In 1881, Erastus O. Haven, outgoing chancellor of Syracuse's struggling university, had a gloomy message for his successor, Charles N. Sims:

Syracuse

"You cannot save the University. It must go."

University

How wrong he was.

Compiled by Bob Hill • Additional research by Alanna Fincke
1870 The Methodist Episcopal Church, which had established Genesee College in Lima, New York, but was unhappy with its remote location, passes a resolution at its state convention to establish a college in Syracuse. The resolution becomes a reality on March 24, when Syracuse University is chartered.

1871 The first classes for 41 registered students begin September 4 in rented space in the Myers Block building on Montgomery Street in downtown Syracuse. The curriculum consists of algebra, geometry, Latin, Greek, history, physiology, elocution, and rhetoric. There are no electives.

1872 Alexander Winchell, a former geologist at the University of Michigan, becomes SU’s first chancellor.

1873 SU dedicates its first building, the $156,000 Hall of Languages. It will stand alone on the 50-acre farmland campus for 14 years until the construction of the Holden Observatory.

1874 A need for spittoons in the Hall of Languages is announced by The University Herald, forerunner to the Daily Orange.

1874 Erastus O. Haven, a former senator from Massachusetts, becomes SU’s second chancellor.

1877 Their required course in calculus completed, sophomores head to nearby Skaneateles Lake for the annual Calculus Burial. A calculus textbook is placed on a raft, set afire, and pushed onto the water. The tradition ends in 1889 when accompanying fireworks prematurely explode.

1881 Charles N. Sims becomes SU’s third chancellor and inherits a University debt of nearly $173,000.

1886 Students burn the ramshackle gymnasium behind the Hall of Languages.

1887 SU purchases the internationally renowned library of Leopold von Ranke, a German once proclaimed the world’s greatest living historian.

1889 Nine of the 10 bells in the Crouse College tower are installed. For the next 92 years, the bells are rung at least twice a day and again on special occasions, such as holidays, elections, deaths, and football victories. Beginning in 1981, the bells are quieted for 18 months until renovations make them safe to ring again.

1890 Orange becomes the University’s official color after a search of Baird’s College Manual reveals that no other American university has adopted orange alone as a school color. SU’s original colors, rose pink and pea green, were not particularly popular.

1891 Stephen Crane, author of The Red Badge of Courage, transfers to SU from Lafayette College. He stays only one semester and later admits he came “more to play baseball than to study.” Chancellor Sims recalls Crane “was not a scholarly student, but his writings are of the kind, I fancy, that will be long remembered.”

1894 James Roscoe Day becomes chancellor. During his 28-year tenure, enrollment increases from fewer than 700 students to more than 6,000, and 11 colleges are founded.

1895 The College of Law is founded.

1898 The student handbook warns freshmen “not to conclude that the University can’t get along without you. It certainly can.”

1901 The L.C. Smith College of Engineering and Computer Science is founded.

1903 Born September 15, the Daily Orange quickly becomes the nation’s first collegiate newspaper with cartoons. Among its first editorial messages: Don’t hit other students when playing golf on campus.
1903 Chancellor Day allows his cow to graze in the open field on the eastern portion of the Quad.

1905 Industrialist Andrew Carnegie makes a surprise donation of $150,000 to erect the library that will bear his name.

1905 The Boar's Head dramatic society is founded. Early campus theatrical productions include King Lear and Macbeth. The society entertains audiences for more than 50 years.

1906 The School of Education is founded.

1906 One hundred spectators are injured and one is killed when bleachers collapse during a Syracuse-Colgate football game at New Star Park, the team's temporary home.

1907 The 25,000-seat Archbold Stadium opens. It is named after philanthropist John D. Archbold, whose many donations also help build Archbold Gymnasium and Sims Hall and eliminate the University's $60,000 deficit in 1910.

1909 The Senior Council forbids undergraduate men from accompanying women to any intercollegiate athletic contest. Separate seating lasts 40 years at SU sporting events.

1910 The Daily Orange holds a three-day editorial campaign to promote campus friendliness.

1911 The Graduate School is founded.

1911 The New York State Senate approves a bill appropriating $55,000 for the creation of a School of Forestry at SU.

1912 The senior class donates a stone bench to the University, which places it on the west lawn of the Hall of Languages. It later becomes known as the Kissing Bench. Tradition holds that if a couple kisses while sitting on this bench, they will eventually marry.

1912 Junior Elizabeth Reed, unhappy with the quality of dining hall food, is expelled after organizing a food strike.

1914 The School of Information Studies is founded.

1918 Twelve students die, emergency hospitals are erected in dormitories, and the campus is quarantined for more than two-and-a-half October weeks because of a Spanish Flu epidemic.

1918 Enrollment declines by more than 50 percent after more than 1,000 students are drafted during World War I.

1918 The College for Human Development is founded.

1919 The School of Management is founded.

1920 SU loosens its ties with the Methodist Episcopal Church with a change to its charter, which now defines the institution as "nonsectarian."

1921 J. Herman Wharton, dean of the College of Business Administration (forerunner to the School of Management), is shot nine times and killed by Professor Holmes Beckwith, whom Wharton recently fired. Beckwith subsequently kills himself.

1921 Under financial duress, the University solicits students for donations totaling $60,000. The drive raises $56,243.

1921 Dancing is banned for the final two weeks of the spring semester by Chancellor Day, who says, "We are close upon examinations and have no time to dance."

1922 Charles Wesley Flint, former president of Cornell College in Iowa, becomes SU's fifth chancellor.
MORE THAN ONE MILLION WORLD WAR II VETERANS STARTED THEIR COLLEGE EDUCATIONS IN 1946 UNDER THE G.I. BILL, WHICH GUARANTEED TUITION, ROOM, BOARD, AND A SMALL ALLOWANCE FOR RETURNING VETERANS. NOT EVERY UNIVERSITY WAS WILLING TO TOLERATE THE DISRUPTION CAUSED BY AN INFLUX OF THOUSANDS OF NEW, AND OFTEN OLDER, STUDENTS. SYRACUSE WAS AN EXCEPTION.

SU set the national standard for welcoming veterans—and earned praise from President Harry S. Truman—by admitting 9,464 in 1946. Enrollment literally tripled overnight. Housing was a major effort. More than 900 Quonset huts, barracks, and trailers sprang up along Comstock Avenue, in the University Farm (now Skytop and Slocum Heights), and in the Drumlins orchard.

More space was needed, however, and many veterans were forced into temporary off-campus housing. Chancellor William Pearson Tolley had to deliver his freshman address three times—once on campus, once in Baldwinsville, and once at the State Fairgrounds, where hundreds of veterans bunked in cow barns.

Welcome Additions

1924 The Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs is founded.

1930 A Daily Orange story declares college is a waste of time for women: "For an average girl who intends to make marriage her chief business, to waste four precious years that ought to be devoted to romantic adventure seems tragic."

1931 A 400-year-old Indian chief graces the cover of a campus magazine and leads to the creation of SU's most famous mascot, the Saltine Warrior. The story about unearthing ancient Indian artifacts beneath a campus building is a hoax, but the Warrior remains SU's mascot until 1978, when American Indian students complain that the mascot is offensive.

1933 Faculty members agree to take a 10 percent salary cut as part of the University's program of retrenchment during the Depression. The Joseph Slocum College of Agriculture, the only private agricultural school in the country, is eliminated 20 years after its founding.

1934 The S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications is founded.

1937 William Pratt Graham becomes SU's sixth chancellor. In November, Graham and former president Herbert Hoover preside over the dedication ceremonies of Maxwell Hall.

1939 Daily Orange editor Elizabeth Donnelly gains widespread attention as one of the nation's first female college newspaper editors.
1941 The Flour Rush, a tradition stretching back more than 60 years, ends after a student is injured. The Flour Rush actually began as the Salt Rush, with sophomores sprinkling salt on unseasoned freshmen on their first day of college. It grew into something of a University-approved annual battle between classes. Freshmen attempted to scale Crouse hill, which was defended by sophomores, who fortified their position by raining sacks, bags, and stockings full of salt down upon the freshmen. Flour eventually replaced salt as the weapon of choice.

1941 The Corner Store, a soda fountain on the corner of Crouse and University avenues and a campus landmark since 1908, is gutted by fire.

1942 William Pearson Tolley becomes chancellor. During his 27-year tenure, enrollment soars from 5,600 to 16,000, assets rise from $15 million to $200 million, and more than 20 buildings are erected.

1942 More than 2,000 Air Force cadets come to campus for specialized training. From 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. they are not allowed to stroll the campus alone or say anything but hello or thank you to a co-ed. The punishment for disobeying this order is a 25-hour walk.

1943 The College of Nursing is founded.

1943 Sports are canceled during the 1943-44 school year as World War II rages on.

1944 The School of Architecture is founded.

1944 Sophomore Charlotte Heers is named Miss Nobody by the Daily Orange after a campus-wide hunt is completed to find the woman who best represents the average co-ed. Heers says she's pleased by the honor.

1947 The Goon Squad is created to enforce the wearing of freshmen beanies, which are supposed to enable upperclassmen to easily spot freshmen and offer them help and guidance. Instead, beanies become a way to harass freshmen. Architecture students of the forties are particularly harsh on beanie-less freshmen—they're carried off to be dunked in a sink. Beanies become obsolete after the 1970 student strike.

1947 The worst fire in school history guts Archbold Gymnasium. Destroyed are the University's bowling alley, swimming pool, crew room, and $75,000 worth of athletic equipment.

1950 The College of Medicine becomes part of the State University of New York system.

1950 Edna Brandau, a professor of applied arts, says better eating habits are the main reason why Syracuse co-eds are prettier than they were 10 or 20 years ago. "Girls today eat a rounded meal, merely cutting out those foods which would make them plump or give them a bad complexion."

1951 The senior class commissions Luise Meyers Kaish, a 1946 graduate of the School of Art, to sculpt a 3,000-pound statue of the Saltine Warrior.

1952 On successive October days presidential candidates Dwight D. Eisenhower and Adlai Stevenson hold campus rallies before audiences exceeding 10,000. In a campus poll, students choose Eisenhower.

William Pearson Tolley
1954 Early spring water fights, a campus tradition among students in the fifties, sixties, and seventies, feature open hydrants and soaked visitors. This year's targets include police cars and officers, who make 31 arrests.

1954 Biology professor Arthur Phillips arrives from MIT and starts the first germ-free animal research laboratory dedicated to studying medical problems.

1955 Ivan Mestrovic, considered by some the greatest sculptor of religious subjects since the Renaissance and a sculptor-in-residence at SU since 1947, leaves for Notre Dame University. He wants to take Supplicant Persephone with him, but the senior class purchases it for the University.

1955 SU's College Quiz Bowl team earns $1,000 in a national radio competition with four other colleges.

1956 The School of Social Work is founded.

1956 Running back Jim Brown scores an NCAA-record 43 points in the football team's 61-7 rout of Colgate.

1957 United States Senator John F. Kennedy speaks at Commencement.


1959 An early-morning fire at a Skytop Air Force barracks kills seven student airmen.

1960 The unbeaten football team culminates its only national championship season with a win over Texas in the Cotton Bowl on New Year's Day.

1960 Valedictorian and future novelist Joyce Carol Oates is determined not to give the traditional student address at Commencement. SU officials tell her rain will be her only excuse for not speaking at the outdoor ceremony in Archbold Stadium. Commencement arrives, and so does the rain.

1960 Use of the Alpha Tau Omega cannon, fired after SU touchdowns in Archbold Stadium since 1922, is indefinitely suspended after an accident injures five students during the Penn State game.

1961 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. addresses more than 700 students in Sadler Hall.

1961 The student handbook insists women must never wear slacks or Bermuda shorts to class, dinner, or in public living rooms. "When merely crossing campus to attend a function where slacks or Bermuda shorts are the appropriate dress, a long coat is required."

1961 Running back Ernie Davis becomes the only Orange-man—and the first African American—to win college football's most prestigious award, the Heisman Trophy. Two years later he dies from leukemia.
THOUGH its flash point may have been a football game, the 70-year rivalry between Syracuse and Colgate was as noted for the creativity and pranks it produced as the memorable games that were played.

Students at both schools often created giant, fanciful placards before the game and held wild parties. SU students annually kidnapped Colgate students and shaved their hair into Ss. One time they nearly succeeded in capturing the entire Colgate band. Another time they dumped orange dye from a plane into a lake on Colgate's campus. Colgate students retaliated by "scalping" many SU students and covering the Saltine Warrior statue in maroon paint. Downtown hotels in Syracuse, wary of overzealous fans, often removed all lobby furniture during the weekend of the game.

The football teams first met in 1891 and became heated rivals in 1897, when a newspaper reporter sympathetic to Colgate's cause tackled an SU runner on his way to a would-be winning touchdown. The rivalry may have reached its height during the twenties and thirties, when Colgate held its "Hoodoo" jinx over Syracuse—14 years passed between Syracuse wins. Before the 1938 game, Colgate supporters hired a plane and dropped leaflets onto the SU campus announcing that "The Hoodoo Is Coming." Syracuse responded by winning the football game and dropping leaflets on the Colgate campus. Their message? "The Hoodoo Is Dead."
1966  Senior Joyce Green becomes SU's first African-American homecoming queen.

1966  Men are required to wear socks in dining halls.

1966  All-American basketball player Dave Bing leads SU to the NCAA tournament and its most wins (22) since 1946.

1966  The Freshman Skeptics Corner enjoys another year of weekly discussions with Hendricks Chapel Dean Charles Noble. Twenty students spend Wednesday afternoons discussing everything from God to abortion. There are no assignments, tests, or grades, just free-wheeling conversation.

1967  Campus concerts are given by Martha and the Vandellas, Neil Diamond, and Marvin Gaye.

1975  The men's basketball team reaches the NCAA Tournament Final Four for the first time. The Orange men are eliminated in the semifinals by the University of Kentucky.

1976  To combat escalating energy costs, the University supplies student washing machines with cold water only. "The clothes never come clean," complains sophomore Martha Murphy. Business booms at local laundromats.

1969  Approximately 100 African-American students demonstrate peacefully, demanding that SU meet their needs. The protest eventually results in the formation of the Afro-American Cultural Center, the Afro-American Studies Program, and a Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial library collection.

1969  John E. Corbally becomes SU's eighth chancellor, but resigns 18 months later to become president of the University of Illinois.

1970  Daily Orange personal advertisement: "Jesus will forgive all those who have participated in the student strike. Send your donation and confession to: FORGIVE, P.O. Box 732, Tulsa, Oklahoma 59673."

1971  Interim Chancellor Melvin A. Eggers, who joined SU in 1950 as an economics professor, becomes the ninth chancellor.

1971  A program for intercollegiate athletics for women is established. Varsity teams begin competing in basketball, swimming and diving, volleyball, tennis, and fencing.

1967  The Passion of Sacco and Vanzetti, Ben Shahn's three-panel marble and enamel mosaic on the east wall of Huntington Beard Crouse Hall, is dedicated. Created in France, it depicts two Italian immigrants, draft dodgers, and radicals on a street corner demonstrating, in custody, and in their coffins after being executed in 1927. They were convicted of robbery and murder in a payroll holdup, though no evidence ever linked them to the crime. It's widely believed that discrimination and public hysteria over radicals were responsible for their sentencings and executions, which caused a sensation throughout much of Europe and South America.
1979 The 106-year-old Hall of Languages reopens after $4 million worth of renovations are completed.

1980 The men's basketball team culminates Beat Siena Week with a 99-64 win. Created by the sports editors of the Daily Orange, Beat Siena Week features a campus-wide blitz of tee-shirts, drink specials, pranks, and record sales. A week later, the euphoria subsides as SU bids farewell to Manley Field House—and a 57-game home winning streak—with a loss to Georgetown.

1980 Named by virtue of a $2.75 million gift from the Carrier Corporation, the $27-million Carrier Dome opens on the former site of Archbold Stadium.


1983 Coming Back Together, a reunion of SU's African-American and Latino alumni, attracts more than 300 former students and guests. The reunion is the first of its kind in the nation. Successive reunions are held in 1986, 1989, and 1992.

1983 The lacrosse team rallies to defeat Johns Hopkins in the NCAA championship game and earns the first of five Division I national tournament championships.

THE era of student unrest left an indelible mark on Syracuse University in 1970, when national and local events conspired to tarnish SU's centennial celebration and produce two of the most tumultuous events in school history—THE STUDENT STRIKE AND THE FOOTBALL BOYCOTT.

President Nixon's decision to send United States troops into Cambodia and the shooting deaths of four Kent State University students by Ohio National Guardsmen prompted campus mayhem in early May. Students barricaded campus roads. The Daily Orange called for a student strike and classrooms quickly emptied. Led by student government president David Ilishin, more than 100 students staged a sit-in in Chancellor John Corbally's office and demanded SU pay $100,000 to the Black Panther Defense Fund to bail out jailed president Bobby Seale. After more than 24 hours, the demonstration ended quietly. Soon after, administration officials canceled the final six weeks of classes.

At the same time, controversy swelled within the football program. Eight African-American players accused coach Ben Schwartzwalder of discriminatory practices and boycotted spring practice. They were later kicked off the team after refusing to sign a statement absolving the University of guilt. The ensuing season began with a home game against Kansas and the most potent riot in campus history. A pre-game confrontation between nearly 100 policemen and at least 400 students featured flying rocks, bottles, and wood, pepper gas, and nightstick beatings.

A year on the edge...

A sign of rebellion at SU
1983 Junior Vanessa Williams becomes the first African American to be named Miss America.

1984 One week after fumbling seven times in a loss to lowly Rutgers, the football team defeats No. 1-ranked Nebraska, 17-9.

1985 More than 73 years after the Daily Orange first addressed the need for a student union, the Schine Student Center opens.

1986 SU and the City of Syracuse settle a five-year dispute over taxes on non-scholastic events in the Carrier Dome. The city keeps $1.2 million in previous University payments but exempts the stadium from real-estate tax. The city gets 75 cents a ticket for major concerts and sports events and is guaranteed at least $100,000 a year.

1986 Students form Undergraduates for a Better Education, an activist organization aimed at improving both SU’s academics and student relations with University administrators.

1986 College of Arts and Sciences graduate Elliott Portnay accepts a scholarship to attend Oxford University as SU’s first Rhodes Scholar.

1987 The men’s basketball team loses the NCAA tournament championship game to Indiana on a last-second basket.

1987 Playboy magazine officials cause a mild furor when they spend several days on campus interviewing and photographing female students.

1988 Members of the student group Peace and Justice interrupt CIA recruiters conducting student interviews, distribute leaflets condemning CIA activities, and attempt to place the recruiters under citizen’s arrest, all the while chanting, “CIA, go away! How many have you killed today?”

1988 Ralph Ketcham, professor of political science, history, public affairs, and American studies, is named national professor of the year by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.

1988 Four days before Christmas, 35 students in SU’s Division of International Programs Abroad are killed over Lockerbie, Scotland, as a result of the terrorist bombing of Pan Am Flight 103.

1989 The gold-plated scissors used in every formal ribbon-cutting dedication of an SU building since 1952 are lost amid the confusion of a student protest during the dedication of the Center for Science and Technology.

1990 Kenneth A. Shaw, former president of the University of Wisconsin system, becomes SU’s 10th chancellor.

1991 Philosophy professor Lawrence Thomas spends $108.03 on a quarter-page advertisement in the Daily Orange to chastise students for their academic indifference.

1992 The Muscular Dystrophy Association Dance Marathon celebrates its 20th anniversary and more than $1 million in contributions.

1994 Seana LaPlace becomes the first African-American woman elected president of the Student Government Association.

1995 For the first time, no classes are held in recognition of the Islamic holy day Eid Ul-Fitr.