

April 9

1682 French explorer Robert LaSalle claimed the entire basin of the Mississippi for France. He named the country Louisiana, in honor of King Louis the 14th.

1851 The city council of the newly-incorporated city of Carondelet met for the first time. Delor de Treget settled Carondelet in 1767. He named the village after the Spanish governor. The town was better known as "Vide Poche," or "empty pocket." The name was either a comment on the gambling abilities of the residents or because the inhabitants were poor. St. Louis annexed Carondelet in 1870.

1852 The worst tragedy in the history of Missouri River navigation. About 150 people died in the explosion of the *Saluda* west of Lexington, Missouri. The captain had been trying to round a bend for several days, but was turned back by the swift current. He vowed to round the bend that day or blow the boat to hell.

1859 After serving two apprenticeships, Samuel Clemens was licensed as a Mississippi River pilot at St. Louis. In *Life on the Mississippi* Twain said, "The first time I ever saw St. Louis, I could have bought it for \$6 million, and it was the mistake of my life that I did not do it." It was while working on the river that he picked up a term used to measure the water's depth, "Mark Twain."

1865 Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee, two former St. Louisans, met at Appomattox and signed the documents ending the Civil War. There were more than 1100 battles or skirmishes in Missouri during the war. Only Tennessee and Virginia had more. 14,000 thousand Missourians died fighting for the Union. About 4,000 died fighting for the Confederacy.

1874 The Board of Army Engineers issued a scathing report on the Eads Bridge, then under construction. The report said although the bridge was "admirable in some engineering features," it presented a serious threat to navigation. The board said the bridge should be rebuilt unless major modifications were made.

1896 An organization of bicycle enthusiasts were demanding that the city do something about what they called the "dusty rutted disgrace" known as Kingshighway. It was a favorite route of cyclists between Tower Grove and Forest Parks. It was the bicyclists who led the push for better roads.

1899 James Sanford McDonnell was born in Denver, Colorado. McDonnell helped to develop the famous Ford "Tri-Motor" aircraft, but was fired by Henry Ford for wearing knickers to work. In 1939, he opened his own aircraft company with two employees in a small rented office at Lambert Field. It was a year before McDonnell Aircraft received its first order.

1904 The lights were turned on for the first time at the fair. As part of a test, the lights on the Cascades and the Terrace of the States were turned on along with the lights at Machinery Hall. The lights were visible for miles.

1904 The first permit for a woman to take pictures on the World's Fair grounds was awarded to Mrs. Jessie Tarbox Beals of Buffalo, New York. Beals was probably the first female photojournalist. At first, fair officials didn't take her seriously. But she wouldn't give up and was eventually hired. Her photos are now among the most famous of the fair. President Francis would award Beals a gold medal normally reserved for heads of state.

1921 The city was holding a 24-hour mourning period for the area soldiers who gave their lives in the World War. The bodies of four soldiers, just returned from France, lay in state at city hall.

1925 Frank Borghi was born in St. Louis. Borghi was the goalie for the 1950 U.S. World Cup soccer team that shutout England. Borghi was a medic during World War Two. In March 1945, he treated a young soldier wounded by a piece of shrapnel. Years later, he learned the soldier's name was Jack Buck and the two became friends. Gerard Butler played Borghi in the film *The Game of Their Lives*.

1929 Chief State Highway Engineer T.H. Cutler announced that the Daniel Boone Expressway, including the new Missouri River Bridge, would be complete from Wentzville to the St. Louis city limits by late 1930. U.S. 40 made it to Lindbergh in 1938, and to Brentwood Blvd. in 1947. But angry residents kept it at a dead end there until 1959.

1953 Anheuser-Busch announced the purchase of Sportsmen's Park from the Browns for \$800,000. The next day, the brewery announced a name change to Busch Stadium. A-B also said it would spend \$400,000 dollars to renovate the ballpark.

1955 Channel 54, WTVI TV in Belleville moved its operations to 5915 Berthold in St. Louis. The station changed its call sign to KTVI and began broadcasting on Channel 36.

1960 The St. Louis Hawks lost the NBA championship to the Boston Celtics, four games to three. The final game at the Boston Garden went to the Celtics 122-103.

1963 Gaslights at last came to Gaslight Square. The Board of Public Service granted permission to Laclede gas to install a form of illumination that had disappeared years ago, except in private residential developments. About 120 lights would be installed on Olive from Whittier to Pendleton and on Boyle from Westminster to Olive.

1963 Water from the Columbia River in Oregon was mixed with the first concrete poured into the structure of the Arch. The waters were drawn near the site of Fort Clatsop, the westernmost point of the Louis and Clark Expedition.

1964 "Mister Baseball" became a Cardinal. The Redbirds traded Jim Coker and Gary Kolb to the Milwaukee Braves for Bob Uecker.

1974 Ground was broken to begin construction of the convention center on the near north side of Downtown St. Louis within the DeSoto-Carr Urban Renewal Area. The center would be named in honor of former Mayor Alfonso J. Cervantes.

1998 Billikens fans recieved some bad news, as their top player announced he was jumping to the NBA. Larry Hughes would break into the NBA with the Philadelphia 76'ers.

2000 It was "Willie McGee Day" and the Cardinals celebrated by slugging six home runs, their most ever in a game at Busch. Mark McGwire, Craig Pauquette, Jim Edmonds, Edgar Renteria, Shawon Dunston and JD Drew went yard to help much touted rookie pitcher Rick Ankiel record his first big league win, an 11-2 pounding of the Brewers.

2001 Albert Pujols played his first game at Busch Stadium, and ripped his first big league homer as the Cardinals beat Colorado 3-2 on Opening Day. Albert would go on to become the first rookie in NL history to record 30 home runs, 100 RBI's, 100 runs and a .300 average.