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Historical Trivia

1906 – November 27, residents, by a two to one margin, voted for incorporation.



History

Our historical page is divided into two sections: Dates and [Photos](#).

If you have anything to add, please [contact us](#).

Historical Dates

1869 – City of Lodi founded in August; Charles O. Ivory and John M. Burt establish the "Ivory Store", which was located at the corner of Pine and Sacramento Streets; it acted as a magnet of sorts, drawing homesteaders and other businesses to the area.

1874 – March 21, Assembly Bill 639 changes town's name from Mokelumne to Lodi.

1876 – The Lodi Flouring Mill is established in a brick building at the southwest corner of Main and Locust Streets; it was capable of producing more than 200 barrels of flour a day.

1878 – Lodi's population is 450; Gertie DeForce Cluff establishes Lodi's first newspaper the Valley Review; San Joaquin County is divided into five townships (now called Districts) with Lodi in the 4th called the Elkhorn Township.

1880 – San Joaquin County raises the largest single wheat crop in the world – some 3.4 million bushels, much of it grown in Lodi.

1881 – Ralph Ellis, with his sons, founds the Lodi News Sentinel, originally headquartered on Elm Street.

1886 – Grown without irrigation, 3,000 carloads of watermelons were shipped from Lodi.

1887 – Fire destroys downtown area along the west side of the 00 block N. Sacramento Street, between Pine and Elm streets.

1888 – Benjamin F. Langford launches the original Bank of Lodi with a capital stock of \$25,000.

1891 – Limited water and gas is service provided to citizens.

1896 – Tom and Wood Henderson buy hardware dealership from John Collins, and Henderson Bros. Hardware is born (Note: The company closed in 2001).

1897 – Wilhelm and Charlotta Heib arrive in Lodi with their eight children; they were the first of a wave of migration by Dakotans of German descent – a group that would shape the City's development through the present day.

1899 – Lodi is said to have 2,346,061 grapevines.

1900 – Lodi is the second largest community in San Joaquin County with a population of 1,500; in the Spring, Dr. Wilton Mason owns the first automobile in Lodi.

1905 – The Opera House (now Thornton House Furniture) was built on School Street, the Lodi Improvement Club (now the Lodi Woman's Club) was formed, and in August

the Central California Traction Company began construction of an electric passenger rail line linking Lodi to Stockton and Sacramento.

1906 – November 27, residents, by a two to one margin, voted for incorporation and elected the following individuals:

- F.O. Hale (Trustee)
- J. M. Blodgett (Trustee)
- G.E. Lawrence (Trustee)
- L. Villinger (Trustee)
- C.A. Rich (Trustee)
- J. M. McMahon (Clerk)
- W. H. Lorenz (Treasurer)
- H. B. Coleman (Marshall)

On December 3, 1906, the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors ordered, decreed, and declared that Lodi was duly incorporated as a municipal corporation.

On December 6, 1906, the County's order was filed in the California Secretary of State's Office, which is the official date of Lodi's incorporation.

On December 7, 1906, Lodi's five-man Board of Trustees meets for the first time; George E. Lawrence becomes Lodi's first Mayor; the first City limits was bordered by Lockeford Street, Hutchins Street, Cherokee Lane, and a line 1,600 feet south of Lodi Avenue; Lodi's population reaches 1,946.

1907 – Spring, Lodi's population exceeds 2,000; at a cost of \$500 the mission-style arch is built at Pine and Sacramento Streets; the Tokay Carnival was held on September 19-21 to "advertise to the world the beauty and value of the Tokay grape"; Central California Traction Company line formally opens; Emerson School opens as part of Salem School District located on Hutchins and Elm Streets (Note: The school was destroyed in 1954 because it was considered unsafe; the City purchased the property in July 1955 and later created a park in its place).

1910 – City purchases the Cary Bros. company – Lodi Water, Gas and Electric for \$35,000; on February 12, the first permanent Lodi Library building on Pine Street is dedicated (now the Carnegie Forum and location of City Council meetings); the first municipal sewer system is built.

1912 – Lodi's first City Hall / Fire Station is built at 114 N. Main Street for \$3,998.

1913 – October 6, Lodi Union High School opens for classes on a 12-acre site located on the corner of Hutchins and Walnut Streets (Note: In 1956 a "west" campus was built on Oak and Pacific Streets where the current Lodi High School stands; the older site was designated as the "east" campus until 1972, when it was officially named Tokay High School); the City Hall Fire Station housed the City's first fire truck, a \$5,950 Seagrave.

1914 – A jail building was finished near the City Hall and the City's first civic complex was completed.

1916 – April, the first City park is established and named for City trustee and second Mayor, Frank O. Hale; Lincoln School was built on what became Cherokee Lane; Farmers and Merchants Bank is founded.

1919 – A & W Root Beer is introduced for the first time; the brand would expand to become well known from coast to coast, as well as in many foreign countries.

1920 – Congress enacts prohibition; although some farmers pulled up vines to plant other crops, the wine industry in Lodi continued to thrive.

1921 – February 1, John F. Blakely becomes City Clerk and serves to his retirement in

1952 (Note: From 1906 to 1948 the City Clerk was also the Chief Administrator, an elected position); on February 22, Clyde Needham School on Pleasant Avenue is dedicated in honor of the first Lodi resident killed in World War I; Woodbridge School is built for the Woodbridge School District (Note: Woodbridge School became part of Lodi Unified School District in 1967 and was annexed into the City of Lodi in 2001).

1923 – Garfield School opens on Garfield and Flora Streets (Note: In 1975 the school was declared unsafe and demolished).

1924 – A second Fire Station is built at Maple Square, located at Lodi Avenue and Sacramento Street, just west of the railroad tracks, so that trains can no longer block fire trucks responding to the west side of Lodi.

1926 – November, Super Mold Company, located on Sacramento Street, one of Lodi's largest industries of the century, started producing the world's first successful full-circle tire retreading mold, the Supertreader.

1928 – February 22, the \$70,000 two-story, brick Italian Renaissance-style City Hall at 221 W. Pine Street is dedicated; the City paid cash for the building and furnishings.

1934 – September 7-9, the first Lodi Grape Festival was held; 5,686 carloads of grapes were said to be shipped from Lodi this year.

1936 – Through the federally funded Works Progress Administration, the National Guard Armory was built.

1940 – Lodi's population reaches 11,079; a stadium is built on Stockton Street.

1941 – December 10, Lodi conducts a test blackout, four days after the United States entered World War II.

1946 – April 1, General Mills announces it will build a plant in Lodi.

1948 – Citizens change Lodi to a council-manager form of government; Nick Felten, Sr., builds the first shopping center "Tokay Shopping Center" located outside the downtown area at Lockeford and California Streets; on June 5, General Mills begins operation.

1950 – November 20-23, a flood threatens the area and 1,000 people living along the river are evacuated from Woodbridge and Lodi; George Washington Elementary School opens with 11 classrooms on West Lockeford Street.

1952 – April 7, Lodi Memorial Hospital, named to honor those who died in World War II, accepts its first patients.

1955 – Leroy Nichols Elementary School named after a retired District Superintendent opens on Crescent Avenue; Blakely Park is named after retired City Clerk John F. Blakely; Farmers and Merchants Bank opened a detached drive-up bank facility at Lodi Avenue and Church Street – the first in California; on December 23-24, volunteers spend the holiday weekend sandbagging Turner Road to hold back floodwaters; 400 threatened homes were saved, but homes on Laurel Avenue flooded with inches of water.

1956 – The Federal Government officially recognizes Lodi as a winegrape growing district, allowing vintners to label their wine as coming from Lodi; on April 9, the Lodi Arch is refurbished at a cost of \$10,000.

1958 – Erma B. Reese Elementary School located on West Elm Street opens; Lodi's population passes 20,000.

1960 – Lawrence Elementary School located on Calaveras Street begins serving Lodi students in the fall.

1963 – Lakewood Elementary School on north Ham Lane opens with 21 classrooms.

1965 – January 4, Senior Elementary School opens with 22 classrooms on Ham Lane (Note: It was later named Lodi Middle School); on June 8, voters pass first municipal bond measure in 44 years, the \$7.2 million bond called for a public safety building on Elm Street housing police and fire departments and a courtroom, a sewage treatment plant at White Slough, and a revised storm drainage system where basins were dug to hold rainwater and serve as City parks during dry weather.

1966 – Tokay Colony School opens on East Live Oak Road, replacing a one-story schoolhouse built in 1909; Vinewood Elementary School, located on West Tokay Street, opens with eight classrooms.

1967 – Eighteen Lodi area elementary schools merge with the Lodi Union High School District to create Lodi Unified School District; the boundaries follow those of the high school district, which was created in 1922; the District encompasses about 350 square miles (Note: Since unification, some property was transferred to Lincoln, Stockton, Tracy, and Galt School Districts); on June 8, ground is broken for the White Slough sewage treatment plant; a group of doctors join to build Community Hospital on Lower Sacramento Road; in September the \$1.1 million public safety building on Elm Street housing the police and fire departments and a courtroom opens.

1968 – Lodi Memorial Hospital adds a \$1 million wing.

1970 – Lodi Unified's first continuation high school, known as the north campus, originally located at Lockeford and Calaveras Streets, is relocated to West Walnut Street and renamed Liberty High School.

1974 – March 17, an arson fire destroys 21 classrooms and administrative offices of Tokay High School, located on the corner of Hutchins and Walnut Streets; in June, a \$13.7 million school bond was approved to build new Tokay High School on Century Boulevard.

1977 – Heritage Elementary School opens in the location of the old Garfield School on Flora Street; on September 6, the \$8 million Tokay High School opens at its new location on Century Boulevard and Ham Lane.

1979 – Robert Mondavi buys the land and historic buildings on Woodbridge Road, which will become the Woodbridge Winery – one of the largest table wine labels in the nation; on April 14, the new \$2.5 million Lodi Library building at Locust and Church Streets is dedicated.

1980 – Lodi High School graduates Michael Crete and Stewart Bewley gain national limelight with the invention of the Wine Cooler; in 1984, the company, California Cooler is sold to wine and spirits giant Brown-Forman for \$55 million; on March 6, the City buys old Lodi Union High School buildings and grounds for \$475,000 and fundraising for today's Hutchins Street Square begins.

1981 – Voters enact Measure A, a controversial initiative, which required voter approval of all annexations (Note: this initiative kept growth in check until 1989 when the Third District Court of Appeals ruled it unconstitutional); September 10, Lodi Arch is officially named California Landmark #931; a few months later, the Arch was declared a National Historical Landmark.

1983 – The modern day Bank of Lodi is founded.

1986 – Lodi viticulture area receives official recognition as an appellation, accelerating the push toward the quality table wine market among Lodi wine makers.

1989 – August 15, the old Carnegie Library is re-dedicated as Carnegie Forum where the City Council and civic commissions hold public meetings.

1990 – Lodi's population exceeds 50,000; Beckman Elementary School located on Scarborough Drive opens

1996 – City Hall's \$3 million renovation is completed.

1998 – Hutchins Street Square's final project, the Performing Arts and Conference Center is completed; on October 8, the Downtown Gateway on School Street is dedicated.

1999 – October 21, the Lodi Station featuring the renovated Southern Pacific Railroad station building is dedicated; population reaches 55,800.

2000 – U.S. Census Bureau reports that Lodi's population is 56,999.

2001 – The Lodi Arch Bear is rededicated on June 14 after being restored and given a 23-karat, gold-leaf finish.

2002 – Two blocks of Elm Street, between Church and Sacramento Streets, were rebuilt with the upgrading of utilities, rebuilding of the street, addition of street trees and decorative lighting, and the creation of a pedestrian plaza with additional trees, paving stones, and decorative concrete graphic "sun" in the middle of the block.

2002 – March 18, a dedication is held for the return of Amtrak passenger rail service to Lodi. The Amtrak service connects Lodi up and down the San Joaquin Valley to Sacramento and the Bay Area with connections to southern California and the rest of Amtrak's rail system.

2002 – Lodi's first 329-stall parking structure is completed on the old railroad depot property east of Sacramento Street, north of Pine Street. The structure includes 14,000 square feet of retail/office space for lease.

2002 – May 22, dedication of the Lodi Area All U.S. Military Veterans Plaza, located in the civic center mall. The project includes a wall of water, eternal flame, sphere, obelisk, and 13 plinth stones featuring inspirational writings submitted by the winners of the project poetry contest.

2002 – November 20, Council adopted resolution designating the "Rose" as the official flower of the City of Lodi.

2003 – December 22, dedication of the Lodi Police Department's new facility, located at 215 West Elm Street. The structure is approximately 59,000 square feet with 51,000 of that dedicated to police and jail services.

Historical Photos

Click on any photo for a larger version. Thanks to Steve Mann for providing these.



Pine Street



Roma Winery



Sacramento and Pine



Sacramento St



Sacramento and Pine



Salem School



School and Oak



School and Pine



School and Pine - Early Parade



SP Depot



South School St



Station



Station



Watermelon Wagon



Sacramento St



Arch - 100% American



Arch

Arch



Bank of America

Bank of Lodi



Bank of Lodi

Bauden and Wells



Carnegie Library

City Hall



Congregational Church

Pine at Sacramento



Emerson School



First Christian Church



Grape Bowl



Grape Harvest Wagons



Green Ford



Historic Catholic Church



Historic Richmaid



Hotel Lodi



House



Lincoln School



Lippert Court



Lockeford Street



Arch



Lodi High School



Lodi High School



Lodi High School



Lodi Post Office



Lodi Union High



Lodi Union High



Main and Pine



Methodist Church



Oak at School



Parade at Sacramento and Pine



Pine and School



Pine and Main

If you have any photos to add, please [contact us](#)

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