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# Menasha's history

- 1831:** Menominee make the first of two treaties ceding their lands on the lower Fox River to the federal government.
- 1835:** The land now occupied by the city of Menasha is offered for sale at \$5 to \$10 an acre.
- 1848:** The Reeds and Dotys leave Neenah to create a rival settlement at Menasha. Gov. Doty is elected to Congress for the new state of Wisconsin. St. Patrick's Catholic Church is organized.
- 1849:** Curtis Reed is awarded the contract for building the government canal and lock.
- 1850:** Elisha Smith comes to town and opens a dry goods store, buying a pail factory in 1852.
- 1851:** Federal land offices transferred from Green Bay to Menasha, making it the center of all real estate transactions in the state.
- 1853:** Newly chartered as a village with Curtis Reed as president, Menasha builds a bridge across Little Lake Butte des Morts to attract Town of Menasha farmers to local stores and flour mills.
- 1855:** The Winnebago County Board creates two townships and divides Doty Island in half to end the squabbling between Neenah and Menasha.
- 1861:** Village board underwrites the cost of relocating the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad across the river and canal.
- 1869:** Menasha voters support consolidating with the village of Neenah under the name "Island City." Neenah voters reject the plan due to Menasha's outstanding railroad debt.
- 1872:** Federal government takes over ownership of the Fox-Wisconsin waterway.
- 1874:** Menasha incorporated as a city. Brewer O. J. Hall defeats Curtis Reed and becomes city's first mayor.
- 1876:** Menasha Paper Co. on Doty Island becomes city's first paper mill.
- 1886:** Mayor P.V. Lawson builds power canal on Doty Island, doubling the city's industrial sites. Construction of the first city hall completed.
- 1887:** Gilbert Paper Co. organized after a split with George Whiting. First National Bank of Menasha organized under the direction of Charles R. Smith.
- 1888:** Whiting Paper Mill explodes during fire, killing 16 spectators and firemen. John Strange pail and tub factory converted to paper mill. Polish Catholics split off from St. Mary's to form St. John's.
- 1895:** New high school constructed at a cost of \$40,000.
- 1897:** Elisha D. Smith donates Smith Park and funds to build and endow a public library. Two years later, after the library is opened, Smith dies.
- 1901:** George Banta Co. organized.
- 1904:** Voters authorize spending \$75,000 for a public water plant, followed in 1905 by \$149,000 to build a municipal utility plant.
- 1915:** Wisconsin Tissue Mills Inc. founded by Anton W. Asmuth
- 1924:** U.S. 41 routed through Menasha.
- 1929:** New Tayco Street bridge opened with bascule lift mandated by War Department and the new width of the highway.
- 1933:** First industrial union organized at Marathon Corp. following the National Labor Relations Act.
- 1935:** Menasha's sewer district consolidates with Neenah, building a joint treatment plant on Doty Island.
- 1936:** Old high school burns. New school completed in 1938 as a WPA project to serve as junior and senior high and vocational school.
- 1951:** Racine Street bridge constructed at a cost of \$500,000. Dave Koslo welcomed home with parade after pitching for the New York Giants in the World Series.
- 1960:** Gilbert Paper Co. sold to Meade Corp.
- 1964:** Menasha Corp. moves its headquarters to Neenah after a fire destroys the downtown Menasha mills.
- 1969:** New E. D. Smith Public library constructed on site of the old Menasha High School.
- 1973:** Voters reject consolidation with Neenah by referendum.
- 1976:** Koslo Park is dedicated in memory of Dave Koslo.
- 1977:** Wisconsin Tissue sold for \$19 million.
- 1983:** James River purchases American Can Co.
- 1985:** Former Twin City Savings & Loan purchased for city hall.
- 1987:** Marina opens downtown. Harbor Place, the first of three office projects follows soon after.
- 1988:** Political newcomer Joe Laux elected to his first term as mayor.
- 1989:** Tayco Street bridge span collapses.
- 1990:** City acquires land for Heckrodt Wetland Reserve.
- 1996:** Declining membership forces Germania Society to fold.
- 2001:** Gilbert Paper Co. closes.
- 2003:** Expanded library reopens.
- 2004:** Construction begins on Marina Place condominiums.