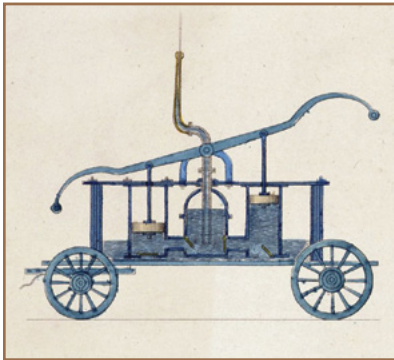


## Fire Plugs



*Early Fire Pump Wagon*

pumper into the pool of water that filled the excavated area and would manually pump (in teeter/totter fashion) to deliver the water to the fire via hose. It's understandable why fires were so devastating in the 1800s when it took so much time to procure the water to extinguish the fire!

When the fire was extinguished, the firefighters would plug the hole they drilled in the water main with a wooden dowel. They would be sure the dowel was long enough to stick up out of the ground, thereby marking the location in case of a future fire. Hence the term, "fire plug." Today, a large valve connected to the water system is known as a fire hydrant, but some still refer to them as fire plugs.



*The photo above shows a section of wooden water main unearthened in Tipton, Indiana. Metal straps were wound tightly around wooden pipe to add strength and help prevent splitting. The metal strap has come loose on this sample.*

The term "fire plug" originated in the mid-1800s when water mains were made from hollowed-out trees. These wooden water mains had little to no water pressure, making firefighting much more difficult than today. In case of a fire, the volunteer firemen would race to the site with the horse-drawn pumper wagon, ringing bells to alert others of a fire. The men would then dig above the buried water main, hopeful they were digging in the right area. Once the water main was located, they would drill into it with a swing bit brace. After this was accomplished, they would place the suction hose from their



*Swing Bit Brace*

The modern fire system includes fire hydrants every two-to-three-hundred feet and an ample water supply with much higher pressures than in days past. Because older water mains cannot handle the same amount of suction velocity as modern equipment, many hydrants are color-coded to identify the maximum water flow of the system. Identifying the hydrant with color codes can save time by allowing firefighters to connect to the correct hydrant. This advanced system means firefighters can quickly access more water and extinguish fires more efficiently than when fire plugs were the norm – something we can all be thankful for.





**Purrfectly Content**  
Transparent watercolor on paper by Cheryle Lowe

## MARCH 2020

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Daylight Savings Time Begins 8	Canberra Day (Australia) Commonwealth Day (Canada) 9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	St. Patrick's Day 17	18	First Day of Spring 19	20	21
World Water Day 22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	New Moon First Quarter Full Moon Last Quarter			

**FEBRUARY 2020**

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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

**APRIL 2020**

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# The Roaring Twenties

A century has gone by now since the opening year of the 1920s, a decade that came to be known as the Roaring Twenties. It was as distinctive a period as America has ever seen.

It was a decade that spawned memorable news events, created a host of sports heroes, incubated organized crime, gave rise to financial prosperity, and brought a burst of creativity in American music and literature.

One hundred years later, the Roaring Twenties continue to fascinate many, including social historians, economists, and literary critics.

The decade opened with the enforcement of Prohibition. The 18th Amendment to the Constitution made the manufacturing, transportation and sale of alcoholic beverages illegal in the United States. Thirteen years later, “The Great Experiment” was repealed with the ratification of the 21st Amendment.

The decade was but a few months old when Tennessee became the 36th state to ratify the 19th Amendment to the Constitution. That action ended the decades-old drive for women’s suffrage at both national and state levels. For the first time, in all states and in all elections, women could vote.

Fashions became controversial in the 1920s as women abandoned traditional clothing for short skirts and slacks. The “flapper” look became the style of choice for many.

Bobbed hair styles became popular (and controversial) in the 1920s. In some parts of the country, female teachers were dismissed if they showed up in class with bobbed hair.

Paul Whiteman’s band premiered George Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue* in 1924 and a new era in American music began. Jazz became more acceptable to the critics, so much so that the Roaring Twenties also became known as the Jazz Age.

One of the great news stories of the century unfolded over a two-day period in May 1927 when young Charles Lindbergh completed the first solo, non-stop flight across the Atlantic.

Novels by Ernest Hemingway, Sinclair Lewis, and William Faulkner published in the 1920s represented the best in American literature. All three authors became recipients of the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Radio as a form of entertainment came into its own in the 1920s. KDKA in Pittsburgh was a pioneer in broadcasting both music and news. Other radio stations sprang up in major cities across the country, and the sale of receiving sets blossomed. Radios such as those manufactured by Atwater-Kent, General Electric, RCA and Crosley soon became the center pieces in living rooms across America.

In Detroit, Henry Ford’s assembly line had turned out nearly 15 million Model-T’s by 1927, and America’s love affair with the automobile was in full bloom.

With the introduction of talking movies, box office receipts took a leap upward. Al Jolson starred in *The Jazz Singer* in 1927, and motion pictures were never the same again. Most people in the entertainment business didn’t realize it, but vaudeville was on the run.

The Roaring Twenties turned out to be a true “golden age” of sports. Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig drew record numbers of fans into the then-new Yankee Stadium, and baseball became even more popular.

In football, Red Grange, playing for the University of Illinois, kindled increasing interest in college football.

In 1924, Notre Dame’s backfield gained fame as The Four Horsemen, a name bestowed upon the players by Grantland Rice in perhaps the most famous sports-page lead ever.

A former miner who came out of Colorado to dominate boxing was Jack Dempsey. His famous “right hand to the jaw” made him a major sports figure of the era.

In tennis, Helen Wills was the best-known competitor. Shy and reticent, she nevertheless became a global celebrity and set a new standard for fashion when she appeared on the court in short, pleated skirts.

On October 24, 1929, just a few weeks before the close of the decade, the stock market collapsed. The Great Depression was soon upon the nation, and the good times of the Roaring Twenties were over.

*by Pete Jones*