



Holland: The Tulip Town (Images of America)

Randall P. Vande Water

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On April 26, 1927, Lida Rogers, a Holland High School biology teacher, suggested an idea to members of the Holland, Michigan Women's Literary Club. The idea was that the city present a "Tulip Day" every spring. Two years later, on May 18, 1929, after scores of visitors viewed more than 100,000 tulips along Holland's curbs, Tulip Time became an annual event.

The 1930 Holland Evening Sentinel banner headline read: "Tulip Reigns as Queen of City." Throughout the decade, motion picture and radio personalities visited to promote the festival. The Holland Furnace Company, then the city's largest corporation, sponsored special radio programs that were broadcast nationwide.

After World War II, Holland saw the festival grow into the nation's third largest annual event. Visitors have enjoyed parades that included street scrubbing, "klompen" dancing, floats, and more than 50 bands. When Tulip Time began, 85 percent of the names in the Holland telephone directory were Dutch. Over time, the community's cultural diversity has evolved and is now reflected in the festival.

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