

OUR CENTURY

1907

AT A GLANCE



PD FILE

A view from the second balcony at the Hippodrome.

Burton plays role of sacrificial lamb

"Jacta est alea!" cried Theodore Burton in accepting the Republican nomination for mayor.

To Julius Caesar, it meant "The die is cast."

But, "In your language and mine, it means, 'Let 'er go, Gallagher!,' " Mayor Tom L. Johnson told roaring crowds as the campaign of 1907 began.

Burton, a two-term congressman who later became a U.S. senator, wasn't eager to make the race, but he was pressed into it by Republicans, from President Theodore Roosevelt on down, who were determined to deny Johnson a fourth term.

The Cleveland Leader borrowed nationally known cartoonist Homer Davenport to lampoon Johnson in Page One cartoons, but Johnson won by a vote of 48,000 to 39,000.

Dudley Humphrey, the "popcorn king" and Euclid Beach impresario, opened the Elysium, one of the three largest indoor skating rinks in the country, at Euclid Ave. and E. 107th St. It was the scene of international figure skating contests, college and later professional hockey, and of women in flowing dresses gliding arm in arm with their derbied beaus.

The building was torn down in 1951, and the city used the land to widen Chester Ave.

For the first time in his life, Nap Lajoie dropped below the .300 mark in batting, missing it by one point. The Naps finished seven games behind the champion Detroit Tigers, led by a brash youngster named Ty Cobb.

The Hippodrome Theater, in the new 11-story Hippodrome Building, had a stage 130 feet wide, 104 feet deep and 110 feet high—the largest in the country after the Hippodrome in New York. An 80-by-40-by-10-foot tank accommodated water spectacles.

Including boxes and two balconies, the "Hipp" seated 3,548. As one of the world's great playhouses, it featured performers such as Enrico Caruso, Sarah Bernhardt, John McCormack and, later, Will Rogers, Al Jolson and W.C. Fields.

The last of the great downtown movie houses to close, it was torn down in 1981 to make room for a parking lot.

An overflow crowd spilled onto Euclid Ave. for the consecration of Trinity Cathedral on Sept. 24. The million-dollar English Gothic edifice was "a civic glory," the Leader declared.

Manning Fisher had a novel way of holding down food prices; he called it "cash and carry." The first Fisher Brothers Co. store opened at W. 47th St. and Lorain Ave. in February; nine years later, it had become a 48-store chain.

The chain was among the first to open what it called "master markets," and, as Fisher Foods, it dominated the retail grocery business for much of the century. In 1965, it was acquired by the Fazio chain, and in 1987, its remaining markets were merged into the Rini-Rego Stop-N-Shop stores.

Golfing fans, including John D. Rockefeller, turned out for the first National Amateur Golf Championship in July at the Euclid course on Cedar Hill. A precocious 16-year-old named Charles "Chick" Evans attracted the attention of the galleries, but Jerry Travers took home the trophy.

New this year: Lakewood Hospital; Glenville Hospital (later Euclid-Glenville, Euclid General and Meridia Euclid); the Alhambra Theater; the East End Neighborhood House; the Gabriel Co. (closed in 1996); Park Drop Forge Co. (now part of Park-Ohio Industries).

Picking up the pace

Traveling at 80 mph, trains brought shoppers, workers to Cleveland

By Fred McGunagle

It wasn't the automobile that liberated Clevelanders from the 1800s' clip-clop pace of transportation: Autos wouldn't be affordable for the average family for decades into the new century.

It was the interurban, which put all of Northeast Ohio a short ride from Cleveland's downtown department stores, let businessmen commute from distant towns and took Clevelanders for inexpensive excursions to beaches and amusement parks.

"The electric cars opened up the countryside," Harry Christiansen wrote in "Northern Ohio's Interurbans." "A day's drive to the big city by horse and wagon was no longer faced by the farmer. Now he could walk to the crossroads, board an interurban trolley and reach the city in an hour or two.

"Country estates for the wealthy mushroomed along the interurban trails. Businessmen commuted to the city mornings and returned to their country homes by dusk."

The first interurban had arrived from Akron in 1895. By 1907, the boom was at its peak; traction tycoons were gobbling up farmland through eminent domain and laying tracks across the pastures. In March of 1907, J. Pomeroy and Maurice Mandelbaum consolidated a number of lines into the Cleveland, Southwestern & Columbus (the "Green Line"), with 208 miles of track reaching west to Elyria and Oberlin and south to Berea, Wooster and Columbus.

The Southwestern featured ornate green and gold cars with cathedral



Interurban electric trains used streetcar tracks in the city. Superior Ave.'s four tracks were crowded with daily traffic. Below, a Cleveland, Southwestern & Columbus crew unload milk at Lorain Station, at West 98th St. (Photos courtesy James A. Toman and Blaine S. Hays, "Horse Trails to Regional Rails," Kent State University Press)

windows; its funeral car, the "Dolores," was black with gold trim.

The Moore-Everett Syndicate operated lines such as the Lake Shore Electric, which eventually reached Detroit; the Cleveland, Eastern & Painesville into Lake County; the Eastern Ohio Traction Co. into Geauga County; and the Akron, Bedford & Cleveland to Ravenna, Barberton and Canton.

Expresses and limiteds "were garished with white flags, shrill whistles and ornate paint jobs," Christiansen wrote. "Their smoking compartments became club rooms of the traveling salesmen who deserted the sooty steam trains."

Fanciest of all was the "Banker's



Maurice Mandelbaum



Special" that left Gates Mills at 7:05 a.m. each day and ran nonstop to Cleveland. On the return trip, the motorman would stop only for a passenger waving a yellow card, his sign of membership in the exclusive passenger list.

The lines targeted resorts, picnic grounds and amusement parks. Clevelanders happily headed for Crystal Beach, Avon Beach and Cedar Point to the west, Puritas Springs Park on the southwest side, Silver Lake, Brady Lake and Chippewa Lake to the south.

To the east were Willoughbeach Park and Chesterland Caves. And, of course, the cars carried passengers from outlying areas into Cleveland, to White City Park, Luna Park and Euclid Beach Park. (Once in the city, they ran along the streetcar tracks.)

The cars carried mail and freight as well, and it piled up at the depot behind the Old Stone Church, where the Standard Building now stands. A typical load on an outgoing baggage car, Christiansen noted, might include empty milk cans as well as stove pipe sections, trunks, an upright swing, rolls of carpet, tools and a baby carriage. Most had been pur-

chased at shops in Cleveland, as merchants in Elyria and Painesville noted with growing alarm.

Interurbans could travel up to 80 mph, and they had their risks. One of the worst wrecks occurred on Memorial Day 1907, when one Southwestern car ran into the rear of another on Middle Ave. in Elyria. Seven people were killed and 53 injured.

The first bus lines appeared in Cleveland in the 1920s; they were the beginning of the end for the interurbans. The last car, a Lake Shore Electric, left Cleveland for Toledo on May 15, 1938.

When World War II halted auto and tire production and forced gasoline rationing, Clevelanders wished they still had interurbans, but the tracks and, in many places, the rights-of-way were gone. Later, Clevelanders wished they had efficient, nonpolluting light-rail lines to relieve traffic congestion, but costs had become prohibitive.

Nothing was left of the interurbans but a faint whistle across a distant pasture.

McGunagle is a Cleveland freelance writer.

LOOKING AT A YEAR

Feb. 24: The New York Times reports that Cleveland's John D. Rockefeller is the world's richest person, with a net worth of more than \$300 million.

Mar. 14: The stock market has its worst crash since the Panic of 1901, but the public shows little concern because so few Americans invest in stocks.

May 9: Labor leader Bill "Big Bill" Haywood goes on trial in Idaho for allegedly ordering the murder of the state's former governor, Frank Steunenberg. Two months later, Haywood is acquitted.

June 10: Five automobiles leave Peking at the start of an 8,000-mile auto race to Paris. Sixty-two days later, "the greatest automobile race

in history" is won by Prince Borghese of Italy, driving an Italian-made car.

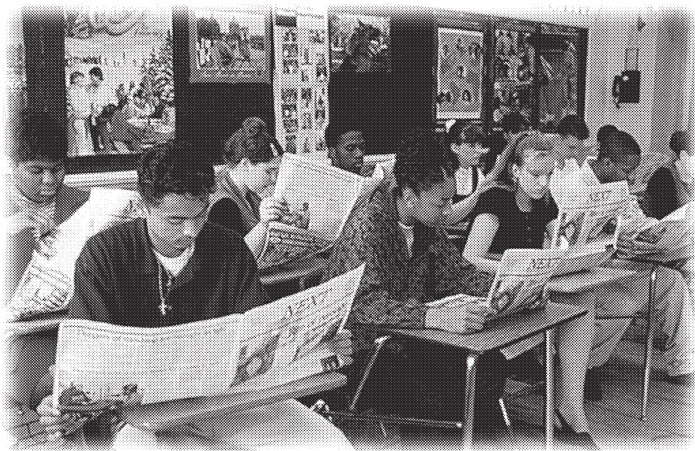
Oct. 1: The Plaza Hotel opens in New York City.

Nov. 13: The world's first helicopter flight takes place in France, but French inventor Paul Cornu's aircraft remains airborne for only a few seconds.

Dec. 10: Rudyard Kipling wins the Nobel Prize for literature.

Born in 1907: Laurence Olivier, John Wayne, Katharine Hepburn, Barbara Stanwyck, Cab Calloway, Milton Berle, Walter Reuther, Alfred Krupp, James Michener.

Died in 1907: American educator Cary Agassiz; French chemist Marcellin Berthelot, the first person to produce synthetic organic compounds; American actor Richard Mansfield.



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