

December 30

1826 The Missouri Legislature took the first steps towards outlawing the whipping post and the pillory. Those were common punishments here in those days. In the early days of St. Louis, the whipping post was located on the block now occupied by the Old Courthouse.

1882 A fire and series of explosions leveled a fireworks factory on the Sportsmen's Park grounds near the grandstands. Residents of the neighborhood had been complaining to Brown's owner Chris Von der Ahe that the factory was a menace.

1904 Prince Pu-Lin, China's Imperial High Commissioner to the fair, donated the lavish Chinese pavilion to fair president David R. Francis. The donation was made with the condition that it would remain intact. Francis said he was so astonished by the gift that he wasn't sure what he would do with it. No one knows exactly what happened, but parts of the pavilion ended up in private homes in St. Louis.

1921 Hogan Gang member Luke Kennedy was killed in revenge for the murder of prominent politician and rival gang leader William Egan, leader of the Egan's Rats. The leader of the Hogan gang and three of his henchmen escaped when the gunmen opened fire on their auto at 11th and Market.

1930 The Gardner Motor Company closed a victim of the Great Depression. Russell Gardner made a fortune manufacturing Banner Buggies. He switched to horseless carriages and controlled all Chevrolet trade west of the Mississippi by 1915. In 1919, Gardner and his sons began making their own cars here. Gardner won a contract with Sears to make a car to be sold by mail order, but the Stock Market crash killed the deal.

1937 John Hartford was born. He grew up in University City and found himself drawn to life on the river and to traditional music. Hartford won two Grammys in 1967 for his composition "Gentle on My Mind." He won another Grammy in 1976 for the album "Mark Twang."

1941 The *Globe-Democrat* reported that the horse and buggy days were making a comeback because of the war and tire rationing. About 500 horses and mules were sold at a National Stockyards auction. The bi-weekly auctions had been suspended just a few weeks earlier because of lack of interest.

1944 The minesweeper *Inaugural* was launched at Winslow, Washington. It earned two battle stars in the Pacific. St. Louisans Eugene Slay and Robert O'Brien brought it here as a tourist attraction. It sank during the flood of 1993 and remains in the river south of the McArthur Bridge.

1949 Famous-Barr announced that construction would begin soon on a distinctive \$2.5 million store at Kingshighway and City Route 66. The "Southtown" Famous would be the second outlying Famous store, and the third in the St. Louis area.

1950 The St. Louis County Court met for the last time. It had served as the governing body of the county since 1804.

1956 A general alarm fire destroyed the St. Louis Candle and Wax Company at 1823 Lucas. A fire captain suffered a fatal heart attack while fighting the fire. Twelve firefighters narrowly escaped when a wall collapsed.

1964 Gaslight Square began to die on this date. Lillian Heller was murdered at an apartment building at 4254 Gaslight Square. Area businessmen said it was an isolated incident. But the media soon began to focus on crimes that occurred anywhere near Gaslight Square. Go-Go joints soon took over. Today, nothing remains of the once vibrant area.

1973 The area was digging out from nearly a foot of snow for the second time in two weeks. The St. Louis area normally receives about 14 inches of snow in December.

1974 The Blues traded fan-favorite Red Berenson to Detroit for tough-guy Phil Roberto and a draft pick. Berenson still holds the Blues record for goals in a single game. He scored six in one night in Philadelphia in 1968.

1988 It was Brian Sutter night at the Arena. His number 11 was retired in a ceremony attended by 11 members of the Sutter family. Six of his brothers played in the NHL. Sutter played 12 seasons with the Blues. He was known for being a fiery competitor. Sutter also spent four seasons as coach of the Blues.

1993 Tom Alston died broke at the age of 61. He had become the first black Cardinal player in 1954. Suffering from mental problems, he was out of baseball by 1957.

1999 Fred Saigh died at the age of 94. Saigh became sole owner of the Cardinals in 1949. In 1953, he was forced to sell after being sent to jail for owing back taxes. Although he received much bigger offers from other cities, he sold the team to Anheuser-Busch. Hurt that August Busch was considered the man who saved the team for St. Louis, Saigh never attended a game while the brewery owned the Cards.