

## **December 29**

**1829** Father John B. Bannon was born in Ireland. He was a leading clergyman in St. Louis at the start of the Civil War. "The Fighting Chaplain" was known for ministering to rebel soldiers in the thick of battle. In 1863, President Jefferson Davis sent Bannon to argue the rebel cause with Pope Pius the IX. Forbidden from returning to his St. John's the Apostle Church after the war, Bannon lived out his days in Ireland and died in 1913.

**1865** August Busch Senior was born. He took over the brewery upon the death of Adolphus Busch in 1913. He built the Bevo Mill to prove that beer was a beverage of respectable restaurants. August led the brewery through the dark days of prohibition. The brewery made yeast, corn and syrups for the baking industry. AB even built truck bodies and refrigerated cabinets. Ailing and in intense pain, August Senior shot himself in 1934.

**1874** Thomas Benoist was born in Irondale, Missouri. He opened the first aeronautical supply company in the nation here in 1908. On September 18, 1910, he became the first St. Louisian to pilot a plane and made the first flight at Kinloch Field. Benoist piloted the plane as Lieutenant Albert Berry made the world's first parachute jump on March 1, 1912. He co-founded the world's first passenger airline in Florida in 1913.

**1876** A panel of judges ruled that the separation of the city and county had been passed by the voters back on August 22nd. Originally, election officials had reported that the measure had won in the city, but failed in the county. The judges threw out hundreds of improperly registered ballots.

**1901** The World's Fair Company announced it had awarded a \$116,000 contract for the construction of a wooden tunnel to take the pesky River Des Peres beneath the fairgrounds. The massive job was finished in June 1902.

**1913** The city of Richmond Heights was incorporated. At the time, the population was about 500. The city got its start because of a wandering quail hunter. Frederick Nelson, a wealthy Realtor, strayed onto part of the Old Spanish land grants while hunting. He was so impressed, he promised to live there one day.

**1922** Depressed over the liquidation of the Lemp Brewery, William Lemp Junior killed himself at the family mansion. His father had killed himself there in 1904. A sister, Elsa Lemp, shot herself at her Hortense Place home in 1920. William Junior's brother Charles shot himself at the mansion in 1949.

**1930** For the first time since the Volstead Act went into effect, prohibition officials announced there would be no "spotters" working the night clubs and hotels on New Years Eve. St. Louis prohibition chief James Dillon said the merrymakers regarded his agents as part of the entertainment.

**1950** The city of Ballwin was incorporated. The population stood at about 750. In 1826, the state established a road between St. Louis and the new capitol at Jefferson City. The road ran through John Ball's land. He laid out a town he called "Ballshow," but the name was later changed to Ballwin.

**1953** St. Louis Police Lieutenant Louis Shoulders was indicted for perjury. Shoulders and patrolman Elmer Dolan arrested Carl Austin Hall for the kidnapping of Bobby Greenlease. Both officers said they brought the remaining half of the \$600,000 ransom to the police station. But the money was never found.

**1953** Monsanto announced plans for a general headquarters complex on 250 acres at Olive and Lindbergh. Monsanto employees were scattered from the headquarters on South Second Street to the KXOK Building on 12th Street and the Central Terminal Building on 12th.

**1955** It was a humiliating day for McDonnell Aircraft. Several "Demon" fighter planes were towed down city streets to the riverfront to be loaded on barges. Fifty of the \$1 million planes were unsafe to fly because their engines were too small. They were sent to ground training facilities on the East Coast.

**1956** St. Louis was one of eleven cities picked by *Look* Magazine and the National Municipal League for the 1956 "All American Cities" Award. The magazine cited "progress achieved through intelligent citizen's actions." Residents had approved a city earnings tax, a \$110 million bond issue and a \$16 million school bond issue over the past two years.

**1958** The portion of the Mark Twain Expressway, (now I-70) from Bircher to Florissant Road was opened to traffic. This stretch is now the most accident-prone in the state. The segment between Bircher and downtown would be completed in 1961.

**1959** The area was shocked when a 29-year-old Affton mother killed her nine-year-old and 21-month-old sons. Her husband said Mrs. Kathryn Davis had been in sanitariums twice in recent years and had recently been suffering from depression.

**1967** A group of about 30 business officials in St. Louis organized a peace offensive against the Vietnam War. T. Walter Hardy, Chairman of the Hardy Salt Company, was named as chairman of the St. Louis Business Executives for Peace.

**1995** St. Louis comptroller Virvus Jones was sentenced to a year in prison for cheating on his income taxes. Jones agreed to a plea bargain after being accused of scheming to steal the 1993 Democratic primary by running a "stalking horse" candidate to draw votes away from his opponent.