The History of Kelowna

1860   Father Pandosy arrived founded the Okanagan Mission, the first interior
            agricultural settlement after arriving in the area the previous year.

1861   John MvDougall founds a small Hudson Bay Co. trading post here, the
            first in the area.

1871   Grist Mill was established.

1872   Eli Lequime' stopping place had the first postal station.

1875   The first teacher arrived to teach in a school built the year before.
            The first wagon road was built, which connected the O'Keefes (Vernon
            area) to the Okanagan Mission.

1890   The Earl and Countess of Aberdeen first visit the Okanagan.

1891   Recognising the fruit growing potential of the Okanagan, the Earl and
            Countess of Aberdeen bought Guisachan Ranch for their summer home
            and for subdivision for potential fruit farmers.

1892   The S.S. Aberdeen was launched: the first CPR stem wheeler put on
            Okanagan Lake. The stem wheeler increased traffic to the area, and so
            the township of Kelowna was registered and Lakeview Hotel was built.
            When naming the township, many settlers recalled a story about a man
            who had lived in the area 30 years earlier, who was so covered in fur and
            whiskers that the Indians thought he resembled a bear. "Kelowna" is the
            native word for Grizzly Bear.

1893   The first marketing co-op was founded. Lord Aberdeen became the
            Governor General of Canada.

1894   Dr. Boyce, Kelowna's first doctor, arrived in the area. For years he was
            the only doctor between Vernon and the US border.
            The first tobacco plants were planted.

1904   The Bank of Montreal became the first bank in Kelowna, but it
            experienced some problems at first as the heavy vault fell through the
            floor.
            The first newspaper, the Kelowna Clarion, was published.

1905   Kelowna was incorporated as a city with a population of 600.
            The first mayor of Kelowna was Henry Raymer.
            The first cars were brought to Kelowna and a telephone line linking
            Kelowna to Vernon was completed.

1906	Kelowna had its first regatta, and the first fire hall was built – horses pulled the wagon.
1907	The hospital opened. Kelowna fruit made a clean sweep of prizes at the Spokane Apple Fair.
1909	A power plant was built for downtown use.
1911	Population of 1100.
1913	Oil was reported found in Kelowna. The Okanagan Oil and Gas Co. Ltd. Drilled down 3000 ft., but never did find any oil.
1914	The first hydroplane came to Kelowna.
1919	The Empress theatre opened as the first movie theatre.
1920's	Many of the richer townspeople and farmers in Kelowna started buying "horseless carriages". The Fire Department even bought a car.
1922	Kelowna experienced a large population jump (800 people) in one year to bring the population total to 3336 people.
1925	Canadian National Railway trains came to Kelowna. Before the railway was built, there was only water transportation to Kelowna.
1929	The Radium Air service begins in Rutland and Vernon.
1931	CKOV becomes the first public radio station broadcasting in Kelowna.
1946	BC Growers started marketing the Sun Rype brand.
1949	The Hope – Princeton road opened.
1952	W.A.C. Bennett, a hardware merchant from Kelowna, became the premier of BC. He remained premier for the next 20 years.
1955	Kelowna received its official coat of arms.
1958	The Okanagan lake floating bridge was opened by H.R.H. Princess Margaret Rose and Premier W.A.C. Bennett.
1959	Capri Shopping mall opened – the first in the BC interior.
1960	Kelowna airport was opened, as was the Black Mountain Ski Bowl.

1962	Kelowna community theatre opened.
1963	Kelowna vocational school opened.
1968	Kelowna airport built a new air terminal complex. Okanagan College/Vocational School began enrolling university students.
1969	The Blue Angels flying ace broke the sound barrier over Kelowna – much of the glass in downtown store windows. Kelowna also experienced one of its worst fires as the aquatic building burned down.
1972	The first Ukrainian Orthodox Church was built.
1973	Kelowna amalgamated with several outlying districts (including Rutland and Okanagan Mission), doubling its area and population overnight. Kelowna now had a population of 50,000.
1976	Kelowna museum opened its new, expanded facility.
1977	Robert Dow Rieds Sculpture "The Sails" was placed at the foot of Bernard Ave.
1980	Kelowna celebrated its 75th birthday. City population was 60,000.
1985	Okanagan college opened its core facility.
1991	Okanagan connector built to link with coquahalla pass. Kelowna had a population of 78,000.
1999	Skyreach place stadium was opened.
2003	Okanagan Mountain Park fire burned down many subdivisions of homes.
2005	UBC Okanagan opens in Kelowna replacing the former Okanagan University College North Campus.
2007	City population was 123,456.