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New York - The Empire State



Capital City:

Albany

Nickname:

Empire State / Excelsior State

Motto:

Excelsior (Ever upward)

Statehood:

July 26, 1788 (11th)

Origin of State's Name:

Named after England's Duke of York.

Largest Cities:

New York, Buffalo, Rochester, Yonkers, Syracuse

Border States:

Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Vermont

Land Area:

47,224 sq.mi., 30th largest

State Bird:

Bluebird

State Flower:

Rose (rosa)

State Tree:

Sugar Maple (acer saccharum)

State Song:

I Love New York

The Dutch West India Company established the first settlement at Fort Orange near present day Albany in 1624 and another in New Amsterdam on the site of present day Manhattan a year later. After the English took over in the 1660s, the colony was renamed New York, after the Duke of York. One of the original 13 states to join the Union (it entered in 1788), New York is known as the "Empire State." The state includes everything from skyscrapers in Manhattan to rivers, mountains, and lakes in upstate New York. Today, New York has the third largest population (after California and Texas), and remains the financial center of the country. The state flower is the rose, and the capital is Albany.

Rochester, New York's Lilac Festival



The Netherlands is known for its tulips. Rochester, New York, is known for another type of flower - the lilac.

There are more than 500 varieties of lilacs and more than 1,200 lilac bushes at Highland Park. In 1888, the world's largest nursery, Ellwanger & Barry, owned by George Ellwanger and Patrick Barry, gave Highland Park to the people of Rochester. It was beautifully landscaped with trees and shrubs and was the first municipal arboretum in the United States. An arboretum is a place where trees, shrubs, and plants are specially grown and cultivated. The park's collection of lilacs originally started with 20 varieties in 1892. Since 1898, Rochester has held a Lilac Festival every May. The first event attracted 3,000 visitors; now more than 500,000 people come to see the lilacs and other flowering trees and shrubs.

Lilacs are shrubs and small trees that flower in the spring and early summer. They have large oval clusters of small blossoms and deep green leaves. The blossoms are fragrant and can be lavender, deep purple, white, or pink. Lilacs are originally from Eastern Europe and Asia and were brought to North America by early European settlers. Some of the first lilacs planted at Highland Park are descendants of the flowers from the Balkan Mountains in Eastern Europe.

Little Falls Canal Celebration



The kids in the photo are competing in their town's Youth Fishing Derby to see who can catch the most fish. The event is part of the Little Falls, New York, Canal Celebration -- an annual festival that celebrates the importance of the Erie Canal to the city.

In the early 1800s, there were few roads, so the shipping of goods over land was expensive. The construction of the Erie Canal in the 1820s helped solve this problem for travel through New York state. A canal is a man-made waterway through which boats can navigate. The Erie Canal connected Buffalo on the eastern shore of Lake Erie to Albany on the upper Hudson River, which ran south to New York City. The canal allowed people and supplies to move between New York City and Buffalo and on to the upper Midwest territories. What used to cost \$100 to ship by land now cost only \$10 by canal. A journey that used to take a few weeks could now be made in less than seven days. The Erie Canal was an important force in the economic development of the area.

Walking Onto Ellis Island, New York



Do you know what important activity once took place at Ellis Island?

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, many immigrants came to New York through an immigration station called Ellis Island, near the southern tip of New York City's Manhattan Island. Immigrants, people who leave their home country to live permanently in a new one, have made up a large part of the population of New York City for several hundred years. Irish, Italian, Jewish, Puerto Rican, and other people have influenced the cultural makeup of this huge city.

Between 1892 and 1954, more than 12 million immigrants passed through Ellis Island in order to start a new life in the United States. They came to escape religious persecution, political oppression, and poverty in their home countries. Getting through Ellis Island, however, was often

a long and grueling process. Newly arrived immigrants had to wait in line for many hours, endure medical examinations, and answer questions from the immigration inspectors.

New York State Fair



This state fair is the largest and most historic exposition of its kind in the Northeastern United States. With 107 structures and 21 permanent buildings on 375 acres of land adjacent to interstate highways, it is the largest and most accessible show in the state.

Each year, during twelve days, ending on Labor Day, nearly one million people flock to the fair. During the rest of the year, the facility hosts another million people for a variety of shows, such as concerts, expositions and conventions.

In 1841 the New York State legislature appropriated \$8,000 for the "promotion of agriculture and household manufacturers in the state" through an annual fair, the first of its kind in the young nation. The Village of Syracuse, which was the center of farming in New York and well located on the Erie Canal and railroad lines, was selected for the two-day event. Despite rainy weather, the first fair attracted between 10,000 and 15,000 people, who were mostly farmers. The fair moved to different locales until Syracuse became its permanent home in 1890. Over the years, more entertainment activities have been added, such as auto racing and concerts that fill the 16,000-seat trackside grandstand.

The New York Fair continues to focus on the people and products of New York, with its main priority to serve the agricultural community. In 1999, fair organizers received more than 32,000 entries for competitions in categories ranging from cows, pigs, horses, sheep, llama, to photos, painting, flower arrangements, to apples pies, pumpkins, fruits and wines.

Documentation includes a text report, a video diskette holding photographs, color slides, and eight archival reproductions.

Buffalo St. Patrick's Day Parade



Each year, thousands of people flock to downtown Buffalo to enjoy the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. The city decorates every light pole along the Delaware Avenue parade route with the tri-color flag of Ireland. Businesses along the parade route sprinkle shamrocks on their windows, and stretch banners wishing a "Happy Saint Patrick's Day."

First held on March 17, 1913, when a group of Buffalo's Irish immigrants decided to manifest their allegiance to both their native and their adopted countries, the Buffalo St. Patrick's Day Parade pays tribute to the patron saint of Ireland. First Parade Marshal Mike Quinn led a group of 5,000 marchers from the Elk Street Market Terminal to Euclid Place and back in sub-zero temperatures. After a hiatus from 1917 - 1935, the parade has been held every year since 1935, with the exception of World War II years (1942-45). The Parade was postponed for a week only once, in 1997, when more than 18 inches of snow fell and wind chills of 30 below threatened frostbite. Today four generations have worn the top hat, worn cutaways, and carried the blackthorn that belonged to Mike Quinn. Today the parade is always held the Sunday closest to St. Patrick's Day (March 17).

The United Irish-American Association works with the city of Buffalo each year to organize the parade, and each year the UIAA selects a grand marshal from among its members. The parade route was moved from Main Street to Delaware Avenue in 1981 to allow for more spectators.

Summer at Jones Beach



Called the crown jewel of the New York State Park system, Jones Beach State Park is an internationally renowned bathing facility, drawing seven million visitors a year. The park derives its name from Major Thomas Jones who acquired 6,000 acres of land in Massapequa around 1700. Jones established a whaling station on the outer beach near the current side of the park. Following his death, the area became known as Jones Beach. In 1925, Robert Moses, the visionary designer of the Long Island State Park system expressed interest in making Jones Beach into a park. In 1926, the first engineering survey stake was driven in the sands of Jones Beach at the precise spot where the water tower now stands. After three years of work, the new park was inaugurated at an opening ceremony attended by then Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt, former Governor Alfred E. Smith, and Commission President Robert Moses.

In the park's first full year of operation in 1930, one-and-one-half million people visited. The park's nautical theme was reflected in the staff's maritime-style uniforms; water fountains enclosed in various nautical instruments, and cigarette receptacles designed as life preservers. Among the park's highlights was its massive tower, modeled after the campanile in St. Mark's Square in Venice, which contained 315,000 gallons of water. The park's first bathhouse had 10,450 lockers, a cafeteria, a beach shop, and sun deck. In 1931 the west bathhouse, which resembled a Moorish castle and contained two heated saltwater pools, opened. In 1967, the east bathhouse was expanded and two freshwater pools were added inside.

Jones Point has evolved to meet the needs and desires of each generation of park goers. Over the years, park attractions have included a sports stadium, miniature golf course, theater, pony track, Indian Village, and band shell for evening concerts and dances. In 2000, a nature center was added to the park.

Iroquois Festival



This annual celebration of the history and culture of the Iroquois Nation in Howes Cave, New York, has been held since 1982, one year after the Iroquois Indian Museum in Howes Cave was founded. The museum's mission is to educate the public about the Iroquois, by collecting, exhibiting, and interpreting their arts.

It also sponsors the festival, held over Labor Day weekend, and festival admission includes admission to the museum, which contains exhibits of archeology, history, and contemporary Iroquois arts. Headlining the 1999 festival was the national dance troupe, Sky Dancers, led by Jim Sky of the Onondaga Nation. Their social dances have been passed down through generations, and remain among the most unchanged Native American traditions.

The festival featured an arts market of Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) artists and crafters, who set up tents from which they showed and sold work, which included antler carving, basketry, beadwork, ceramics, feather work, leatherwork, textiles, silverwork, and woodworking. Many children's activities, such as face painting, cornhusk doll making, T-shirt painting, and bead working, were offered at the craft tent. A scavenger hunt in the artists' tents encouraged visitors to talk with the many Iroquois people in attendance. Other festival activities included story telling, puppet shows, nature tours, an archeology tent, and lacrosse demonstrations. Native foods featured corn soup, venison, a strawberry drink, and fry bread.

Documentation includes text, a 20-minute videotape, 20 slides, a history of the museum, promotional materials, and an audio tape of an interview with festival participants.

New York Relocation

If you are considering relocating to New York, this New York Relocation Guide will give you essential information on Schools, Voting, Drivers License, real estate, etc.

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