

# Time Capsule 1954

**The Year in Review:** In 1952, Gamal Abdel Nasser, an Egyptian army officer, led the army coup that deposed King Farouk. Gen. Muhammad Naguib became the head of government. After an attempt on Nasser's life this year, Nasser arrests Naguib and becomes Egypt's prime minister.

In French Indochina (now Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam), a French military outpost falls to the Viet Minh, a coalition of Communist and nationalist forces that has opposed the French and Japanese after WWII.

This regional war has been going on since 1946. The French defeat at Dien Bien Phu leads to the Geneva Conference, which divides Vietnam at the 17th parallel, creating North and South Vietnam.

In northern Africa, the French also start to come under attack by nationalist forces in Algeria.

In the U.S., the Supreme Court rules that segregation of black and white students in public schools violates the right to equal protection under the law. The Court later orders that schools be desegregated.

The Court also states that the "badge of inferiority" stamped on minority children by segregation hinders their development, no matter how "equal" schools' physical facilities are.

In the legislative branch, **Sen. Joseph McCarthy** continues to exploit the public's fear of Communism until the Senate censures him, condemning him for abusing certain senators and insulting the Senate itself.

As the polio epidemic continues, the first children receive

inoculations against the disease, using a vaccine created by Dr. Jonas Salk. Three other U.S. researchers are honored for their work against the polio virus.

The U.S. detonates a thermonuclear device at Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands. A mistake in the calculations results in a blast three times larger than expected. The unexpectedly large yield and a major wind shift spread radioactive fallout more than 100 miles away.

In an Ohio courtroom, Sam Sheppard, an osteopathic physician, is convicted of the second-degree murder of his pregnant wife, Marilyn.

The U.S. enters the age of jet transport with the maiden flight of the Boeing 707 prototype aircraft. On—and under—the sea, the USS Nautilus, the world's first nuclear-powered submarine, is launched. And on the roads, General Motors announces it will spend \$1 billion on plant expansion.

**Names in the News:** Linus Pauling receives the Nobel Prize in chemistry for his work on understanding chemical bonds.

**“Joltin’ Joe” DiMaggio**, the three-time MVP and 13-time All-Star who played his entire baseball career for the New York Yankees, marries movie star **Marilyn Monroe**. The marriage ends in divorce 274 days later.

**Music:** Elvis Presley, Scotty Moore and Bill Black walk into Sam Phillips' Memphis Sound Services studio on July 5 to cut several records, including That's All Right (Mama), which starts the Elvis phenomenon.

Disc jockey and promoter Alan Freed begins a 5-year stint with WINS in New York that helps change the rock-and-roll world. Through his radio show, live concerts and TV shows, he helps bring black recording artists into the mainstream.

Sh-Boom by The Chords makes the first major crossover from rhythm and blues to the pop charts and becomes a national hit for The Crew Cuts, resulting in R&B records getting more airtime on pop radio stations.

Other debut artists going straight to the top include the Chordettes, Mr. Sandman; Kitty Kallen, Little Things Mean a Lot; and Billy Vaughn, Melody of Love.

Other songs high on the pop charts are Oh, Mein Papa, Eddie Calvert; Three Coins in the Fountain, The Four Aces; Hey There and This Ole House, Rosemary Clooney; I Need You Now, Eddie Fisher; Secret Love, Doris Day; Make Love to Me!, Jo Stafford; Let Me Go, Lover, Joan Weber; and Wanted, Perry Como.

Bill Haley and His Comets are also popular with their Shake, Rattle and Roll and (We're Gonna) Rock Around the Clock.

**Television:** Walt Disney's new show Disneyland begins what will become the longest prime-time run in TV history—34 years. A number of name changes over the years will include Walt Disney Presents, Walt Disney's Wonderful World of Color and The Wonderful World of Disney. The show begins a national craze for coonskin caps and other Davy Crockett products.

Disney's foray into television marks the first time a major Hollywood studio has taken the plunge into TV production. Among Disney's demands is that ABC help finance his new theme park in Anaheim, California.

The Secret Storm opens a 20-year run as a popular daytime serial. Other premieres include several taking advantage of big names in entertainment—The Jimmy Durante Show and The George Gobel Show. Robert Young and Jane Wyatt make the transition from the big screen to the small screen in the new family show Father Knows Best. Steve Allen is the host when Tonight! debuts.

I Love Lucy, the hilarious show created by Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz, is by far the most popular entertainment on TV. The police drama [Dragnet](#) is also big with viewers.

**Stage:** Popular musicals premiering on Broadway include The Pajama Game and Peter Pan. Also opening on Broadway are The Rainmaker, Witness for the Prosecution, Anastasia and The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial.

**Movies:** Actress Grace Kelly co stars in several dramas, including two from director Alfred Hitchcock—Rear Window with Jimmy Stewart and Dial M for Murder with Ray Milland. She also joins Bing Crosby and William Holden in The Country Girl.

Humphrey Bogart is another one of the busiest actors in Hollywood. His roles include one as an aging tycoon who romances Audrey Hepburn in Sabrina, also starring Holden, and one as a Hollywood director who makes Ava Gardner a star in The Barefoot Contessa. Another of this year's films with Bogart is The Caine Mutiny.

**Marlon Brando's** popularity continues to soar after last year, when he played a societal rebel leading a motorcycle gang in [The Wild One](#). He switches to another societal misfit as a dockworker in the blockbuster On the Waterfront. Brando also stars as Napoleon Bonaparte in Desirée.

Rounding out the wide variety for moviegoers are films like Seven Brides for Seven Brothers, a colorful musical full of spectacular dancing; Three Coins in the Fountain, a pleasant romantic adventure set in Rome; and a semi-musical remake of A Star Is Born, with Judy Garland as the rising star and James Mason as the falling star.

When Academy Awards are presented in March for the previous year's films, eight Oscars go to From Here to Eternity, a drama

about Army life in Hawaii before the attack on Pearl Harbor. The honors include Best Picture and Best Supporting Actor and Actress (Frank Sinatra and Donna Reed).

**Sports:** Englishman Roger Bannister, a 25-year-old medical student at Oxford University, becomes the first man to run a mile in less than 4 minutes, at 3:59.4, breaking the previous world record by 2 seconds.

In baseball, the Cleveland Indians win a record 111 games in the regular season but are swept by the New York Giants in the World Series. Stan Musial of the St. Louis Cardinals also sets a record with five home runs in a doubleheader split with the Giants, and Joe Adcock of the Milwaukee Braves, using a borrowed bat, hits four home runs and a double for a record 18 total bases against the Brooklyn Dodgers.

The city of Cleveland does get a title when the Browns swamp the Detroit Lions, 56-10, in the National Football League championship game. The Minneapolis Lakers win a third straight title in pro basketball, and La Salle is tops in college basketball.

Rocky Marciano defends his heavyweight boxing title twice against Ezzard Charles, **Bill Vukovich** earns his second straight auto-racing crown at the Indianapolis 500 and Ray York rides "Determine" to victory in the Kentucky Derby.

New in '54

- Butterball turkey
- Colored appliances (General Electric)
- M&M's peanut chocolate candies
- Reddi-wip
- Trix cereal
- Shakey's Pizza Parlor
- Marmaduke
- Pocket-size transistor radio

## Popular Books

### Fiction

- ***Not as a Stranger***, Morton Thompson
- ***The Royal Box***, Frances Parkinson Keyes
- ***The Egyptian***, Mika Waltari
- ***No Time for Sergeants***, Mac Hyman
- ***Sweet Thursday***, John Steinbeck
- ***Never Victorious, Never Defeated***, Taylor Caldwell

### Nonfiction

- ***The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version***
- ***The Power of Positive Thinking***, Norma Vincent Peale
- ***I'll Cry Tomorrow***, Lillian Roth, Gerold Frank and Mike Connolly
- ***The Prayers of Peter Marshall***, Catherine Marshall, editor
- ***This I Believe, 2***, Raymond Swing, editor
- ***But We Were Born Free***, Elmer Davis

### A Few Prices

- Average house, \$22,000
- Annual income, \$3,953
- Oldsmobile 88, \$2,362
- Kenmore washer, \$155
- Men's Dacron suit, \$60
- Woman's cotton-Orlon dress, \$8.98
- Sugar, \$1.01 for 10 pounds
- Round steak, 65¢ a pound
- Butter, 59¢ a pound
- Potatoes, 57¢ for 10 pounds
- Chuck roast, 47¢ a pound
- Gasoline, 29¢ a gallon
- Lettuce, 29¢ for two heads
- Frying chicken, 29¢ a pound
- Post Grape-Nuts cereal, 19¢ for 10-ounce box
- Bread, 17¢ a loaf
- First-class stamp, 3¢

## **Machine Age Expands**

ON NEW JERSEY'S Garden State Parkway, the nation's first automatic toll collectors are placed in service. They work only with exact change—a quarter.

Across the country, more and more automated machines are entering our lives. This is the first year a newspaper vending machine is used. The first U.S. vending machine dispensed gum on train platforms in 1888.

Believe it or not, vending machines have been around for centuries. The first one is believed to have been invented in the first century A.D. when a Greek inventor, Hero, came up with a machine that dispensed holy water at temples once a coin was inserted.