

OUR CENTURY

1995

AT A GLANCE

City parties to welcome rock hall of fame

What a party! It lasted four days and featured the greatest rock 'n' roll artists in the world. Clevelanders danced in the street, on the lakefront and in the brand-new Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum.

After seven years of doubts and battles with a New York board, the \$84 million museum opened Labor Day weekend in I.M. Pei's glass pyramid on the lakefront. It was all there — Elvis' jumpsuit, Wilson Pickett's guitar, Alice Cooper's guillotine, Keith Moon's report card and — hanging from the ceiling of the lobby — four East German Trabant cars from U2's "Zoo TV" tour.

Twenty thousand people watched a parade whose floats included an iron butterfly, a Janis Joplin look-alike in a Mercedes Benz and stones rolling along the street.

Bruce Springsteen and Chuck Berry led off a nationally televised concert that included Johnny Cash, Aretha Franklin, Jackson Browne, Little Richard, Melissa Etheridge and Bon Jovi.

Critics raved about the museum. Said the New York Times: "Like the dynamic building, the interactive exhibits inside pull off the difficult stunt of stating the rebellious cultural and historical import of rock and roll without either stripping the music of its fun or striking the pompous tones of academic pop culture criticism."

Three successive school superintendents had been "bought out" — paid to go away. This time, the superintendent was fed up. Sammie Campbell Parrish resigned abruptly.

She had been miffed since Mayor Michael White held a meeting with "his" school board — he had campaigned for all seven members — without inviting her. In February, she dropped a hint that she might not be around to campaign for a levy in March. The following day, she made her resignation official.

That was the last straw, as far as U.S. District Judge Robert Krupansky was concerned. He had been named to take over the 22-year desegregation case after the death of Judge Frank Battisti in 1994. He ordered the state to take over the school system. The levy was yanked from the ballot.

Richard Boyd, director of the prestigious Martha Holden Jennings Foundation and a former Mississippi state and Lakewood superintendent, was named superintendent. The elected board was relegated to figurehead status. White fumed.

Boyd, his staff and consultants put together a "Blueprint for Change." It would give principals and parents more say in running the schools and increase the power of the superintendent at the expense of the board.

Parents and the NAACP complained that they hadn't been consulted. The NAACP said it would oppose a levy proposed for March 1996.

White's reaction? "There will never be another decent board elected in this town for the next two decades, thanks to Judge Krupansky," he said, "because no decent person, no well-meaning person is ever going to take the chance of being maligned and mistreated the way he had done to this board."

In the face of the protests, Boyd and state officials withdrew the levy and sought to reshape their "Blueprint for Change."

For the first 35 years, Samuel Reese Sheppard avoided talking and even thinking about the 1954 murder of his mother and the conviction — followed 12 years later by the acquittal — of his father. But now he was determined to prove Dr. Sam Sheppard innocent.

He had a suspect — Richard Eberling, a petty thief who had washed windows in the family's home and who was in prison for the 1984 murder of Ethel Durkin of Lakewood. In 1995, Samuel Reese Sheppard and investigator Cynthia Cooper published "Mockery of Justice," detailing a circumstantial case against Eberling.

In October, Alan Davis, the administrator of Sam Sheppard's estate, sued to win a declaration that the osteopath was legally innocent — not just not guilty beyond a reasonable doubt, as the second jury had ruled. A victory would enable the family to sue the state for millions of dollars for wrongful imprisonment.

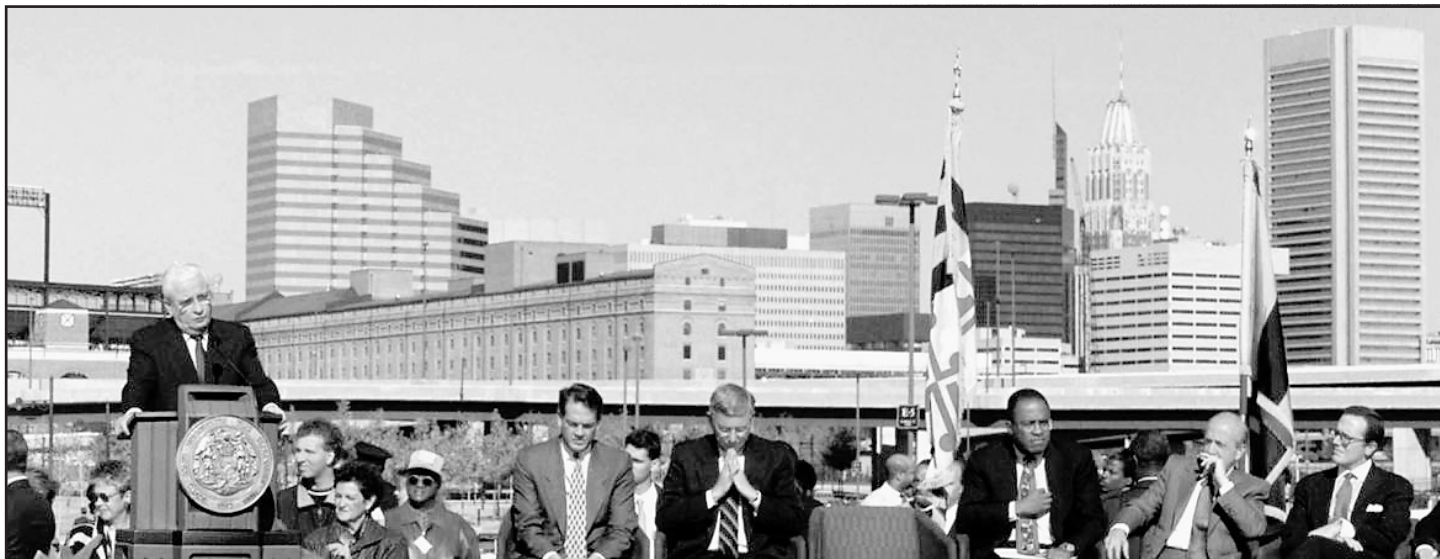
During the bull market in bonds in the early 1990s, the Cuyahoga County treasurer's office's Secured Assets Fund Earnings paid high returns to the county and to 70 local governments. But when the market turned down, the fund made risky trades in an effort to keep up those returns.

They didn't pan out, and county commissioners, who had guaranteed the fund's safety, sold its holdings at the bottom of the market. The market then regained its losses, but the county was out \$114 million.

Timothy Simmerly, the fund's chief investment officer, was convicted of dereliction of duty and given probation. County Treasurer Frank Gaul was similarly convicted and sentenced to 90 days in jail, but the verdict was overturned on appeal.

The Cavaliers drew a franchise-record 833,000 fans at their new home in Gund Arena. They tied their record 11 straight wins in December to move into first place in the Central Division. Mark Price hit a record seven 3-pointers Dec. 26.

Price broke his wrist in January, but rookie Tyrell Brandon stepped in at point guard — until he broke his leg. The team finished 43-39 despite losing 257 player games to injuries, but was eliminated three games to one by the New York Knicks in the first round of the playoffs.



PLAIN DEALER FILE PHOTOS

In Baltimore, Art Modell announces the Browns' move.

The glow, then the blow

By Fred McGunagle

The little pop-up settled into Jim Thome's glove for the final out and the Jacobs Field fans went — well, crazier. They'd been going crazy since the start of the inning, standing and screaming after each pitch by Jose Mesa.

Now they almost drowned out the fireworks as they cheered the Indians, who came out of their dugout to cheer back at them. Then the players jogged to the bleachers carrying a flag. Eddie Murray was given the honor of raising the banner that read, "Central Division Champions."

"I cried watching it go up," catcher Sandy Alomar Jr. said later. "I never saw the one in 1954. I wasn't born yet."

Forty-one years of frustration dropped away. With their 3-2 win over Baltimore, the Indians had clinched a playoff spot on Sept. 8, with 21 games still to play.

In spring training, it had looked as though the 1995 season would start with replacement players. An injunction ended the long stalemate between the owners and the players association, and the season got off to a late start. The Indians finished with 100 wins in only 144 games. Their 30-game margin over Kansas City was the largest in baseball's modern era.

The 100th win came in Seattle on the last night of the season. In Cleveland, fans marched down E. 9th St. and partied in the Flats, where 3,500 had watched on an outdoor screen at Nautica. "We did it! We did it!" shouted the exultant crowd at Pete and Dewey's.

The cheers continued in the playoffs as the Indians beat Boston 3-2 on Tony Pena's 11th-inning home run and 4-0 as Orel Hershiser shut out the Red Sox. They swept the series with an 8-2 win in Boston.

Seattle won two of the first three games in the league championship series. But the Tribe won three in a row as Hershiser won his second game of the series and Kenny Lofton ran wild on the bases. Then Dennis Martinez outpitched Mariner ace Randy Johnson, 4-0, for the win that put the Indians in the World Series for the first time since 1954. A mob of 30,000 turned out on Public Square to cheer the Indians as they headed to Atlanta.

Pitchers Greg Maddux and Tom Glavine were too much for the Tribe in the two games in Atlanta. In friendly Jacobs Field, the Indians won, 7-6 in 11 innings. They lost, 5-2,

to Steve Avery, but stayed alive in Game 5 with a 5-4 win as Albert Belle and Jim Thome homered. Belle had set a new Indians record with 50 homers in the regular season.

The Series went back to Atlanta, where Glavine and Martinez battled evenly in Game 6. Then Atlanta's David Justice hit a home run off reliever Jim Poole for the only run of the game.

The glorious season of 1995 was over. The Indians had lost the World Series, but they were winners in the eyes of Cleveland. Fifty thousand jammed Euclid Ave. for a tickertape parade. At Public Square, Gov. George Voinovich greeted the team. "Today, Cleveland is the greatest

baseball town in the world!" he said.

The euphoria would last only four days. Clevelanders didn't yet know what had happened Oct. 27 — a day before the last World Series game and 11 days before Cuyahoga County voters were to decide on renovating the Stadium for the Browns.

On that morning, Art Modell flew to Baltimore on the plane of Alfred

Lerner, his friend and minority Browns owner. Maryland Gov. Parris Glendening boarded the plane and watched as Modell signed a contract. It said the Browns would play in Baltimore in 1996.

On Monday, Nov. 5 — the day before the stadium vote — Clevelanders paused at lunch to watch a televised press conference from Baltimore. On a windy outdoor stage, with Lerner nearby, Glendening introduced Modell as owner of the "Baltimore Browns." About 200 Baltimore fans chanted "Art! Art!"

In 1993, Modell had pledged that the Browns would play in Cleveland at least through the end of their Stadium lease in 1998. "A deal's a deal," he said then.

But now Maryland had promised him a new \$200 million stadium with no rent and 100 percent of parking and concession revenue. It was a deal, Modell said, "far beyond the capacity" of Cleveland to match.

Mayor Michael White and Voinovich charged that the Monday announcement was intended to sabotage the bond issue on Tuesday's ballot. Voters passed it anyway, by a 3-1 ratio.

White announced, "We will fight." He flew to New York to urge National Football League Commissioner Paul Tagliabue to block the move. He met with county commissioners, subur-

City.

Jan. 17: More than 4,000 people die when an earthquake strikes Kobe, Japan.

April 2: Major league baseball players end a 234-day strike.

April 20: One hundred sixty-seven people die when a bomb rips through the federal building in Oklahoma

Sept. 19: The Washington Post publishes the Unabomber's manifesto.

Oct. 3: A jury deliberates less than four hours before acquitting O.J. Simpson in the 1994 murder of his ex-wife, Nicole, and her friend Ronald Goldman.



In Cleveland, fans celebrate the end of the Indians' title drought.

ban mayors and business leaders to plan a lawsuit. He urged 120 Browns fan clubs around the nation to join Clevelanders in jamming the NFL's fax machines with protests.

He flew to Texas, where NFL owners were meeting, to lobby them to reject the move. He convoked a conference of officials from 11 cities determined not to be held hostage by sports teams.

And he put together a stadium renovation plan that went beyond the \$175 million from the bond issue. The Browns would not have to pay rent and would get millions from the sale of club seats and naming rights. When he took it to Browns offices in Berea, he was not allowed in, so he handed it to a guard.

Sports Illustrated sold 150,000 Cleveland copies of an issue with a cover of Modell sucker-punching Big Dawg. Sportswriters around the country pilloried Modell. "He is a father who deserted his family for money," said the Los Angeles Daily News. The St. Louis Post-Dispatch said: "It stinks. It's shameful to take the Browns from Cleveland, the best football city in America."

A preliminary court ruling suggested the Browns might have to play the remaining two seasons of their lease in an empty stadium. A group of season ticket-holders convinced a

judge that the Browns owed them damages.

Facing a national uproar, Tagliabue declared, "I think our challenge as a league is to keep a team in Cleveland and get a team in Baltimore." He said Cleveland probably would get an existing team from some other city. Fans feared it would be the hapless Tampa Bay Buccaneers and their unpopular owner. White demanded that Modell leave behind "our name and our colors."

Amid the off-field battles, the Browns played their final Stadium game on Dec. 17. A crowd of 55,000 cheered as they beat Cincinnati, 26-10 — their first victory after six straight losses. The crowd counted off the final seconds, then gave a cheer for 50 years of memories.

Some fans took home more than memories. They ripped out thousands of seats and trashed restrooms. The city said it would send the bill to the company that leased the facility — Modell's Stadium Corp.

McGunagle is a Cleveland freelance writer.

E-mail: fmcgoo@prodigy.com

Photo researcher:
David G. Jardy
Plain Dealer Library

LOOKING AT A YEAR

Nov. 4: Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is assassinated while leaving a peace rally in Tel Aviv.

Nov. 20: During an interview on British television, Princess Diana attacks the monarchy and predicts she will never be queen.

Deaths: Family matriarch Rose Kennedy, sports broadcaster Howard Cosell, film star Lana Turner, singer Dean Martin, journalist James Reston, former British Prime Minister Harold Wilson, former Sen. J. William Fulbright.