

1921 Fun Facts, Trivia & History

Quick Facts from 1921:

- The America Changing Event: The first radio baseball game was broadcast. Harold Arlin announced the Pirates-Phillies game from Forbes Field over Westinghouse KDKA, in Pittsburgh. The Pirates won, 8-5.
- Soviet Russia and Poland signed the Treaty of Riga establishing a permanent border between the two countries.
- The Russian Great Famine of 1921/22 killed 5 million people.
- The Communist Party of China was formed.
- Influential Songs include *Second Hand Rose* and *My Man* by Fanny Brice. Also: *St. Louis Blues* by the Original Dixie Land Band and others.
- The Movies to Watch include *The Kid*, *The Three Musketeers*, *The Haunted Castle* and *The Sheik*
- The Most Famous Person in America was probably Roscoe 'Fatty' Arbuckle
- New York Yankee pitcher Babe Ruth hit his 138th home-run, continually growing that record to 714 in 1935.
- Adolf Hitler became the Chairman of the Nazi Party in his rise to power and prominence in Germany.
- Price of a pound peanut butter in 1921: 15 cents

Top Ten Baby Names of 1921:

Mary, Dorothy, Helen, Margaret, Ruth, Virginia, Mildred, Betty, Frances, Elizabeth
John, Robert, William, James, Charles, George, Joseph, Edward, Frank, Richard

US Life Expectancy:

(1921) Males: 60.0 years, Females: 61.8 years

The Stars:

Theda Bara, Pola Negri, Mary Pickford

Miss America:

Margaret Gorman (Washington, DC)

Firsts, Inventions, and Wonders:

Guccio Gucci started selling his handbags.

Coco Chanel introduced "Chanel No. 5".

On October 23, 1921, an American officer selected the body of the first "Unknown Soldier".

"Andy's Candies" was founded, but maker Andy Kanelos realized that men would never buy chocolates for women with another man's name written on them. He renamed his company "Andes".

The most popular laboratory rodent, The Black-6 mouse, was bred in 1921 by C.C. Little.

Radio Shack opened in Boston, Massachusetts.

White Castle restaurants opened in Wichita Kansas.

The United States Figure Skating Association formed in Colorado.

The “Bloody Mary” drink was invented by Pete Petiot.

Betty Crocker was not a real person – the name was created in 1921 as a way to give a personalized response to consumer product questions for by the Washburn-Crosby Company (later part of General Mills).

The biggest Pop Artists of 1921 include:

Nora Bayes, Eddie Cantor, Frank Crumit, Carl Fenton and His Orchestra, Mariona Harris, Art Hickman & His Orchestra, Al Jolson, Billy Jones, Isham Jones and His Orchestra, Benny Krueger and His Orchestra, Ted Lewis and His Band, Billy Murray, The Original Dixieland Band, The Peerless Quartet, Leo Reisman and His Orchestra, Mamie Smith & Her Jazz Hounds, Van & Schenck, Ethel Waters, Reinald Werrenrath, Paul Whiteman and His Orchestra, Yerkes Jazarimba Orchestra

US Politics:

March 4, 1921 (Friday) Inauguration of Warren G. Harding. The United States also approved the burial of an unidentified soldier from World War I at Arlington National Cemetery. The inscription on the tomb reads “Here rests in honored glory an American soldier known but to God.”

The Emergency Quota Act limited the number of immigrants that were allowed to come to the United States.

US Civil Rights:

The Tulsa Race Riot took place over [May 31st](#) and June 1st

Pop Culture News:

Wonder Bread began distribution. It went national in 1925 when the Continental Baking Company bought out Taggart baking, the originators of the product.

Albert Einstein won the Nobel Prize for Physics for his 1916 work ‘The General Theory of Relativity’.

Iowa imposed the first state cigarette tax, 2 cents per pack.

On January 21, The full-length silent comedy-drama film *The Kid*, written, produced, directed by and starring Charlie Chaplin, as his Tramp character, and Jackie Coogan, was released in the United States.

On October 31, *The Sheik*, starring Rudolph Valentino, premiered in Los Angeles.

The first actor to ever to play Jesse James on film was his own son, Jesse James Jr, in the 1921 film *Under the Black Flag*.

In Atlantic City, New Jersey, the first Miss America Pageant is held and sixteen-year-old Margaret Gorman won the Atlantic City Pageant’s Golden Mermaid trophy. Pageant officials later named her the first Miss America.

The Rorschach Test does not use a series of random inkblots, but 10 specific prints selected in 1921 and always shown in the same order.

We, the book that is thought to have inspired both *Brave New World* and *1984* was written by Russian writer Yevgeny Zamyatin.

John Larson invented an early polygraph (lie detector)

On July 20, Congresswoman Alice Mary Robertson became the first woman to preside over the floor of US House of Representatives.

There is a small tract of land (“[The Wedge](#)”) along the borders of Delaware, Maryland and Pennsylvania. Ownership of the land was disputed until 1921, but it is now officially recognized as part of Delaware.

On July 1, The Communist Party of China (CPC) was founded.

Pierre de Coubertin, founder of the modern Olympic Games, borrowed a Latin phrase from his friend, Father Henri Didon, for the Olympic motto: Citius, Altius, Fortius (“Swifter, Higher, Stronger”).

The Horrible:

“Black Wall Street” was the wealthiest Black community in America (in the African-American community of Greenwood in Tulsa, Oklahoma) before being attacked by an angry mob that killed hundreds of Black residents and destroyed 35 city blocks.

Workers at an ammonium nitrate factory in Oppau (now part of Ludwigshafen) Germany, tried clearing a clogged silo with dynamite. The resulting explosion killed over 500 people and left 6500 homeless.

The Scandals:

August 4th – Eight Chicago White Sox players were banned for life for purposefully losing the World Series to the Cincinnati Reds. They were all acquitted in criminal court, however.

Silent film actor Roscoe “Fatty” Arbuckle was accused of raping and killing Virginia Rappe. It was probably consensual and accidental.

Nerd News:

Einstein won the 1921 Nobel Prize in Physics not for his work on the famous $E=mc^2$ equation or special relativity, but for his work on the photoelectric effect; an effect that forms the basis of photosynthesis.

Nobel Prize Winners:

Physics – Albert Einstein

Chemistry – Frederick Soddy

Medicine – not awarded

Literature – Anatole France

Peace – Karl Hjalmar Branting, Christian Lous Lange

Popular and Notable Books From 1921:

A Poor Wise Man by Mary Roberts Rinehart

The Age of Innocence by Edith Wharton

The Brimming Cup by Dorothy Canfield
Her Father's Daughter by Gene Stratton-Porter
The Kingdom Round the Corner by Coningsby Dawson
Main Street by Sinclair Lewis
The Mysterious Rider by Zane Grey
The Sheik by Edith M. Hull
The Sisters-in-Law by Gertrude Atherton
The Valley of Silent Men by James Oliver Curwood

Sports:

World Series Champions: New York Giants
Stanley Cup Champs: Ottawa Senators
U.S. Open Golf: James M. Barnes
U.S. Tennis (Men/Ladies): William (Bill) T. Tilden/Molla B. Mallory
Wimbledon (Men/Women): Bill Tilden/Suzanna Lenglen
NCAA Football Champions: California & Cornell
Kentucky Derby Winner: Behave Yourself
Boston Marathon Winner: Frank Zuna [Time](#): 2:18:57