



KANSAS LEGEND BIOGRAPHY

Kansas Facts

A celebration of the legends of Kansas wouldn't be complete without a celebration of Kansas history and the state itself. Kansas was named after the Kansas River, which received its name from the French's derivation of the Indian word Kanzhe, meaning South Wind. From the days of Kansas Territory to the present-day, there are numerous people, places and stories that make the state of Kansas legendary.



Kansas Territory was created to help solve the nation's political turmoil in 1854 with the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Settlers with both free-state and proslavery perspectives moved to the area to support their respective causes. Kansas received the nickname "Bleeding Kansas" when discrepancies between the two sides escalated to violence. On January 29, 1861, Kansas received statehood, officially entering the union as a free state.

The Kansas seal was adopted on May 25, 1861, representing all things Kansas at the time. The seal displays a river and steamboat, a man plowing near his cabin, a train of oxen headed west, and two Indians on horseback following a herd of buffalo. These symbols reflected Kansas' agriculture, commerce and future prosperity. Additionally, the seal features the state motto, "Ad astra per aspera," meaning to the stars through difficulties. The 34 stars below the state motto represent Kansas' admission as the 34th state of the union.



In the 1860s through the 1880s, Kansas' population began to grow due to its central location and railway accessibility. These were the days of cowboys and cowtowns, which led to the establishment of the storied law enforcement figures of this time period. From Wyatt Earp to Wild Bill Hickok, Kansas is still remembered today for its many great Wild Wild West stories. It was also during this time the sport of rodeo developed.

With farming as most Kansans' livelihood, technological advancements at the end of the 19th century and widely available after World War I drastically improved life for Kansans. The steam engine and then the gasoline engine made harvesting crops less time consuming, and storage improvements contributed to keeping food safer longer.

Prior to World War II, Kansas adopted its official state flag. The flag was first flown in 1927 at Fort Riley to show support of troops enlisted there and for the Kansas National Guard. Kansas was showing the world advancements in aviation, science and technology, botany, and oil and gas refining. Kansas today is still known for its farming, but is also known for its telecommunications industry and as a great place to raise a family.

Here are some additional quick fun facts you can use to show your knowledge of this great state:

- Kansas has two official marches. "The Kansas March" is referred to as the official state march, and "Here's Kansas" is an official state march.
- Kansas has a state soil! The official state soil is Harney Silt Loam, which is found on more than 4 million acres of central and western Kansas farm land.
- The last state symbol to be adopted was the state amphibian, the barred tiger salamander, which gained official recognition in 1994.

