

## August 17

**1804** George Rapeen Smith was born. As a state representative from Pettis County, he lost a bid to bring the railroad through Georgetown. Undaunted, Smith founded a new town. He wanted to call it Sedville, after his daughter's nickname. A friend said there were too many "villes" in Missouri, and suggested the Greek word Sedilia, meaning "seat."

**1806** Peter Richard Kenrick was born in Dublin, Ireland. When Bishop Rosati died in 1843, Kenrick became Bishop of St. Louis. He became the first Archbishop when the St. Louis Diocese was made an archdiocese in January 1847. Kenrick led the diocese for more than 50 years. By investing in city real estate, he was able to put the diocese on firm financial footing. In 1853, he purchased the land that became Cavalry Cemetery.

**1846** An ordinance made the St. Louis Police system part of the regular municipal government. There had been night watchmen and some patrols before, but no regular police department. The ordinance established the offices of city Marshall, day police and the keeper of the calaboose.

**1859** John Queeny was born in Chicago. In 1891, he took a job as a buyer for a wholesale drug company in St. Louis. In 1901, he established his own company for the production of saccharine. He named it Monsanto, after his wife, Olga Monsanto Queeny.

**1882** Flamboyant Brown Stockings president Chris von Der Ahe had touched off another controversy. Residents around Sportsmen's Park were upset after he set up a small fireworks factory on the grounds. Residents complained that the factory was too close to the stands. The city ordered it shut down.

**1904** The Olympic gymnastics competitions were underway. George Eyser would win the gold in the parallel bars and rope climb, and tie for first in the vault. He also won the silver on the pommel horse and the all-around, and took bronze on the horizontal bar. This is even more remarkable because Eyser's left leg was made of wood!

**1930** Dale Jackson and Forrest O'Brine landed their *Greater St. Louis Challenger Robin* after establishing a new aerial endurance record for a second time. They stayed over Lambert Field for 647 hours, 28 minutes and 30 seconds. This record would stand for nearly five years.

**1938** The Board of Estimate and Apportionment proposed slashing the Art Museum tax rate by 50 percent. The board was also calling for budgetary control over the purchase of art objects. The museum was under fire for spending \$14,000 for an ancient Egyptian cat at a time when the city faced a \$3 million deficit.

**1944** Two spectacular fires swept the Army Engineers Depot at Granite City. The smoke was visible from 50 miles away. Thousands of dollars worth of military equipment waiting to be shipped overseas was destroyed.

**1945** The three daily newspapers in St. Louis were shut down by a carriers strike. The *Post-Dispatch*, *Star-Times*, and *Globe-Democrat* were closed, as the city was eager for news about the end of World War Two. The strike would not be settled until September.

**1953** Hundreds of school children came out to watch as the last horse-drawn milk wagon on the streets of St. Louis was retired. Quality Dairy retired its 38 horses and replaced them with a fleet of modern trucks.

**1954** Banner headlines told the news that Robert “Hot Rod” Moore had agreed to give up his license. The exploits of the handsome 22-year-old son of a Portland Place doctor made headlines for years. Moore was sentenced to eight months in the city workhouse. He claimed to be just “showing off” while racking up 24 convictions. In 1954, a license could not be revoked until all appeals were exhausted.

**1959** Jonathan Franzen was born in suburban Chicago. He attended high school in Webster Groves before heading to Swarthmore College. His first novel, *The Twenty-Seventh City*, was set in St. Louis. Franzen rose to national fame in 2001 with *The Corrections*. He also made headlines after bashing Oprah Winfrey’s Book Club.

**1961** Mayor A.J. Cervantes declared that Gaslight Square was now one of the city’s top attractions, on par with Shaw’s Garden, Forest Park and the Zoo. The area had once been regarded as “offbeat and sometimes beatnik” according to the *Globe-Democrat*.

**1964** The Cardinals fired general manager Bing Devine. Gussie Busch was upset because he felt Devine kept him in the dark about a feud between the GM and shortstop Dick Groat. Devine was replaced by Bob Howsam, former general manager of the Denver Bears. Bing would return as GM for the 1968 season and stayed for ten years.

**1970** Mayor Cervantes asked a federal court to declare that the Spanish Pavilion was bankrupt. Cervantes and the foundation accepted the pavilion from the New York World's Fair as a gift from the Spanish people. It opened as a cultural center in May 1969, but closed less than one year later. The pavilion presently forms the lobby of the Downtown Marriott.

**1970** St. Louis University and Washington University announced they had leased a building at 4200 Forest Park Boulevard to serve as the Army and Air Force ROTC building for both schools. The old building had been the target of violent protests during the spring of 1970.

**1977** Record dealers here reported a sudden shortage of Elvis records, the day after “The King” died in Memphis. The manager of Bootheel records in Lemay said some customers had bought up to \$100 worth of Elvis albums. The manager of Peaches in Dellwood said Elvis’ latest album, “Moody Blue” had been “bombing out” before the news. He said from a business standpoint, the death of Elvis was a “shot in the arm.”

**1979** The last patients were removed from Homer G. Phillips hospital in North St. Louis. Alderman Freeman Bosley Senior was among 18 protestors arrested. Mayor Conway had ordered the hospital closed and consolidated with City Hospital Number One amid protests from the black community.

**1984** GM president F. James McDonald was on hand for ceremonies marking the dedication of the new Wentzville Assembly Plant.