

August 1

1702 Missionary Pierre Francois Pinet died at a village established by the Jesuits on the north bank of the River Des Peres. Pinet's death and burial are the first recorded on Missouri soil. The settlement was abandoned in 1704, 63 years before Auguste Chouteau began construction of St. Louis.

1770 William Clark was born in Virginia. In the 1790's, he commanded a rifle company in the battles with the Indians, where he met Meriwether Lewis. Lewis and Clark fought in the Revolutionary War together under Anthony Wayne. After the war, Lewis became Secretary to President Jefferson, and wrote his old friend and asked him to join an expedition to explore the newly acquired Louisiana Territory.

1806 The St. Charles post office was established. It was the third post office established west of the Mississippi. Mackey Wherry served as the first postmaster.

1831 The cornerstone was laid for a "new" cathedral at Third and Walnut in St. Louis. The building we now know as the old cathedral was completed in the fall of 1834. A church has occupied the site of the old cathedral since the very beginning of the city.

1854 The city council okayed an ordinance approving the purchase of a steam fire engine. It signaled the beginning of the end for volunteer firefighters in St. Louis. A paid department was organized in 1857. The volunteer companies did not go quietly, often harassing the paid firemen and racing them to fires.

1901 Pitcher Jack Powell burst into the Cardinals office and threatened to trash the office and its occupants unless the business manager of the club was fired. A mutiny had been brewing among Cardinal pitchers because the business manager had been signing and releasing players without consulting manager Patsy Donovan.

1902 Construction began on a permanent highway bridge across the Missouri at St. Charles. A pontoon bridge had been built in 1896, but it was destroyed by ice. Four men died building the highway bridge, which was finished just as the world's fair got underway in 1904. The bridge survived a devastating fire in 1916, a train that hit its approach on Main in 1936, and a ramming by an excursion boat in 1990. The bridge was closed in 1993, and dynamited in 1997.

1904 The St. Louis Police Department became the first in the nation to use the fingerprint method of identification. It had been demonstrated here by Scotland Yard detectives, who said it was foolproof.

1927 Parks College was founded by St. Louis automobile salesman and pilot Oliver L. Parks at Lambert Field. In 1928, he moved the school across the river to Cahokia. During World War Two, 37,000 cadets, more than ten percent of the Army Air Corps pilots, earned their wings at Parks.

1930 Plans were announced for a new, one-million-250-thousand-dollar hospital on South Grand. Firmin-Desloge Hospital opened in 1933. It was named for the father of one of the hospital's major donors.

1943 A crowd of 5,000 at Lambert Field watched in horror as a Robertson CG-4A glider carrying Mayor William Dee Becker plunged to earth. The crash also killed Major William B. Robertson, president of Robertson Aircraft; Harold Krueger of Robertson Aircraft; Thomas Dysart, President of the St. Louis Chamber of Commerce; Max Doyne; Director of Public Utilities; Charles Cunningham, Deputy Comptroller; Henry Mueller, St. Louis County Court Presiding Judge; Lieutenant Colonel Paul Hazelton; Pilot Milton Klugh and mechanic J.M. Davis.

1957 A crowd of 450 attended a meeting on the proposed route of the "Innerbelt" expressway. Property owners asked owners asked the County Council to reject the plan, saying many fine homes would be destroyed.

1963 Work on the Gateway Arch reached higher than standard cranes could reach. A new design, a "creeper" derrick was attached to the South Leg of the Arch. The creeper was raised on rails as the Arch rose higher.

1966 The last remnant of the "Hop Alley" or "Chinatown" section of St. Louis closed its doors. The Asia Cafe was all that was left of the old section bounded by Market, Walnut, and 7th and 8th Streets. The area was cleared to make room for Busch Stadium, The Spanish Pavilion (Now the Marriott) and the parking lots.

1972 Senator Thomas Eagleton announced he had agreed to resign as the Democratic vice-presidential candidate at the request of George McGovern. The resignation came after it was reported Eagleton had been hospitalized three times in the 1960's for nervous exhaustion.

1976 St. Louisans Michael and Leon Spinks won boxing gold medals at the Olympics in Montreal. Michael won the middleweight medal and Leon took the light-heavyweight title.

1979 The Bee Gees came to the Arena. Arena officials said the show put St. Louis in the concert big leagues. They said promoters of such large shows would never have played the Arena before a recent remodeling project. The Arena was air conditioned for the first time in its 50-year history.

1984 Seven years of detours and headaches for St. Louis drivers came to an end, as the eastbound lanes of the new Vandeventer Overpass opened to traffic. The westbound overpass was completed in 1983.

1988 Workers began tearing down the Arena Bowl, on the west side of the Arena. Built in 1929 as a livestock exhibition hall, its 48 lanes were built in 1959. It was the largest bowling alley in St. Louis, and one of the largest in the country.

1993 The flood of 1993 hit its peak here, as the Mississippi crested at 49.58 feet, a full 6.58 feet above the record 1973 level. At that point, more than 400 million gallons of water were flowing past the Arch every 60 seconds.

1993 The raging flood waters knocked the Burger King river boat and the minesweeper Inaugural from their moorings. The Inaugural was wedged under the Poplar Street Bridge, and eventually sank. There was panic along the River des Peres, where water was lapping at the top of sandbags protecting thousands of homes.

1993 A levee broke in Monroe County, near Columbia, Illinois. News helicopters sent dramatic pictures back as the rampaging river washed away the Gummersheimer farm. Those are the most enduring images of the worst flood in U.S. history. Virgil and Darlene Gummersheimer still farm the land today, but they rebuilt down the road and out of the flood plain.

1993 The break in the Fountain Creek Levee wiped out the town of Valmeyer, Illinois. After the water receded, the federal government spent \$7.2 million dollars to buy out some 300 homes, three churches and several businesses. A new town has sprung up on a bluff high above the flood plain.

1995 Joe Torre was named as manager of the Cardinals. Torre managed the team until June 16, 1995. He won 351 games and lost 354. After being fired by the Cardinals, Torre was hired as manager of the New York Yankees in 1996, leading them to four World Championships in five seasons.

1997 The \$16.3 million merger between McDonnell-Douglas and Boeing officially took effect. The McDonnell-Douglas sign at the world headquarters in Hazelwood was dismantled. Some 23,000 St. Louis employees were now working for Boeing.

1997 St. Louis native William Burroughs died at the age of 83. Born to a family that lived on Pershing in the Central West end, Burroughs fell into a role as outsider. He wrote of hard-drinking, drugs and homosexuality in a rambling, stream-of-consciousness style that made him a hero to the beat generation.