

1940 in the United States

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Events from the year **1940 in the United States**.

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Incumbents

Federal Government

- President: Franklin D. Roosevelt (D-New York)
- Vice President: John Nance Garner (D-Texas)
- Chief Justice: Charles Evans Hughes (New York)
- Speaker of the House of Representatives: William B. Bankhead (D-Alabama) (until September 15), Sam Rayburn (D-Texas) (starting September 16)
- Senate Majority Leader: Alben W. Barkley (D-Kentucky)
- Congress: 76th

Governors and Lieutenant Governors

Governors

- Governor of Alabama: Frank M. Dixon (Democratic)
- Governor of Arizona: Robert Taylor Jones (Democratic)
- Governor of Arkansas: Carl Edward Bailey (Democratic)
- Governor of California: Culbert Olson (Democratic)
- Governor of Colorado: Ralph Lawrence Carr (Republican)
- Governor of Connecticut: Raymond E. Baldwin (Republican)
- Governor of Delaware: Richard C. McMullen (Democratic)
- Governor of Florida: Fred P. Cone (Democratic)
- Governor of Georgia: Eurith D. Rivers (Democratic)
- Governor of Idaho: C. A. Bottolfsen (Republican)
- Governor of Illinois: Henry Horner (Democratic) (until October 6), John H. Stelle (Democratic) (starting October 6)
- Governor of Indiana: M. Clifford Townsend (Democratic)
- Governor of Iowa: George A. Wilson (Republican)
- Governor of Kansas: Payne Ratner (Republican)
- Governor of Kentucky: Keen Johnson (Democratic)
- Governor of Louisiana: Earl K. Long (Democratic) (until May 14), Sam H. Jones (Democratic) (starting May 14)
- Governor of Maine: Lewis O. Barrows (Republican)
- Governor of Maryland: Herbert R. O'Connor (Democratic)
- Governor of Massachusetts: Leverett Saltonstall (Republican)
- Governor of Michigan: Luren Dickinson (Republican)
- Governor of Minnesota: Harold E. Stassen (Republican)
- Governor of Mississippi: Hugh L. White (Democratic) (until January 16), Paul B. Johnson, Sr. (Democratic) (starting January 16)
- Governor of Missouri: Lloyd C. Stark (Democratic)
- Governor of Montana: Roy E. Ayers (Democratic)
- Governor of Nebraska: Robert Leroy Cochran (Democratic)
- Governor of Nevada: Edward P. Carville (Democratic)
- Governor of New Hampshire: Francis P. Murphy (Republican)
- Governor of New Jersey: A. Harry Moore (Democratic)
- Governor of New Mexico: John E. Miles (Democratic)
- Governor of New York: Herbert H. Lehman (Democratic)
- Governor of North Carolina: Clyde R. Hoey (Democratic)
- Governor of North Dakota: John Moses (Democratic)
- Governor of Ohio: John W. Bricker (Republican)
- Governor of Oklahoma: Leon C. Phillips (Democratic)
- Governor of Oregon: Charles A. Sprague (Republican)
- Governor of Pennsylvania: Arthur James (Republican)
- Governor of Rhode Island: William Henry Vanderbilt III (Republican)
- Governor of South Carolina: Burnet R. Maybank (Democratic)
- Governor of South Dakota: Harlan J. Bushfield (Republican)
- Governor of Tennessee: Prentice Cooper (Democratic)
- Governor of Texas: W. Lee O'Daniel (Democratic)
- Governor of Utah: Henry H. Blood (Democratic)
- Governor of Vermont: George David Aiken (Republican)
- Governor of Virginia: James H. Price (Democratic)
- Governor of Washington: Clarence D. Martin (Democratic)
- Governor of West Virginia: Homer A. Holt (Democratic)
- Governor of Wisconsin: Julius P. Heil (Republican)
- Governor of Wyoming: Nels H. Smith (Republican)

Lieutenant Governors

- Lieutenant Governor of Alabama: Albert A. Carmichael (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Arkansas: Robert L. Bailey (political party unknown)
- Lieutenant Governor of California: Ellis E. Patterson (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Colorado: John Charles Vivian (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Connecticut: James L. McConaughy (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Delaware: Edward W. Cooch (Democratic)

- Lieutenant Governor of Idaho: Donald S. Whitehead (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Illinois: John H. Stelle (Democratic) (until October 6), vacant (starting October 6)
- Lieutenant Governor of Indiana: Henry F. Schricker (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Iowa: Bourke B. Hickenlooper (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Kansas: Carl E. Friend (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Kentucky: Rodes K. Myers (political party unknown)
- Lieutenant Governor of Louisiana: Coleman Lindsey (Democratic) (until month and day unknown), Marc M. Mouton (Democratic) (starting month and day unknown)
- Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts: Horace T. Cahill (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Michigan: vacant (until month and day unknown), Matilda Dodge Wilson (Republican) (starting month and day unknown)
- Lieutenant Governor of Minnesota: C. Elmer Anderson (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Mississippi: Jacob Buehler Snider (Democratic) (until month and day unknown), Dennis Murphree (Democratic) (starting month and day unknown)
- Lieutenant Governor of Missouri: Frank Gaines Harris (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Montana: Hugh R. Adair (political party unknown)
- Lieutenant Governor of Nebraska: William E. Johnson (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Nevada: Maurice J. Sullivan (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of New Mexico: James Murray, Sr. (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of New York: Charles Poletti (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of North Carolina: Wilkins P. Horton (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of North Dakota: Jack A. Patterson (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Ohio: Paul M. Herbert (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Oklahoma: James E. Berry (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Pennsylvania: Samuel S. Lewis (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Rhode Island: James O. McManus (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of South Carolina: Joseph Emile Harley (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of South Dakota: Donald McMurchie (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Tennessee: Blan R. Maxwell (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Texas: Coke Robert Stevenson (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Vermont: William H. Wills (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Virginia: Saxon W. Holt (Democratic) (until March 31), vacant (starting March 31)
- Lieutenant Governor of Washington: Victor A. Meyers (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Wisconsin: Walter S. Goodland (Republican)

Events

January–March

- February 7 – RKO release Walt Disney's second full-length animated film, *Pinocchio*.
- February 20 – Tom and Jerry make their debut in *Puss Gets the Boot*.
- February 27 – Martin Kamen and Sam Ruben discover carbon-14.
- March – *Truth or Consequences* debuts on NBC Radio.
- March 2 – Cartoon character Elmer Fudd makes his debut in the animated short *Elmer's Candid Camera*.

April–June

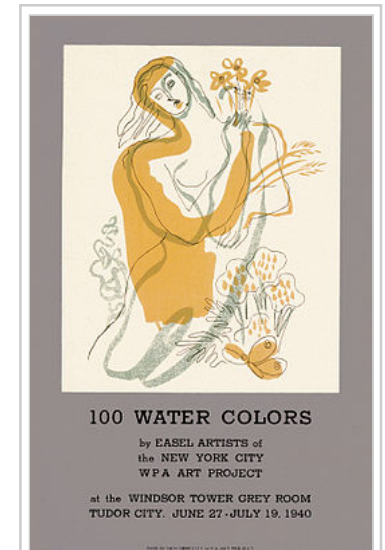
- April – Dick Grayson (AKA as Robin, the Boy Wonder) first appears with Batman.
- April 1 – April Fools' Day is also the census date for the 16th U.S. Census.
- April 7 – Booker T. Washington becomes the first African American to be depicted on a United States postage stamp.
- April 12 – Opening day at Jamaica Racetrack features the use of pari-mutuel betting equipment, a departure from bookmaking heretofore used exclusively throughout New York state. Other NY tracks follow suit later in 1940.
- April 21 – *Take It or Leave It* makes its debut on CBS Radio, with Bob Hawk as host.
- April 23 – A fire at the Rhythm Night Club in Natchez, Mississippi kills 198.
- May 15
 - The very first McDonald's restaurant opens in San Bernardino, California.
 - Women's stockings made of nylon are first placed on sale across the U.S. Almost five million pairs are bought on this day.^[1]
- May 16 – U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, addressing a joint session of Congress, asks for an extraordinary credit of approximately \$900 million to finance construction of at least 50,000 airplanes per year.
- May 29 – The Vought XF4U-1, prototype of the F4U Corsair U.S. fighter later used in WWII, makes its first flight.
- June 10 – U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt denounces Italy's actions with his "Stab in the Back" (ftp://webstor.age2.mcpa.virginia.edu/library/nara/fdr/audiovisual/speeches/fdr_1940_0610.mp3) speech during the graduation ceremonies of the University of Virginia.
- June 14 – U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs the Naval Expansion Act into law, which aims to increase the United States Navy's tonnage by 11%.
- June 16 – The Sturgis Motorcycle Rally is held for the first time in Sturgis, South Dakota.
- June 24 – U.S. politics: The Republican Party begins its national convention in Philadelphia and nominates Wendell Willkie as its candidate for president.

July–September

- July 1 – The doomed first Tacoma Narrows Bridge opens for business, built with an 8-foot (2.4 m) girder and 190 feet (58 m) above the water, as the third longest suspension bridge in the world.
- July 15 – U.S. politics: The Democratic Party begins its national convention in Chicago, and nominates Franklin D. Roosevelt for an unprecedented third term as president.
- July 20 – The Arroyo Seco Parkway, one of the first freeways built in the U.S., opens to traffic, connecting downtown Los Angeles with Pasadena, California.
- July 27 – Bugs Bunny makes his debut in the Oscar-nominated cartoon short, *A Wild Hare*.
- August 4 – Gen. John J. Pershing, in a nationwide radio broadcast, urges all-out aid to Britain in order to defend the Americas, while Charles Lindbergh speaks to an isolationist rally at Soldier Field in Chicago.



May 15: The first McDonald's restaurant (*photographed in 2005*).

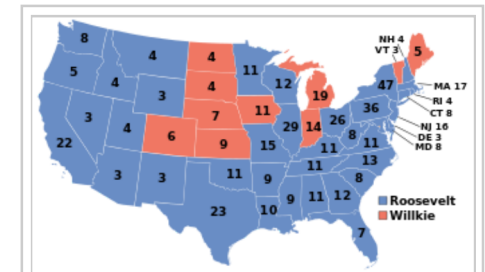


June 27: "100 Water Colors" show by Federal Arts Project opens in New York City

- September – The U.S. Army 45th Infantry Division (previously a National Guard Division in Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and Oklahoma), is activated and ordered into federal service for 1 year, to engage in a training program in Ft. Sill and Louisiana, prior to serving in World War II.
- September 2 – WWII: An agreement between America and Great Britain is announced to the effect that 50 U.S. destroyers needed for escort work will be transferred to Great Britain. In return, America gains 99-year leases on British bases in the North Atlantic, West Indies and Bermuda.
- September 12 – The Hercules Munitions Plant in Succasunna-Kenvil, New Jersey explodes, killing 55 people.
- September 16 – WWII: The Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 is signed into law by Franklin D. Roosevelt, creating the first peacetime draft in U.S. history.
- September 26 – WWII: The United States imposes a total embargo on all scrap metal shipments to Japan.

October–December

- October 1 – The first section of the Pennsylvania Turnpike, the country's first long-distance controlled-access highway, is opened between Irwin and Carlisle.
- October 16 – The draft registration of approximately 16 million men begins in the United States.
- October 29 – The Selective Service System lottery is held in Washington, D.C..
- November 5 – U.S. presidential election, 1940: Democrat incumbent Franklin D. Roosevelt defeats Republican challenger Wendell Willkie and becomes the nation's first and only third-term president.
- November 7 – In Tacoma, Washington, the Tacoma Narrows Bridge (nicknamed the "Galloping Gertie") collapses in a 42-mile-per-hour (68 km/h) wind storm, causing the center span of the bridge to sway. When it collapses, a 600-foot-long (180 m) design of the center span falls 190 feet above the water, killing Tubby, a black male cocker spaniel dog.
- November 11 – Armistice Day Blizzard: An unexpected blizzard kills 144 in U.S. Midwest.
- November 12 – Case of *Hansberry v. Lee*, 311 U.S. 32 (<https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/311/32/>) (1940), decided, allowing a racially restrictive covenant to be lifted.
- November 13 – Walt Disney's *Fantasia* is released. It is the first box office failure for Disney, though it eventually recoups its cost years later, and becomes one of the most highly regarded of Disney's films.
- November 16 – An unexploded pipe bomb is found in the Consolidated Edison office building (only years later is the culprit, George Metesky, apprehended).
- December 8 – The Chicago Bears, in what will become the most one-sided victory in National Football League history, defeat the Washington Redskins 73–0 in the 1940 NFL Championship Game.
- December 17 – President Franklin D. Roosevelt, at his regular press conference, first sets forth the outline of his plan to send aid to Great Britain that will become known as Lend-Lease.
- December 29 – Franklin D. Roosevelt, in a fireside chat to the nation, declares that the United States must become "the great arsenal of democracy."
- December 30 – California's first modern freeway, the future State Route 110, opens to traffic in Pasadena, California, as the Arroyo Seco Parkway (now the Pasadena Freeway).



November 5: FDR becomes the first and only President elected to a third term.

Births

January

- January 2 – Jim Bakker, Televangelist and former husband of Tammy Faye
- January 6 – Penny Lernoux, Journalist and author (d. 1989)
- January 14 – Julian Bond, Civil rights activist (d. 2015)
- January 20 – Carol Heiss, Figure skater
- January 21 – Jack Nicklaus, Golfer
- January 27 – James Cromwell, Actor
- January 29 – Katharine Ross, Actress

February

- February 3 – Fran Tarkenton, Football player
- February 4 – George A. Romero, Film writer and director
- February 6 – Tom Brokaw, Television news reporter
- February 8
 - Ted Koppel, Journalist
 - Joe South, Singer and songwriter
 - Richard Lynch, Actor
 - Donald W. Stewart, United States Senator from Alabama from 1978 till 1981.
- February 12 – Hank Brown, United States Senator from Colorado from 1991 till 1997.
- February 17 – Gene Pitney, Singer (d. 2006)
- February 19 – Smokey Robinson, Musician
- February 22 – Billy Name, Photographer and Warhol archivist
- February 23 – Peter Fonda, Actor
- February 24 – Pete Duel, Actor (d. 1971)
- February 25 – Ron Santo, Baseball player (d. 2010)
- February 28 – Mario Andretti, Race car driver

March

- March 6 – Willie Stargell, African-American baseball player (d. 2001)
- March 10
 - Dean Torrence, singer (Jan and Dean)
 - Chuck Norris, actor and martial artist
- March 12 – Al Jarreau, jazz singer (d. 2017)

- March 13 – Candi Staton, singer
- March 15 – Phil Lesh, musician (Grateful Dead)
- March 17 – Mark White, 43rd Governor of Texas from 1983 to 1987
- March 20 – Mary Ellen Mark, photographer (d. 2015)
- March 21 – Solomon Burke, singer-songwriter (d. 2010)
- March 25 – Anita Bryant, entertainer
- March 26
 - James Caan, actor
 - Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives
- March 27 – Cale Yarborough, race car driver
- March 29 – Ray Davis, musician (P-Funk) (d. 2005)
- March 31 – Patrick Leahy, U.S. Senator from Vermont from 1975

April

May

May 10 - Wayne A. Downing, American general (d. 2007)

June

- June 7 – Evi Nemeth, author and engineer (died 2013)
- June 8
 - Arthur Elgort, photographer
 - Jim Wickwire, lawyer and mountaineer
- June 23 – Wilma Rudolph, Track & Field Athlete and 3 Time Olympic Winner (died 1994)

July

- July 3 – Lamar Alexander, United States Senator from Tennessee from 2003
- July 13 – Paul Prudhomme, Louisiana Creole cuisine chef (d. 2015)
- July 29 – Betty Harris (scientist), Inventor

August

- August 27 – Fernest Arceneaux, Zydeco accordionist (d. 2008)

- August 28 – William Cohen, United States Senator from Maine from 1979 to 1997
- August 31 – Wilton Felder, African American jazz saxophonist (d. 2015)

November

- November 11 – Barbara Boxer, United States Senator from California from 1993 till 2017

September

October

- October 6 – Wyche Fowler, United States Senator from Georgia from 1987 till 1993.
- October 9 – Gordon J. Humphrey, United States Senator from New Hampshire from 1979 till 1990.
- October 29 – Connie Mack III, United States Senator from Florida from 1989 till 2001.

December

- December 19 - Phil Ochs – American protest singer and songwriter (died 1976)
- December 21
 - Kelly Cherry, poet and author
 - Frank Zappa musician, songwriter, composer, guitarist, record producer, actor and filmmaker (died 1993)

Deaths

- January 4 – Flora Finch, silent film actress and comedian (born 1869 in the United Kingdom)
- February 1 – Philip Francis Nowlan, science fiction writer, creator of Buck Rogers (born 1888)
- February 4 – Samuel M. Vauclain, steam locomotive engineer (born 1856)
- February 9 – William Edward Dodd, diplomat and historian (born 1869)
- March 11 – John Monk Saunders, screenwriter (born 1897)
- July 1 – Ben Turpin, comic silent film actor (born 1869)
- July 15 – Robert Wadlow, tallest man ever (born 1918)
- July 30 – Spencer S. Wood, U.S. Navy rear admiral (born 1861)
- September 1 – Lillian Wald, nurse and humanitarian (born 1867)
- December 21 – F. Scott Fitzgerald, fiction writer, author of the novel *The Great Gatsby* (born 1896)
- December 22 – Nathanael West, fiction writer (born 1903)
- December 23 – Eddie August Schneider, aviator (born 1911)
- December 25 – Agnes Ayres, silent film actress (born 1898)
- December 26 – Daniel Frohman, theater producer (born 1851)
- December 31 – John T. Thompson, U.S. Army officer, inventor of the Thompson submachine gun (born 1860)


See also

- List of American films of 1940

References

1. Trossarelli, L. (2010). "the history of nylon". Club Alpino Italiano, Centro Studi Materiali e Tecniche. Retrieved 2012-02-28.

External links

-  Media related to 1940 in the United States at Wikimedia Commons

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