

## **April 5**

**1872** Government architect A.B. Mullett was here to begin work on the new St. Louis Customs House and Post Office. He said the first thing he wanted to do was find a way to link the post office with the tunnel James Eads was building to his great bridge.

**1874** A special force of federal reserve officers were in St. Louis. They were investigating reports that a "Whiskey Ring" was defrauding the government out of tax revenues. The scandal would soon reach into the highest levels of the Grant administration.

**1882** The mayor of St. Joseph was asking Governor Crittenden to send in the militia. He was concerned that members of the James Gang would try to avenge Jesse's death. The town was over run by sightseers. Jesse James was buried in the yard of the James Farm in Kearney. The body would later be moved to Mount Olivet Cemetery.

**1885** Flamboyant Englishman Walter Lennox Maxwell murdered his friend, Arthur Preller, at the old Southern Hotel and stuffed the nude body in a trunk. St. Louis Police spent the unheard sum of \$400 for a telegram to New Zealand, where Brooks had fled. The press across the nation eagerly followed his 69-day journey back to St. Louis. Some historians compare it to the O.J chase! Brooks was hanged on August 10, 1888.

**1904** The city police chief ordered his officers to strictly enforce the eight-miles-per-hour speed limit on city streets and six-miles-per-hour in the parks. He said the spring weather would bring out automobiles of the latest types, and drivers would be using the boulevards and parks as raceways.

**1916** "Miss Jim" the elephant arrived, and Mayor Henry Kiel formally dedicated the St. Louis Zoo. Children in the public schools raised \$2,385 to purchase an elephant that was to be named in honor of Board of Education President James Harper. But the animal turned out to be a "she," so they settled on "Miss Jim." A parade led by 3,000 school children accompanied her from Lindell and Kingshighway to the park.

**1917** On the eve of war, a huge crowd packed the old coliseum to hear Missouri Governor Frederick Gardner read a series of resolutions proclaiming the determination of St. Louisans to stand behind the president. The resolutions also called for immediate and compulsory military service.

**1919** Governor Frederick Gardner signed a bill giving women in Missouri their first voting rights. The bill granted women the right to vote for president. Missouri became the seventh state to give women the right to vote.

**1921** The St. Louis police department was asking three of its 16 policewomen to resign after it was discovered they were married. Department rules said a woman could not hold a position with the force if her husband was capable of supporting her.

**1922** St. Louis radio pioneer Lester Benson signed station WEB on the air. Three years later, the call letters were changed to WIL. WIL lays claim to being the first St. Louis radio station to operate commercially by selling time for advertising. Benson began broadcasting from his home at age 14, and had broadcast the Harding-Cox election returns in November 1920.

**1932** Residents of the makeshift collection of shantys that sprang up beneath the Free Bridge now had their own newspaper. The *Hooverville News* billed itself as "The official publication of the depression colony on the Mississippi River."

**1939** The last event was held at the old coliseum at Jefferson and Washington. The coliseum had hosted such names as Enrico Caruso, and Billy Sunday. The Democrats nominated Woodrow Wilson for president in the building. The final event was a wrestling match. Jefferson Savings was built on the site.

**1944** The Board of Aldermen passed a bill permitting blacks to eat in the lunch rooms of municipal buildings.

**1960** The contract was let to Millstone Construction Company for the first portion of a planned Interstate highway route around St. Louis. The first section of I-270 was built alongside US 66 between Florissant Road and Highway 67. (Now 367)

**1962** The Air Force announced it was halting a month long program of supersonic training flights over St. Louis. The military had been besieged with complaints over damage from sonic booms. Two rare antelope at the zoo had died when they were panicked by a sonic boom.

**1966** The last active player to have been a member of the St. Louis Browns received his walking papers. The Baltimore Orioles released Don Larsen.

**1968** A coalition of Negro civil rights and religious leaders agreed to hold a non-violent march that coming Sunday to honor Doctor Martin Luther King. The City Jail returned to normal after a riot on the night of the assassination. Police reported only minor disturbances and a few small fires, but St. Louis escaped the violence that swept many cities. Stores in Wellston were closed as demanded by the St. Louis Congress of Racial Equality. But most businesses in St. Louis were open.

**1971** St. Louisans were stunned by a record April snowfall of about six inches. Belleville reported 13 inches.

**1972** Marc Bulger was born in Pittsburgh. After signing with the Rams in January 2001, Bulger spent most of his time on the bench until Kurt Warner suffered a series of injuries in 2002. Bulger won his first five games as a starter that season. He returned as starting quarterback in 2003, after Warner suffered a concussion during a season opening loss at New York.

**1977** State Senator James Conway was elected mayor of St. Louis, defeating incumbent John Peolker.

**1977** The number three engine fell off an American Airlines 707 after take off from Lambert. The plane's hydraulic system was disabled. All air traffic and auto traffic on Lindbergh was halted as the plane came in for a safe landing. One person was injured in the evacuation. The engine gouged a four-foot hole in the ground as it fell to earth in a field near Jonesburg.

**1983** There was something new at Busch Stadium on opening day. The original scoreboard, with its redbird that took flight and tipped its hat after each Cards homer, was replaced with a state-of-the-art system. It included a 22 x 30 color video screen in right field.

**1991** One of the most notorious crimes in recent St. Louis history occurred on the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge. Sisters Robin and Julia Kerry were raped and forced to jump into the Mississippi. Their cousin was also forced to jump, but survived. Antonio Richardson, Marvin Gray and Reginald Clemens were sentenced to death for the brutal crime.

**2000** The Blues clinched the President's Cup Trophy for the best regular season record in the NHL. With a 6-5 win over Calgary, the Blues clinched their first title of any kind since winning the Norris Division in 1987. But the Blues would fall to the San Jose Sharks in the first round of the playoffs.

**2004** George W. Bush became the first president to throw out the first pitch at a Cardinal's game. A few fans complained about the long lines to pass through security on Opening Day but Bush received loud cheers. The 2004 season didn't get off to a good start for the Cards. Redbird pitching handed out eight walks and the defense committed two errors as Milwaukee won 8-6.