

# Houston History

Looking at this sprawling urban area, now the fourth largest city in the U.S, it's hard to believe that Houston was once a mosquito-infested village overshadowed by the thriving cities of Beaumont and Galveston.

Houston was founded in 1836 by the Allen brothers and named after General Sam Houston, then-President of the Republic of Texas. The town received an economic boost in 1853 when the first railroad made Houston a hub of cotton trading. Another growth spurt was brought on by the discovery of oil at nearby Spindletop in 1901.

Soon after the oil discovery, Houston was granted funds to improve the Houston Ship Channel making it one of the largest ports in the world. The need for petrochemical products and rubber during World War II spurred further growth of industries along the shipping channel. NASA's manned spacecraft center moved to the city in 1962.

The 1970's oil boom brought on the development of many of the buildings we see today. The Houston skyline boasts numerous high-rise buildings in its downtown and uptown areas. From the train station you are able to look up at the skyline – it's the third tallest skyline in the United States. The downtown area hosts the two tallest buildings in the city. The JP Morgan Chase Tower, completed in 1981, stands 1,002 feet and 75 stories – it's the tallest building in Texas and the tenth tallest in the U.S. The second in height is the Wells Fargo Bank Plaza which is 71 stories and 992 feet tall.

While Houston is best known as an industrial and business center, it is also rich in performing arts, education and entertainment. The Houston Symphony was established in 1913, and throughout the 20th century, Houstonians have benefited from the addition of ballet, theatre, museums and numerous colleges and universities. The astrodome, the world's first indoor domed sports stadium, was built in 1965.

Houston, Texas has a rich history of diversified commerce and industry, and looks to a bright future as a city of technology, science, business and finance.

## Source(s):

<http://www.houstontx.gov/>

<http://www.texasbest.com/houston/history.html>

<http://www.houstonhistory.com/>

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