

THE WEEK IN HISTORY



At the opening of the new Burnet Park Zoo in 1986, from left, Nick Pirro, county legislature chairman; Gary MacLachlan, parks commissioner; John Mulroy, county executive; Romani, zoo resident; Jack Haley, parks and recreations committee chairman; and Chuck Doyle, zookeeper.

Opening the new zoo

The Onondaga Historical Association looks back at the week in local history:

28 years ago: On Aug. 2, 1986, the new Burnet Park Zoo opened its doors to the public with Romani the elephant officially breaking through the ceremonial ribbon. The zoo drew a crowd of over 12,000 people for the weekend. Onondaga County had taken over management of the zoo from the City of Syracuse in 1979 and by 1982 had come up with a renovation plan that was approved by the county legislature. Over the next few years, almost \$3 million was raised by the Friends of Burnet Park Zoo and the county contributed another \$10 million to the project. This year, the Rosamond Gifford Zoo celebrates its 100th anniversary and the long way it has come from just a barn on four acres of land in 1914, to one of the best mid-sized zoos in the country.

— Daniel Connors of the OHA