

## **April 12**

**1777** Statesman Henry Clay was born in Hanover County, Virginia. Clay is best remembered as the author of the Missouri Compromise, which allowed Missouri to be admitted to the Union. When the Kentucky Senator visited St. Louis in 1828, Major Richard Graham invited Clay to spend a few days at his farm in North St. Louis County. Clay told Graham it reminded him of his estate, "Hazelwood." The name stuck.

**1861** The St. Louis Board of Police Commissioners banned permits for assemblages of Negroes, including church services conducted by blacks. Pro-southern governor Claiborne Jackson selected the commissioners. He was determined to stamp out Union activities.

**1873** Luther M. Kennett died. He served as Mayor of St. Louis from 1850-1853. He was very active in the development of railroads here, serving as vice president of the Iron Mountain Railroad and vice president of the Pacific Railroad during its early days. In 1854, he was elected to Congress, defeating Thomas Benton.

**1880** Throngs of St. Louisans attended an exhibition of the electric light at Samuel Davis and Company Dry Goods. They marveled at the huge generator in the basement that provided power to light all three floors of the store.

**1892** The current St. Louis National League franchise played its first game. The Browns lost to Chicago 14-10 before 8,160 at Old Sportsmen's Park. St. Louis had a franchise when the NL was founded in 1876, but the team folded. In 1882, the Browns joined the American Association. The AA merged with the National League in 1892. The Cardinals nickname was born in 1900.

**1898** The Central Trades and Labor Union formed a committee to lobby Congress for passage of a bill recognizing a world's fair to be held here in 1903 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Louisiana Purchase.

**1903** The *Globe-Democrat* reported that 10,000 immigrants had arrived in New York City during the first week of April, shattering all records. The paper said most of the new Americans were heading straight for St. Louis. They planned to work on the construction of the fair or one of the many railroads building west from St. Louis.

**1904** Gunpowder exploded prematurely during target practice about the battleship *Missouri*, killing 33 sailors. The disaster prompted calls for an investigation into whether Commander W.S. Coles was fit for command. Coles was the brother-in-law of President Theodore Roosevelt. He already faced an inquiry for his role in the collision of the *Missouri* with the *Illinois* a few months earlier.

**1920** The Census Bureau reported that St. Louis would probably fall from its position as the fourth largest city in the United States when the 1920 census was released. Detroit

was expected to move ahead of St. Louis, even though the population of St. Louis had increased by 12.5% to 773,000.

**1941** Emerson Electric announced plans for a 700,000 square foot plant to build 50 caliber gun turrets for planes. The plant would be built on a 22-acre site occupied by the hermetic motors plant on Florissant Road at the Wabash tracks. Over 12,000 people would be working there by 1945.

**1947** East St. Louis Mayor John T. Connors and Belleville Mayor Ernst Tiemann were among 19 officials indicted by a St. Clair County grand jury. The mayors were accused of malfeasance for ignoring evidence of gambling and election irregularities.

**1952** Jerome Hannah "Dizzy" Dean returned to St. Louis for "Dizzy Dean Week." The festivities marked the premiere of the movie based on his life, *The Pride of St. Louis*. Ol' Diz didn't seem to mind that the movie took some liberties with the facts. He said "Jeez, they're gonna give me 50,000 smackers just fer livin." Look at one of the final scenes. That's Chet Huntley playing a sportscaster.

**1955** The federal government gave the go-ahead for clearing and redevelopment of the Mill Creek Valley slums. The plans called for 460 acres to be completely leveled. The cleared area would be bounded by 20th, Olive, Grand and the Mill Creek rail yards. The area became known as "Hiroshima Flats" before redevelopment began.

**1955** A bill to establish a children's zoo was presented to Mayor Tucker. On that same day, the first shipments of the Salk anti-polio vaccine arrived in St. Louis. Monsanto unveiled its \$20,000 per month "electronic brain." It was the only one of its kind outside the offices of IBM.

**1958** Bob Pettit turned in a great clutch performance as the St. Louis Hawks won their only NBA Championship for owner Ben Kerner. Pettit scored 50 points, including 19 in the final quarter, as the Hawks won Game Six 110-109. Pettit's 50 points tied the NBA record for a playoff game set by Bob Cousy of Boston in 1953.

**1965** Cardinal rookie Steve Carlton made his major league pitching debut. It came in the 11th inning of a game against the Cubs at Wrigley field. The game was called because of darkness. Carlton would win 77 games in a Cardinal uniform before he was dealt to Philadelphia in 1972. He went on to win another 252 games!

**1970** Disturbances at Washington University over the ROTC program were becoming an almost nightly occurrence. Campus security police dispersed a crowd of chanting students after the protestors splashed the building with red paint.

**1987** JoAnn Williams was charged with murder in connection with the death of her husband, Walter Scott, lead singer for Bob Kuban and the In-Men. The man she later married, Walter Williams, was also charged with the murder. He was also charged with

killing his wife. JoAnn Williams later plea bargained to a lesser charge of obstruction of justice.

**1993** The state granted the approval for the demolition of the last two blocks of the controversial Gateway Mall downtown. Within a few days, crews began tearing down the 905 Liquor store, Kentucky Fried Chicken, and the Western Union Building. A 1980 plan calling for a block-wide green space from the Old Courthouse to Union Station ignited a battle over the history buildings on Realty Row. The Buder and Title Gauranty Buildings bit the dust, and the city ended up settling for half a mall.

**1995** The National Football League approved the move of the Rams from Los Angeles to St. Louis. One month earlier, they had voted against the move.

**1998** Mark McGwire's three-run homer in the fifth inning against the Brewers landed in the upper deck. The mammoth shot was measured at 527-feet, the longest home run in Busch Stadium history.

**1999** All 17 National Supermarkets closed their doors forever. National's parent company had filed for bankruptcy earlier in the month.