A year of special events and activities in anticipation of Utah's Statehood Centennial observance Jan. 4, 1996, already is under way. The first contribution to the celebration -- the Utah History Encyclopedia -- will be released officially this afternoon during a presentation to Gov. Mike Leavitt at 2:45 p.m. at the State Capitol.

Among those attending will be Allan Kent Powell, public-history coordinator for the Utah State Historical Society and editor of the encyclopedia.

A number of other Centennial publishing projects have been announced, and there are more to come.

From Centennial displays at the Salt Lake International Airport Visitor Center this January to First Night '96, the New Year's Eve celebration in downtown Salt Lake City a year from now, the calendar is filled.

While many of the activities will involve local or community observances, the thrust of the Centennial encompasses statewide activities.

Among the more significant events planned are:

-- Throughout 1995 -- Centennial seminars for history teachers are planned, with historical exhibits and specimens of Utah flora and fauna on display at the Bean Museum on Brigham Young University campus.

-- At least one major theater production with a Utah-heritage theme will be staged at BYU; documentary and dramatic films of the past 100 years dealing with subjects such as the pioneers, Brigham Young, the Golden Spike and so on will be shown through the year at BYU.

-- A live performance of a Utah Centennial-related concert will air on KBYU-TV.

-- Vignettes with old photographs or film footage and interviews with individuals who remember old streetcars in Salt Lake City, the ballroom at Saltair, and other memories related to the theme "Things That Aren't Here Anymore" are part of a program for KBYU-TV and KBYU-FM.

-- Jan. 1 -- Official renaming of Pioneer Trail State Park, a major expansion that will include additional historic buildings, a new and larger visitor center and its name change to "This Is the Place State Park."
-- Jan. 4 -- A Statehood Day commemoration in Ogden of the official declaration of Utah as a state.

-- Jan. 4 -- As a feature of Faces of Utah: A Centennial Portrait, the project to record the impressions and memories of modern-day Utah residents, Gov. Mike Leavitt will read his essay contribution in a television broadcast. Every Utahn is encouraged to write a personal essay -- whether it be 25 words or 2,500 -- produce a videotape, take a photograph, or find some other way of expressing the topic: What does it mean to be a Utahn? How have the land and culture shaped my life?

-- January -- A Centennial minted coin will issue.

-- Feb. 22 -- Deadline for entries by Utah students who are studying or have studied history, in a Utah State Archives Competition celebrating 100 years of Utah's Constitution. Essays on the theme "Utah's Constitution and Your Rights," no minimum or maximum lengths, must be submitted by this date as part of a Constitution Centennial Symposium conducted May 8. Competition winners at elementary, middle, high-school and university levels will be awarded $100 U.S. savings bonds, with papers to be presented at the symposium.

-- March-April -- Utah History Fairs featuring research competition statewide in Grades 4-12, emphasizing Utah's heritage, will be staged at Utah State University, Logan.


-- April -- A film documentary, "Treasure House -- The Utah Mining Story," depicting the history of mining in Utah, produced by Groberg Communications, airs on public television.

-- Spring -- A Salt Lake County Centennial Park will be planted using 100 trees under the auspices of Tree Utah.

-- April -- "Take Pride In Utah," a statewide fix-up and clean-up, continues the entire month under the direction of the Department of Natural Resources.

-- April -- Premiere of "Utah Women, Past," the first of a three-part series on Utah women's lives that will air on KUED, with a video and study guide for use in classrooms thereafter.

-- April 7-8 -- Grand Centennial Family & Local History Conference and Exhibition in Salt lake City.

-- May 1 -- Release of Utah: A Centennial Celebration, by Westcliffe Publishers, Englewood, Colo., with photography by Tom Till, foreword by Terry Tempest Williams, and text by Brooke Williams.

-- May-July -- Unveiling of murals painted on three Salt Lake City buildings, exploring Utah's past, present and future.
-- May 8 -- Daylong symposium on Utah's Constitution, at Utah State Archives.

-- May 8 -- State Documents Exhibit opening. Original statehood-related documents will be displayed in the Salt Lake City & County Building, then at the Capitol, followed by a tour of the state.

-- June -- Utah Arts Festival featuring performances of selected scenes and music from the Centennial opera "Dreamkeepers,"commissioned by Utah Opera.

-- June 23-Sept. 2 -- "Utah!" Outdoor musical drama at the Tuacahn Amphitheater in St. George, celebrating the exploration and settling of southern Utah.

-- July -- Utah State Historical Society annual meeting, focused on the statehood theme.

-- August -- Premiere of "Utah: A Centennial Portrait," a one-hour visual portrait of Utah by KUED, with a companion book by the University of Utah Press.

-- September -- Indian Artwork Display, featuring original Ute and other Indian beadwork at the Utah Museum of Natural History.

-- September-December -- Lecture series on the Utah Constitution, prepared by lawyers touring the state for discussions on the Constitution.

-- Sept. 30 -- "This Place Utah" -- an art exhibit at the LDS Museum of Church History and Art, celebrating a century of art reflecting Utah's land and people since statehood.

-- Fall-Spring -- Utah Symphony Centennial Season featuring Utah composers and internationally recognized Utah artists as soloists. Century-old works will be featured.

-- Fall -- Utah: A Guide to the State. Publication of the Centennial edition of the Tour Section of this standard work.

-- Fall through 1996 -- Publication of county centennial and tribal histories, under auspices of the Division of State History, will continue through the summer of '96.

-- Fall -- Publication of Utah Centennial Anthology, a two-volume collection of works by Utah writers.

-- October -- Publication of State Centennial Histories, a five-volume project detailing Utah's history.

-- October -- Governor's Conference on History and Heritage, a forum for those interested in heritage fields with a centennial focus.

-- October -- Symposium sponsored by the Utah Coalition of African American Women on conscious co-creation of a sustainable future.
-- October-December -- "Leonardo on Wheels," a traveling Centennial exhibit, focuses on the relationship of science and art.

-- October -- History of Utah Business: A panel of historians discusses the nature of Utah business during the past century.

-- November -- Premiere of "Statehood: The Making of Utah," two KUED documentary films chronicling the quest for statehood.

-- November -- Centennial Suite, premiere of the third of four dance pieces being choreographed based on Utah geographical themes commissioned by Repertory Dance Theater.


-- Dec. 31 -- First Night '96, a New Year's celebration of the arts, will usher in the Centennial.

An even more event-laden calendar is in preparation for 1996, including visits from ambassadors from around the world, a Salt Palace Centennial Grand Opening, and, of course, the Statehood Centennial celebration itself Jan. 4, 1996.

The remainder of '96 features celebrations throughout Utah with heavy emphasis during the summer tourist season.