

BELLE ISLE HISTORY

Source: City of Detroit website

<http://www.detroitmi.gov/DepartmentsandAgencies/RecreationDepartment/BelleIsle/BelleIsleHistory.aspx>

1700'S

1768: King George grants McDougall ownership of Hog Island; cost: 194 pounds sterling

1771: Geographic survey establishes the island's size to be 704 acres

1773: Census: 200 farm animals; 5 people

1783: Treaty of Paris ends the Revolutionary War; Hog Island becomes American territory

1794: William Macomb purchase Hog Island from McDougall's heirs for 813 pounds sterling

1800'S

1811: Patent certifies Macomb's ownership. Son David becomes sole owner

1817: David Macomb sells the island to Barnabas Campau for \$5,000 1832: Campau's ownership confirmed by patent signed by President Andrew Jackson

1840: Ferry boat service to the island starts

1845:Hog Island becomes Belle Isle 1851: Summer resort opens on Belle Isle

1879: The City of Detroit purchases Belle Isle for \$180,000

1880: Lighthouse is built on the east end of the island

1881: Frederick Law Olmstead hired to develop a plan for the island

1883: Construction of the Loop Canal begins

1884: Marsh run canal is built

1885: Olmstead resigns though his plan is accepted by Detroit City Council

1887: First Casino is completed Tacoma Lake is formed. First canoe shelter.1889: First Belle Isle Bridge opens. Lake Okonoko is formed.

1890: Nashua Creek is completed

1892: Newsboy Fountain and Sculpture is completed

1893: Police Station is built. Muskoday Lake is formed.

1894: Riding stables are built. Fire destroys Detroit Boat Club. Pony ride concession opens.

1895: Deer park created and populated. Belle Isle Zoo is established.

1897: Newsboy fountain is erected.

1899: Athletic Field House is completed. Bicycle shelter is built.

1903: First greenhouse is built

1904: Aquarium and Conservatory open. Current Casino is built.

1910: Sylvan Creek completed.

1912: Ferry Dock built near beach area

1915: Scott Fountain and lagoon area created using fill from downtown construction sites

1916: Bridge burns down. Temporary bridge installed.

1922: Golf course is built

1923: MacArthur Bridge is completed

1924: Detroit News Nature Trail completed

1925: Scott Fountain completed

1930: Livingston Lighthouse erected. Blue Lagoon completed

1937: Lagoon by casino is filled in. Levi Barbour Fountain completed

1940: Nancy Brown Carillon installed

1947: Children's Zoo is established.

1950: Skating Pavilion opens

1952: Flood Control Project completed

1955: Conservatory reconstructed

1957: Last ferry boat to Belle Isle

1960: Dossin Great Lakes Museum completed

1964: New canoe livery opens. Construction begins on maintenance building

1967: Bicycle trail on island's east side opens

1976: Kiley Plan adopted by Detroit Common Council

1980: Nature Center completed

1982: White House restored. Kresge Promenade begins

1987: Reconstructed bridge dedicated.

2000'S

2001: Hug Belle Isle Cleanup program begins.

2005: New Giant Slide Opens

2006: Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory receives renovations

2007: Grand Prix returns to Belle Isle.