

This day in history: May 6

- 1861** Arkansas secedes from the Union.
- 1896** On the Potomac River, Samuel Langley demonstrates his “aerodrome”, the world's first mechanically propelled, heavier-than-air machine, driven by a small steam engine, the unmanned craft flies about three-quarters of a mile.
- 1937** The German dirigible *Hindenburg* explodes in Lakehurst, NJ, killing 39 of the 97 people on board.
- 1939** John Steinbeck wins the Pulitzer Prize for *The Grapes of Wrath*.
- 1941** In Riverside, CA, Bob Hope performs his first show for U.S. troops.

This day in history: May 7

- 1789** The first inaugural ball, honoring George and Martha Washington, is held in New York City.
- 1915** A German U-boat sinks the British liner *Lusitania* off the Irish coast, killing 1,200 including 128 Americans, hastening U.S. entry into World War I.
- 1945** Germany surrenders its forces to the Allies in Reims, France, bringing an end to World War II in Europe.
- 1957** John F. Kennedy is awarded the Pulitzer Prize for *Profiles in Courage*.
- 1992** The 27th Amendment, barring Congress from giving itself a midterm pay raise is ratified.

This day in history: May 8

- 1541** Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto reaches the Mississippi River.
- 1846** General Zachary Taylor wins the first major battle of the Mexican War in Palo Alto, TX.
- 1884** Harry S. Truman, the 33rd U.S. president, is born in Lamar, MS.
- 1886** Druggist John. S. Pemberton sells the first Coca-Cola at Jacob's Pharmacy in Atlanta, GA.
- 1914** Congress establishes the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day.
- 1945** Americans celebrate victory in Europe over Nazi Germany (VE Day).

This day in history: May 9

- 1502** Christopher Columbus sails from Cadiz, Spain, on his forth and final trip to the new world.
- 1754** Benjamin Franklin's *Pennsylvania Gazette* publishes America's first political cartoon.
- 1865** Richard Gatling receives a patent for the Gatling gun, an early machine gun.
- 1926** Explorer Richard Byrd and copilot Floyd Bennett claim to have made the first flight over the North Pole (since disputed by some experts).
- 1974** The House Judiciary Committee begins impeachment hearings against President Nixon.

This day in history: May 10

- 1775** Ethan Allen and his Green Mountain Boys capture British-held Fort Ticonderoga in New York.
- 1865** Union troops capture Confederate president Jefferson Davis in Irwinville, GA.
- 1869** The transcontinental railroad is completed at Promontory Point, Utah.
- 1872** The Equal Rights Party nominates Victoria Woodhull as the first woman presidential candidate.
- 1908** The first Mother's Day services take place in Grafton, West Virginia and Philadelphia.

This day in history: May 11

- 1647** Peter Stuyvesant arrives in New Amsterdam (later New York) to become governor of the Dutch colony.
- 1792** Captain Robert Gray becomes the first white explorer to sail into the Columbia River which he named after his ship.
- 1858** Minnesota becomes the 32nd state.
- 1947** The B.F. Goodrich Company announces the development of a tubeless tire.
- 1997** IBM's Deep Blue computer beats world chess champ Gary Kasparov, the first time a computer defeats a reigning grand master.

This day in history: May 12

- 1780** Patriot general Benjamin Lincoln surrenders Charleston, SC, and more than 5,000 troops to British general Sir Henry Clinton.
- 1864** Some of the bloodiest fighting of the Civil War rages at the Battle of Spotsylvania Court House in Virginia.
- 1943** In World War II, Axis troops in North Africa surrender after advances by Allied forces.
- 1949** The Soviet Union ends its blockade of West Berlin, which the United States and Britain had overcome with the Berlin Airlift.