

## **April 30**

**1803** The U.S and France signed the Louisiana Purchase. Napoleon planned to use Louisiana to supply an empire on Hispaniola. But Toussaint L'Ouverture led a slave revolt that forced the French from Hispaniola and made Louisiana useless. President Thomas Jefferson sent James Monroe and Robert R. Livingston to purchase the Port of New Orleans and western Florida to guarantee free navigation of the Mississippi. They were stunned when the French offered to sell the entire territory.

**1873** The Missouri Supreme Court declared that the act by the legislature creating Forest Park was unconstitutional. The park commissioners had already started buying up land. A new act creating the park was passed in 1874.

**1887** The Browns set a St. Louis baseball scoring record that still stands. They defeated Cleveland 28-11.

**1897** City officials were debating a bill to tax baseball parks three-thousand-dollars per year. The measure was introduced after Browns owner Chris Von der Ahe failed to send over the customary season passes. The situation was quickly remedied.

**1900** The city police department announced plans for what it called its biggest job ever--protecting people from criminals during the World's Fair. All known or suspected con-men-men, pickpockets, burglars and thieves were ordered picked up and photographed. Their pictures were to be posted in every station house.

**1903** President Theodore Roosevelt, the governors of nearly all 50 states, and ambassadors and ministers from 30 foreign countries assembled in St. Louis. They were here for the weeklong festivities marking the dedication of the world's fair buildings. Opening day had been postponed for a year to allow the buildings to be finished.

**1904** A crowd of 200,000 people began arriving as the sun rose on a beautiful day. The World's Fair Opening Day ceremonies on the Plaza of St. Louis began with an invocation by the Reverend Doctor Frank W. Gunsaulus. John Philip Sousa's band and a chorus of 450 sang the "Star Spangled Banner" and the official hymn of the fair, "Hymn of the West." Exposition Company President David R. Francis declared that the fair "will have a place in history more conspicuous than its projectors ever conceived. For more than a generation to come, it will be a marker in the accomplishments and progress of man."

Secretary of War William Howard Taft was the final speaker. The ceremonies ran well past the scheduled time when President Roosevelt was to touch a golden key at the White House to open the fair. Roosevelt touched his key at 12:15 p.m. St. Louis time and left the White House. It wasn't until 1:06 p.m. in St. Louis when Francis raised his hands and said, "Swing wide ye portals. Enter herein ye sons of men and behold the achievement of your race." Water gushed from the Cascades, the machinery roared to life. Over 10,000 flags rose and the massed bands played. The 1904 World's Fair was open.

**1913** The Jefferson Memorial in Forest Park was dedicated. The World's Fair company built it with money left over from the fair. The memorial marks the former site of the fair's main entrance.

**1926** After a six-month fight over the number to be assigned to the federal highway from Chicago to Los Angeles, the American Association of Highway Officials proposed 66. The highway was to have been designated as Route 60, but the governor of Kentucky wanted the more important sounding 60 to go through his state. It's a good thing. "Get your kicks on Route 60" doesn't have the same ring to it.

**1928** Charles Lindbergh flew the "Spirit of St. Louis" for the last time. The final flight was from Lambert Field to Bolling Field in Washington, DC. The Spirit of St. Louis was presented to the Smithsonian Institution. The total flying time for the plane since its construction was 789 hours and 28 minutes.

**1931** William Lacy Clay was born in St. Louis.. He will become a congressman from Missouri and chairman of the Post Office and Civil Service Committee.

**1940** President Franklin Roosevelt authorized the inclusion of the Old Courthouse in the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial. The courthouse was the scene of Thomas Hart Benton's speech that spurred the westward migration. It was also the scene of the Dred Scott trial and the last slave auction ever held in St. Louis.

**1944** The Mississippi River at St. Louis crested at 39.1 feet, the highest level in 100 years. The river was two feet short of the record high of 1844. Over 250,000 acres were under water.

**1949** Rocky Nelson of the Cardinals hit an inside-the-glove homerun, turning a ninth inning three-one Cubs lead into a Cardinals win. Nelson blooped a single into short-left with two out. Cub outfielder Andy Pafko thought he had it, and ran in from the field triumphantly holding up his catch. Umpire Al Barlick ruled that he had trapped the ball. The runners circled the bases while Pafko headed for the dugout.

**1950** An Air Force bomber crashed into a home near Scott Air Force Base and exploded. Six crewmen were killed. Six other homes caught fire and several people on the ground were hurt. The occupants of the house the plane hit weren't home at the time.

**1956** Kentucky Senator and former Vice-President Alben Barkley died at the age of 78. In 1949, he focused national attention on St. Louis when he wooed and wed Jane Hadley, an attractive widow here. He also headed the commission set up by Congress to supervise construction of a riverfront memorial.

**1961** Plans were unveiled for a spectacular new Free Bridge to replace the aging Macarthur Bridge and speed highways 40, 55, 66 and 70 across the Mississippi. Construction would begin on the bridge at the foot of Poplar Street in 1962.

**1966** Formal ceremonies dedicated the new Mansion House Complex at Fourth and Washington. The \$52 million development had "risen from the rubble of the St. Louis riverfront," according to papers.

**1974** Agnes Moorehead died at the age of 67. She was one of the cast members of the ill-fated film *The Conquerer*, which was filmed in 1954 in the Nevada desert. The site was very close to an area where government was testing nuclear devices. In later years those tests were suspected to have caused the cancer deaths of several of the films stars, including John Wayne, Dick Powell, Susan Hayward, Lee Van Cleef and Pedro Armendariz.

**1980** St. Louis was linked directly to Europe for the first time. A British Caledonian Airways plane landed at Lambert Field after the first scheduled non-stop flight from London to St. Louis.

**1991** After eight years of trials and appeals, Walter Harvey Junior was sentenced to life in prison for killing Gary Decker. On December 14, 1982, Gary and Donna Decker were abducted from the parking lot of a North County store while Christmas shopping for their four-year-old son. Their bodies were found the next day in a field in East St. Louis.

**1999** St. Louis Mayor Clarence Harmon announced a lawsuit by the city against gun manufacturers. The suit charged them with failing to regulate sales and implement safety features to prevent the use of guns by children and unauthorized users.