

## **April 17**

**1810** Benjamin Howard was appointed Governor of the District of Louisiana, following the mysterious death of Meriweather Lewis. He became the first governor of the Missouri Territory when Congress created it in 1812. Howard was instrumental in fortifying St. Louis against the Indians.

**1865** City leaders and members of the Merchant's Exchange met downtown to pay their respects to the murdered president. After the dignitaries addressed the crowd, plans were made for many St. Louisans to attend the funeral of Abraham Lincoln in Springfield two days later.

**1882** Bob and Charley Ford were sentenced to hang for killing Jesse James. As soon as he heard the news, Missouri Governor Thomas Crittenden issued a pardon. He said the Fords had done a great service to the state.

**1892** The Browns hosted the first Sunday game in National League history. More than 10,000 fans came to Sportsmen's Park and saw the Browns lose to Cincinnati, 5-1.

**1904** Only 43 men were allowed to take part as the Igorot tribesmen at the World's Fair enjoyed their first dog feast. Three dogs provided by the city pound were used for stew. Two other dogs provided were too thin to cook. Women were not allowed to taste the delicacy, which was prepared behind a bamboo fence outdoors away from the view of the public.

**1918** William Beedle was born in O'Fallon, Illinois. He changed his name to William Holden when he signed a movie contract. His first major role came in *Golden Boy* with Barbara Stanwyck in 1939. He played Joe Gillis, the writer who romanced Norma Desmond in *Sunset Boulevard*. Holden won an Academy Award for his role in *Stalag 17* and also made a memorable appearance in *Network*.

**1922** Three firemen were killed in a wreck at Skinker and Forsyth. The firemen were rushing to a fire at Hodiament and Maple. A car suddenly pulled out in front of the fire truck. The truck was shoved into the path of a streetcar. Another fireman and the streetcar motorman were seriously injured.

**1922** Luke Kennedy, a well-known member of the notorious "Jelly Roll" Hogan Gang, was shot and killed by gunmen in a speeding car. Informants said Kennedy was riding in the car from which the shots were fired that killed rival gang leader and St. Louis politician William Egan in October 1921.

**1930** General Electric announced plans to build a mammoth manufacturing plant in North St. Louis. A 155-acre site was chosen at Goodfellow and Bircher. The cost of the plant was put at \$75 million dollars.

**1933** The original terminal building at Lambert Field was dedicated. The two-story building was described as "A Union Station of the Air." After all, it could handle four planes at once! The terminal stood at the northwest corner of the field, near the present day Lindbergh and Banshee. It was replaced by the new terminal in 1956 and torn down in 1978.

**1942** Arthur Holly Compton convinced Edward J. Malinkrodt to perform a dangerous job. Malinkrodt would process the 40 tons of uranium to be used in Enrico Fermi's experiments at the University of Chicago. His work would prove that a self-sustaining nuclear reaction was possible.

**1945** Red Schoendienst of Germantown, Illinois played his first game in a Cardinal uniform. The Cardinals gave him a shot because there was a gap in the infield left when Stan Musial went into the Army. Red would play for the Redbirds for 15 seasons and manage them for 12 more. That same day, Harry Caray made his debut as a Cardinal broadcaster. He broadcast Cardinals and Browns away games in 1945, then became the Cards broadcaster in 1947.

**1948** The very first baseball game ever on television here. KSD TV broadcast the City Series game between the Browns and the Cardinals at Sportsmen's Park. Baseball broadcast rights bring big bucks today. But in 1948, KSD purchased the rights for the price of four seats. That's how much room it took for the two cameras used to televise the game.

**1950** Baseball's first ever night game on opening day was played here in St. Louis. The first Opening Night saw the Cardinals beat the Pirates 4-2. A crowd of 20,871 saw the game.

**1953** Blues great Bob Gassoff was born. Number three came up to the Blues in 1973-74 and quickly established himself as the team's enforcer. He was one of the most feared players in the league, racking up 306 penalty minutes in 1975-76. Gassoff died in a motorcycle accident on Gary Unger's farm near Gray Summit on Memorial Day weekend 1977.

**1953** It was announced that the landmark American Theatre building would be torn down to make room for a parking garage on Pine. The American Theatre operations were moved into the Schubert Theatre at Grand and Olive.

**1956** The new military personnel records center on Page in Overland was dedicated. The six-story center was one of the 20 largest buildings in the world at the time. It was designed to be fireproof.

**1958** Stan Musial's home run against the Cubs gave him 5,045 total bases. That broke the old National League record held by Mel Ott.

**1961** The Smothers Brothers topped the bill of a new revue opening at the Crystal Palace in Gaslight Square. Second on the bill was an 18-year-old singer named Barbara Streisand. Performers such as Woody Allen, George Carlin and Lenny Bruce all played the Palace early in their careers.

**1970** Hundreds gathered around televisions at Stix and Famous-Barr downtown to watch as Apollo 13 splashed down. The crowd of about 150 at Stix broke into applause as the crippled craft returned safely to earth.

**1983** For the first time, a game was “snowed out” at Busch Stadium. The white stuff ruined the Cardinals promotional date. It was “Sun Visor Day.” The only other “snow out” at Busch Stadium occurred on April 10, 1997.

**1985** The Cardinals called up speedy outfielder Vince Coleman. It was intended to be a temporary move. But Vince stole two bases in his debut game, and got four hits the next day. He would go on to steal 110 bases and become NL Rookie of the Year. But he was injured by the “killer tarp” at Busch Stadium and the Cards missed his offense in the post season.