



1910  2010

Pacific National Exhibition

PNE Top 100 Facts

1. **1889:** Hastings Park is granted, in trust, by the Province of British Columbia to the City of Vancouver as a “park for recreation and enjoyment of the public.” It consisted of 160 acres (later expanded to 172 acres).
2. **1892:** The Hastings Racetrack opens at Hastings Park.
3. **1907:** A dozen businessmen get together and decide to develop a fair for the city. The Vancouver Exhibition Association (VEA) is born, later named Pacific National Exhibition (PNE). The fair was the second largest in North America, after the New York City Fair.
4. **1909:** The first organizing secretary, W.E. Flumerfelt, is hired to supervise the association’s affairs on a part-time basis. Six people applied for the \$100 a month job.
5. **1909:** Shortly after being hired, W.E. Flumerfelt fell ill and had to step down from his position. This led the VEA to hire its first full-time employee, James Roy, as manager of the exhibition. He was allocated a salary of \$250, which he had to raise himself.
6. **1910:** Canadian Prime Minister Sir Wilfred Laurier officially opens the first Fair held on the Hastings Park site. The Fair is dubbed “The Industrial Exhibition,” and is focused on promoting Vancouver’s industrial and resource potential. This is the first year an exhibition was held in Vancouver and there were a total of twelve other fairs held west of Hope, which were, with the exception of one, one-or-two day fairs.
7. **1910:** Admission to the Fair is 50 cents and approximately 68,000 people attend the event.
8. **1910:** The Industrial Building is built with great haste and little caution and deteriorated rapidly. It was finally demolished in 1936.
9. **1910:** The VEA and the Canadian Pacific Railway make arrangements to provide accessible transportation for exhibitors and their livestock to and from the Fair, by offering them a round-trip ticket for the cost of a one-way fare.
10. **1910:** The Grandstand is built. The Grandstand was one of the first structures erected at Hastings Park by the Vancouver Exhibition Association and was also where the VEA administration offices were housed.

11. **1913:** The Better Babies Contest launches, becoming one of the city's most popular wartime programs. For a 50¢ registration fee, a mother could bring her family to the exhibition grounds, have the children examined by a team of physicians and nurses, have them rated according to a standardized scoring system, and depending on the health of the baby, either receive medical advice and treatment or win prizes and recognition. This contest is credited with improving medical facilities for children in BC and the addition of 20 beds specifically for young people at Vancouver General Hospital.
12. **1913:** The Forestry Building is built - using all local wood. 18 years later, the building had to be torn down due to dry rot.
13. **1914:** Marking the start of the First World War, the Exhibition Association is faced with the decision of whether or not to cancel the exhibition. Thankfully, the Fair is not canceled, as the members believe that it will boost national morale and see it as essential to industrial development.
14. **1918:** The military and several reserve drill corps use Hastings Park as a drill-training site during the Fair - both as an attraction and as evidence of the VEA's contribution to the war effort during World War I.
15. **1920:** City Council decides to widen and pave Hastings Street, which allows the VEA to re-orient the grounds around the southwest entrance to Hastings Park.
16. **1920:** The Hastings Park Auto Camp is one of the first facilities of its kind in the Vancouver area, and during its brief existence it serves as a popular resting spot for visitors who have traveled "all the way from the Vancouver city core to the wilds of Hastings Park." The camping location also attracts a steady stream of campers from the United States.
17. **1921:** Development of a Golf Course begins.
18. **1924:** The Golf Course is completed at a cost of less than \$18,000.
19. **1924:** Columbia Aviation Display: In earlier Fairs, the airplane had only appeared as a special feature or attraction. By the mid-1920's aviation displays appeared with greater frequency. In 1924, Columbia Aviation advertised flying lessons during the Fair.
20. **1925:** The first Winter Fair at Hastings Park is held with over 3,000 entries on display.
21. **1926:** First nicknamed "Skid Row," the featured Midway of the 1910 PNE is officially named and reopened as "Happyland."
22. **1926:** The VEA embarks on a program of placing first class entertainment in front of the Grandstand and charging admission to see the shows. This entertainment, later to become a main feature of the Fair, gradually replaced wandering bands and some free attractions.

23. **1927:** The VEA continues to expand the Winter Fair by adding features such as an industry and province sponsored National Apple Show.
24. **1930:** The Industrial Exhibition is the largest in the Pacific Northwest. After a decrease in Fair attendance due to the First World War, Fair attendance increases - remaining at over 300,000 per year for most of the decade.
25. **1930:** The PNE Forum Building opens. At the time, the Forum was the largest indoor ice sheet in North America and was home to the Pacific Coast Hockey League's (forerunner of the Western Hockey League) Vancouver Canucks.
26. **1932:** The Vancouver Daily Province newspaper sponsors a rest tent for weary walkers and a supervised playground for young children.
27. **1932:** After a fire destroys the buildings at Queen's Park causing the collapse of the New Westminster Agriculture Exhibition, the PNE becomes the major agricultural event in the province.
28. **1934:** The first PNE Prize Home is given away. It is called the "PNE Dream Home," and tickets for the raffle are sold for 25¢. The winner was Vancouver mechanic Leonard Frewin.
29. **1935:** The first opening day parade that features bands, drill teams, clowns, business and service clubs, and community floats. The parade was a major success and was integrated into the annual exhibition program.
30. **1935:** On January 21st, after an extended snowfall, the Forum Building's roof collapses. The building was originally designed to withstand twice Vancouver's heaviest recorded snowfall.
31. **1940:** Two new facilities open: The Livestock Building and the Garden Auditorium.
32. **1940:** This decade was marked as one of the most controversial in the fairground's history. A large section of the grounds was used as a temporary facility for Japanese men and women slated for deportation, and as storage space for their confiscated belongings.
33. **1941:** The Lipsett Indian Museum is added to VEA's operations. Donated by association members Edward and Mary Lipset, the museum included a large collection of American Indian artifacts. The new attraction displaced the aquarium, which had been a fixture in the building for almost two decades.
34. **1942:** For the first time since 1910, the Vancouver Exhibition did not stage its annual Fair. The Fair was not held as a result of two factors: Pearl Harbour and the military's demand for the use of the grounds and facilities.

35. **1946:** The Vancouver Exhibition Association is renamed the Pacific National Exhibition.
36. **1947:** Another record-breaking year for the Pacific National Exhibition. It plays host to over 580,000 visitors while attendance continues to rise, and the exhibition itself turns a profit in excess of \$113,000.
37. **1947:** The first Old-Timers hockey game staged in Canada is held at the PNE Forum. Among the players was Fred “Cyclone” Taylor, one of hockey’s all time greats.
38. **1948:** The first Miss PNE contest is held.
39. **1952:** The BC Products Building is built to display the province’s economic diversity.
40. **1954:** Empire Stadium is built for the British Empire and Commonwealth Games.
41. **1954:** The BC Lions are accepted into the Canadian Football League and call Empire Stadium home.
42. **1954:** Bannister-Landy Miracle Mile – On May 6, British medical student Roger Bannister makes history by becoming the first person to break the coveted four-minute mile. Three months later, on August 7, he defends his title against seven other runners at the British Empire and Commonwealth Games at Empire Stadium. Bannister went toe-to-toe against his rival, and fellow four-minute mile breaker, Australian John Landy, pulling ahead in the last leg of the race to win.
43. **1957:** Elvis Presley performs at Empire Stadium – his only appearance in Vancouver. 22,000 adoring fans pay between \$1.50-\$3.50 for tickets.
44. **1957:** As a result of the relocation of Happyland, several long-time favourite rides such as the “Shoot-the-Chutes” flume ride are demolished.
45. **1958:** A one-time-event “warehouse sale” is held by Wosk’s Department Stores in the Showmart Building. This is the first retail sale held on the grounds.
46. **1958:** As part of the BC Centennial year exhibition, the PNE plans a “secret” Project “X,” which is kept under wraps until the eve of the Fair. Project X turns out to be a display of modern rocketry and includes exhibits by the American Army and Canadian Legion.
47. **1958:** Happyland moves from its original site to its present site between Empire Stadium and the BC Building and re-opens under the name Playland.
48. **1958:** The famous wooden roller coaster designed by the legendary Carl Phare opens. It is considered to be one of the top ten wooden roller coasters in the world. The Playland Coaster rides in excess of 1/2 million thrill seekers annually.

49. **1958:** In conjunction with the BC Centennial celebrations, the PNE stages a variety of special features at the Fair. The most notable is the ski jumping competition held at Empire Stadium.
50. **1958:** The Fair expands from 11 to 14 days. This raises concern for the livestock exhibitors who worry two weeks is too long and costly to keep their animals fed and sheltered. Recognizing the exhibitors' difficulties, the PNE reconciles the problem by splitting the show, with the competitions for individual breeds and in particular classes running for only a portion of the exhibition.
51. **1959:** New features added to the Fair include a petting zoo for small children, a trackless train providing transportation around the exhibition grounds, and "Old MacDonald's Farm."
52. **1959:** On their longest ever forty-five day tour across Canada, the Queen and Prince Philip visit Empire Stadium on July 15 marking it as one of the most notable events to take place at the PNE.
53. **1960:** The Timber Show is first held at the Fair and by 1966, the show becomes a regular feature of the annual event.
54. **1961:** The PNE's central theme for 1961 is a Maritime Festival where Willie the Whale is an important feature. Other attractions include an aquarium of tropical fish and a statue of King Neptune.
55. **1961:** BC International Trade Fair is held to highlight the importance of the import and export trade to the provincial economy.
56. **1964:** The Beatles perform at Empire Stadium – their only appearance in Vancouver. The most expensive ticket is \$5.25.
57. **1967:** The Fair takes on a national theme as it celebrates Canada's centennial year. The Fair displayed exhibitions on each province, with a special focus on forestry in BC. A huge birthday party on July 1st kicks off the festivities.
58. **1967:** As the PNE moves to make more productive use of its facilities year round, trade shows prove to be particularly valuable tenants. As a special feature in the Vancouver Boat Show, the promoters brought in "Walter," a killer whale, and placed him in a pool for the duration of the event. When the Boat Show ended, the whale was sold to the Vancouver Aquarium Society and renamed "Skana". Skana was a much-loved addition to the Aquarium and quickly became a fixture in the city.
59. **1968:** The Pacific Coliseum opens. Construction of the arena is \$6 million and the stadium is home to the NHL franchise Vancouver Canucks.

60. **1968:** Under Regulation 25 in the PNE's manual of exhibition rules and regulations, the PNE bans partisan political displays on the grounds. This creates an uproar and sparks a series of protests – which eventually lead to the elimination of the regulation.
61. **1970:** The Vancouver Canucks score their first goal in the Pacific Coliseum against the Los Angeles Kings.
62. **1971:** A daily Demolition Derby is added to the Fair program and is scheduled to take place in the Outdoor Bowl. The Derby replaces the Timber Show, which was also held in that spot.
63. **1973:** The provincial government takes control of the PNE and makes it a provincial institution.
64. **1974:** The Vancouver Whitecaps, members of the North American Soccer League, play their first game at Empire Stadium.
65. **1979:** The Whitecaps win the prestigious Soccer Bowl, beating the Tampa Bay Rowdies.
66. **1982:** The Vancouver Canucks capture the hearts of Vancouverites when they reach the Stanley Cup Finals in May. The team plays to capacity crowds at the Coliseum and players are hailed as heroes even after they lose to the New York Islanders in game four.
67. **1984:** The ever-popular Superdogs Show makes its debut.
68. **1993:** Previously owned by a number of parent companies, Playland becomes a division of the Pacific National Exhibition in July.
69. **1993:** Empire Stadium is demolished. One of the most treasured venues on the Hastings Park site was Empire Stadium, which played host to many important cultural and sporting moments in the City of Vancouver's history. Empire Stadium was home to the Canadian Football League's BC Lions and the North American Soccer League's Vancouver Whitecaps.
70. **1993:** Opening of the Momiji Commemorative Garden and the implementation of the greening revitalization project of the PNE
71. **1994:** Vancouver Canucks play their last game at the Pacific Coliseum before moving to GM Place for the 1995 season.
72. **1995:** Vancouver City Council directs the Park Board to begin extensive community consultation about the future of Hastings Park. Two years of work results in the Hastings Park Restoration Plan, a comprehensive planning document adopted by the Park Board and City Council in 1997. It was based on the premise that the PNE would be leaving the Hastings Park site and provided for a transition of the fairgrounds to parkland.

73. **1995:** Now recognized for his talents around the world, crooner Michael Buble is discovered at the annual PNE talent competition.
74. **1997:** Hastings Park Restoration Concept Plan is finalized. Council and the Park Board approve the restoration of three areas: the Sanctuary, the Italian Garden and Empire Fields. Between 1998 and 2001, \$13 million is invested in realizing the Restoration Plan with the completion of the Italian Gardens, the Sanctuary and Empire Fields (a total of 11 hectares (27 acres)).
75. **1997 to 2001:** Creation of the Sanctuary, Italian Gardens and Empire Fields.
76. **1999:** The Sanctuary, completed in the summer of 1999, is a verdant refuge planted in indigenous species. The Sanctuary encompasses four hectares and has a storm water retention pond and a meadow on the highland (Windermere Hill).
77. **2000:** The Italian Garden (Il Giardino Italiano) is completed. Today, this formal garden includes a children's play area, a skateboard park, basketball courts, a multi-use court, bocci courts, formal flower beds and allies of trees.
78. **2001:** The Park Board constructs playing fields on the site of the former Empire Stadium in the southeast part of the site. The 5.5-hectare (14 acre) site is known as Empire Fields.
79. **2003:** Vancouver is named Host City of the 2010 Olympic & Paralympic Winter Games. The Pacific Coliseum is scheduled to hold figure skating & short-track speed-skating competitions.
80. **2004:** In March 2003, the Province determines that it will no longer operate the PNE and enters into an agreement with the City for the transfer of the PNE to the City effective January 1, 2004.
81. **2004:** Vancouver secures the 2006 World Junior Ice Hockey Championships to be played at the Coliseum.
82. **2004:** A city wide consultation process dubbed 'Help Shape the Future' begins, involving over 1500 people helping to identify a vision for the future of Hastings Park & the PNE.
83. **2006:** The Pacific Coliseum is home to a number of hockey games played between national teams at the 2006 World Junior Ice Hockey Championships from December 26, 2005 to January 5, 2006.
84. **2007:** The Vancouver Giants host the MasterCard Memorial Cup at the Pacific Coliseum from May 18-27. The Memorial Cup is the championship trophy of the Canadian Hockey League.

85. **2007:** Vancouver City Council approves the Hastings Park Implementation Plan Process, the goal of which is to realize Council's 2004 direction for the site.
86. **2008:** The PNE celebrates the 50th anniversary of the Wooden Roller Coaster with the major recognition event "Coaster Day" on June 17th.
87. **2008:** The PNE celebrates the 40th anniversary of the Pacific Coliseum recognized with festivities later in the year.
88. **2008:** In January, the Pacific Coliseum hosts the 2008 BMO Canadian Championships, in which 180 skaters compete for spots on the Skate Canada national team, the Skate Canada junior national team, and the Canadian teams that will compete at the 2008 ISU World Figure Skating Championships, 2008 ISU Four Continents Championships, and 2008 ISU World Junior Figure Skating Championships.
89. **2010:** The Pacific Coliseum is used to host figure skating and short-track speed skating at the 2010 Olympic Winter Games.
90. **2010:** Canada's Tessa Virtue & Scott Moir win Canada's first-ever Olympic Ice Dance gold medal at the Pacific Coliseum.
91. **2010:** Charles Hamelin brings Canada's gold medal count to ten after winning the men's 500 meter short-track at the Pacific Coliseum.
92. **2010:** The temporary Stadium at Empire Field is built to house the BC Lions and Vancouver Whitecaps while BC Place undergoes construction for a new retractable roof.
93. The PNE employs 140 full-time staff and up to 4,000 direct part-time and seasonal employees.
94. The PNE is home to over 1,800 event days annually, including sporting and cultural events, community, concerts, trade and consumer shows and festivals.
95. Each year, over two million people visit the many activities and events happening at Hastings Park, making it one of the most dynamic and successful venues of its kind in North America.
96. The annual Fair at the PNE is the largest and best attended ticketed event in British Columbia.
97. The PNE contributes about \$115 million to the gross domestic product of Metro Vancouver.
98. Numerous community groups and film production companies rent the facilities at the park, as do the Western Hockey League's Vancouver Giants.

99. The PNE is a non-profit organization with the Board of Directors appointed by Vancouver City Council.

100. **2010:** The PNE celebrates 100 years!