

MINNESOTA STATE FAIR

Political Visitors & Events Timeline

1878 - President Rutherford B. Hayes speaks at the State Fair and offers advice on solving the disagreement over the permanent fairgrounds location.

1901 - Vice President Theodore Roosevelt opens the fair with his famous “Big Stick” speech. Four days later he becomes President when William McKinley is assassinated. This year’s fair became known as “Teddy Roosevelt’s Fair.”

1908 - Three-time Democratic Party presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan opens the fair from an enclosure outside the fairgrounds.

1910 - President William H. Taft and former president Theodore Roosevelt address crowds at the Grandstand.

1912 - Former President Teddy Roosevelt revisits the fair on the “Bull Moose” ticket in hopes of regaining the White House.

1915 - William Jennings Bryan speaks about women’s suffrage and equality.

1922 - Vice President Calvin Coolidge speaks about the country’s economic conditions in the Grandstand.

1925 - Newly elected President Calvin Coolidge visits the fair for a second time and addresses huge crowds at the Grandstand.

1947 - Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, addresses a State Fair crowd of 50,000 on Labor Day.

1965 - Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey dedicates the newly-completed Education Building.

1984 - Vice President Walter Mondale makes a stop at the fair and campaigns for the presidency.

1987 - Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis visits the fair and shoots hoops with Boston Celtics’ Kevin McHale while campaigning for the Democratic presidential nomination. Senator Bob Dole greets guests during primary season at the fair.

1996 - Vice President Al Gore visits the fair to campaign and give a speech on Machinery Hill.

2004 - Presidential candidate John Kerry visits the fair to shake hands and visit the barns. Vice President Dick Cheney holds a town meeting in the Grandstand Infield followed by a quick stop at Sweet Martha’s Cookies. Senator John McCain holds a Labor Day rally on the north side of the Coliseum.

2007 - Former U.S. Senator and actor Fred Thompson makes a quick stop at the fair to campaign for the Republican nomination for president.