in 1960.

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**2024 November 5**

Women are elected to a majority of State Senate seats for the first time in California history.

**2024 November 12**

Sacramento State University President Luke Wood announces the creation of the University's Native American College. The first of its kind in California, the College offers students an inclusive, Native-based education that fosters connections to community and tribal government.

**2025 January 7**

Los Angeles wildfires kill dozens of people, force more than 200,000 to evacuate and destroy 18,000 structures and homes, becoming the worst fire in California history.